

GEORGIA:

IDPs in Georgia still need attention

A profile of the internal displacement situation

9 July, 2009

This Internal Displacement Profile is automatically generated from the online IDP database of the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC). It includes an overview of the internal displacement situation in the country prepared by the IDMC, followed by a compilation of excerpts from relevant reports by a variety of different sources. All headlines as well as the bullet point summaries at the beginning of each chapter were added by the IDMC to facilitate navigation through the Profile. Where dates in brackets are added to headlines, they indicate the publication date of the most recent source used in the respective chapter. The views expressed in the reports compiled in this Profile are not necessarily shared by the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre. The Profile is also available online at www.internal-displacement.org.

About the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre

The Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, established in 1998 by the Norwegian Refugee Council, is the leading international body monitoring conflict-induced internal displacement worldwide.

Through its work, the Centre contributes to improving national and international capacities to protect and assist the millions of people around the globe who have been displaced within their own country as a result of conflicts or human rights violations.

At the request of the United Nations, the Geneva-based Centre runs an online database providing comprehensive information and analysis on internal displacement in some 50 countries.

Based on its monitoring and data collection activities, the Centre advocates for durable solutions to the plight of the internally displaced in line with international standards.

The Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre also carries out training activities to enhance the capacity of local actors to respond to the needs of internally displaced people. In its work, the Centre cooperates with and provides support to local and national civil society initiatives.

For more information, visit the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre website and the database at www.internal-displacement.org.

Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre

Norwegian Refugee Council
Chemin de Balexert 7-9
1219 Geneva, Switzerland
Tel.: +41 22 799 07 00
idmc@nrc.ch

www.internal-displacement.org

CONTENTS

CONTENTS	3
OVERVIEW	6
IDPs IN GEORGIA STILL NEED ATTENTION	6
CAUSES AND BACKGROUND	12
BACKGROUND	12
OVERVIEW OF THE CONFLICT	12
CAUSES OF DISPLACEMENT	15
IDPs FROM ABKHAZIA	15
IDPs FROM SOUTH OSSETIA AND ADMINISTRATIVE BORDER AREA	16
DISPLACEMENT DUE TO NATURAL DISASTERS	17
IDP POPULATION FIGURES	18
NUMBER OF IDPs, DISAGGREGATED BY AGE AND SEX WHERE DATA ARE AVAILABLE	18
SOME 257,000- 277,000 IDPs AS OF 2009	18
IDP DEMOGRAPHIC STRUCTURE	19
LOCATION(S) OF IDP POPULATIONS	20
IDPs IN COLLECTIVE CENTRES AND IN PRIVATE ACCOMMODATIONS	20
IDP POPULATION MOVEMENTS AND PATTERNS	21
POPULATION MOVEMENTS AND INFORMATION ON PATTERNS OF CONCENTRATION OF IDPs	21
PHYSICAL SECURITY AND INTEGRITY	23
PHYSICAL SECURITY, DIGNITY, MENTAL AND MORAL INTEGRITY	23
SECURITY SITUATION IN AREAS OF RETURN: ABKHAZIA AND SOUTH OSSETIA	23
PHYSICAL SECURITY AND MENTAL INTEGRITY OF DISPLACED ADULTS AND CHILDREN IN GEORGIA	23
LIBERTY AND FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT	24
MOST IDPs ARE PREVENTED TO RETURN TO ABKHAZIA AND SOUTH OSSETIA	24
BASIC NECESSITIES OF LIFE	26

FOOD AND WATER	26
FOOD AND WATER	26
SHELTER AND HOUSING	26
SHELTER AND HOUSING	26
MEDICAL CARE AND SANITATION	28
MEDICAL CARE AND SANITATION	28

PROPERTY, LIVELIHOODS, EDUCATION AND OTHER ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS **30**

LAND AND PROPERTY	30
PRIVATISATION OF COLLECTIVE CENTRES	30
IDP PROPERTY LEFT IN ABKHAZIA, SOUTH OSSETIA AND VILLAGES CLOSE TO SOUTH OSSETIA	32
PRIMARY EDUCATION AND EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMES	33
SEPARATE SCHOOLS FOR SOME IDPS	33
DISRUPTION OF EDUCATION FOR DISPLACED CHILDREN WHO RETURNED TO GALI, ABKHAZIA	35
WORK AND LIVELIHOOD OPPORTUNITIES AND COPING STRATEGIES	35
LIVELIHOODS OF WOMEN: BEFORE AND AFTER DISPLACEMENT	35
IDPS EMPLOYMENT COMPARED TO THE GENERAL POPULATION	36
RISKY WORK OF SOME DISPLACED CHILDREN	37

FAMILY LIFE, PARTICIPATION, ACCESS TO JUSTICE AND OTHER CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS **39**

DOCUMENTATION AND CITIZENSHIP	39
COPING WITH THE LOSS OF IDENTITY DOCUMENTS OR NEW LAWS AFFECTING IDENTITY	39
VOTING AND PARTICIPATION IN PUBLIC AFFAIRS	39
VOTING AND PARTICIPATION IN PUBLIC AFFAIRS	39
RIGHT TO INFORMATION AND PARTICIPATION, INCLUDING WOMEN	40
IDPS ADVOCATE FOR THEIR RIGHTS	40

PROTECTION OF SPECIAL CATEGORIES OF IDPS (AGE, GENDER, DIVERSITY) **42**

GENDER- WOMEN AND MEN; IMPACT OF DISPLACEMENT ON GENDER IDENTITY AND ROLES	42
GENDER- WOMEN AND MEN; IMPACT OF DISPLACEMENT ON GENDER IDENTITY AND ROLES	42
BOYS, GIRLS AND ADOLESCENTS	42
IMPACT OF DISPLACEMENT ON CHILDREN'S IDENTITY	42
INDIGENOUS PEOPLES, MINORITIES, PEASANTS, PASTORALISTS AND OTHER GROUPS WITH A SPECIAL DEPENDENCY ON AND ATTACHMENT TO THEIR LANDS	43
PRESSURE ON ETHNIC GEORGIANS RETURNEES IN GALI, ABKHAZIA	43

DURABLE SOLUTIONS (RETURN, LOCAL INTEGRATION, SETTLEMENT ELSEWHERE IN THE COUNTRY) **44**

DOCUMENTED RETURNS, SETTLED LOCALLY AND SETTLED ELSEWHERE	44
DOCUMENTED RETURNS, SETTLED LOCALLY AND SETTLED ELSEWHERE	44

PROSPECTS FOR AND OBSTACLES TO VOLUNTARY RETURN, LOCAL SETTLEMENT AND SETTLEMENT ELSEWHERE	45
REVIEW OF OBSTACLES TO RETURN AND TO LOCAL SETTLEMENT	45
SUPPORT FOR RETURN INTEGRATION AND REINTEGRATION	46
NATIONAL	46
INTERNATIONAL	48
<u>NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE</u>	<u>50</u>
INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS AND HUMANITARIAN LAW FRAMEWORK INCLUDING REFERENCES TO THE GUIDING PRINCIPLES ON INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT	50
NATIONAL LAWS	50
NATIONAL RESPONSE	51
GOVERNMENT IDP FOCAL POINTS, STRATEGY AND PROGRAMMES	51
CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS	53
HUMANITARIAN ACCESS AND ASSISTANCE	54
HUMANITARIAN ACCESS TO GALI AND SOUTH OSSETIA	54
INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE	55
MAIN ACTORS, POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES	55
<u>LIST OF SOURCES USED</u>	<u>60</u>

OVERVIEW

IDPs in Georgia still need attention

Large-scale displacement was caused in August 2008 by conflict between Georgia and the Russian Federation over the fate of the secessionist territory of South Ossetia. Most of the people displaced were later able to return to their homes in areas adjacent to the administrative border with South Ossetia, and most ethnic Ossetians returned to their homes in South Ossetia. However, some 37,000 ethnic Georgians who fled South Ossetia have not been able to return by mid-2009.

In addition to the people displaced in 2008, some 220,000 to 247,000 people from Georgia's secessionist territories of Abkhazia and South Ossetia are still waiting for a solution to their displacement following conflicts which broke out in the early 1990s. The majority of them live in the region bordering Abkhazia and in the Georgian capital Tbilisi, face difficult conditions in former hotels and public buildings, and depend on meagre state benefits. Over the past years, some 45,000 people have returned to the Gali district in eastern Abkhazia, only to find poor conditions and economic prospects there.

Causes of displacement and estimated numbers of IDPs

The majority of internally displaced people (IDPs) in Georgia have been displaced since the early 1990s. In 1991, Georgia's declaration of independence was followed by increased tensions in the autonomous regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, which both demanded full independence.

The fighting that followed caused the displacement of some 300,000 people, primarily to Georgia proper and also to the Russian Federation. Most of them were from Abkhazia, where virtually the entire ethnic Georgian population fled, primarily to the region on the Georgian side of the administrative border with Abkhazia, and to the Georgian capital, Tbilisi (CHR, 25 January 2001). At the same time, many ethnic Abkhaz were displaced within Abkhazia. Ethnic Georgians and Abkhaz also found refuge in the Russian Federation. Both groups generally describe what happened to them as "ethnic cleansing" (OSCE, 3 December 1996; Dale, 1997; IFRC, 30 November 2000).

The conflict in South Ossetia caused the displacement of 60,000 people, mainly ethnic Ossetians from both the breakaway territory and other parts of Georgia; the vast majority of them found refuge in North Ossetia in the Russian Federation. About 10,000 ethnic Georgians from South Ossetia were also displaced within Georgia (CHR, 22 March 2006). Both regions then declared their independence and have since sought to maintain close relations with the Russian Federation rather than with Georgia.

In 2004 and 2005, the Georgian Ministry of Refugees and Accommodation (MRA), with the support of UNHCR and the Swiss government, identified and registered almost 222,000 IDPs living in territories under Georgian control (CHR, 22 March 2006). This figure was not endorsed by the Georgian government, who used the estimate of 247,000 in 2007, although no new displacement had occurred in the interim (GoG, 2 February 2007).

In August 2008, conflict broke out between Georgia and the Russian Federation over South Ossetia. Hundreds of people were killed and at least 158,000 ethnic Georgians and Ossetians fled their homes in South Ossetia, Georgia proper and Abkhazia. 128,000 of the people displaced

were ethnic Georgians from South Ossetia, from areas in Georgia proper neighbouring South Ossetia and from the Kodori Gorge in Abkhazia. In addition, 30,000 ethnic Ossetians found refuge temporarily in North Ossetia within the Russian Federation (OCHA, 18 August 2008). Forces on both sides in the conflict appear to have killed and injured civilians through indiscriminate attacks on the town of Gori and on the South Ossetian capital Tskhinvali (HRW, 14 August 2008). The arrival of Russian and South Ossetian forces to ethnic Georgian villages in South Ossetia and on the Georgian side of the administrative border reportedly resulted in direct threats to the population, instructions to leave, looting and house burning (OSCE, November 2008).

An internationally-brokered ceasefire came a week later. However, the Russian Federation recognised the independence of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, and kept thousands of soldiers in both regions. At the end of April 2009, the Russian Federation signed border pacts with both regions, by which it assumed immediate responsibility for guarding their de facto borders with Georgia for the next ten years (AFP, 2 May 2009).

International efforts to bring peace

Since October 2008, the European Union Monitoring Mission (EUMM) to Georgia has monitored the August 2008 ceasefire between the Russian Federation, Georgia, Abkhazia and South Ossetia, but it has been prevented by the Russian Federation, Abkhazia and South Ossetia from entering the breakaway regions. Meanwhile, the mandates of the peacekeeping forces which had been patrolling South Ossetia and Abkhazia since the early 1990s to prevent the resumption of conflict failed to be renewed, mainly due to the Russian Federation's opposition (EU, 19 June 2009).

Following the August 2008 crisis, the UN, EU and OSCE chaired several rounds of discussions in Geneva, which included delegations from Georgia, the Russian Federation, the United States, and Abkhaz and South Ossetian representatives. One of the issues discussed was how to improve the living conditions of IDPs, but talks have failed to delivered tangible results (UNSC, 3 February 2009).

In search of durable solutions

People displaced in 2008

The vast majority of Georgians displaced in August 2008 were first accommodated in Tbilisi in public buildings such as schools. A minority were temporarily housed in tented camps (AI, 18 November 2008). In the months following the conflict, most of the displaced were able to return to their homes in areas adjacent to the administrative border with South Ossetia, and most ethnic Ossetians returned to their homes in South Ossetia. According to several reports, some IDPs were pressurised by Georgian authorities to return to their homes close to the administrative border before conditions were in place to guarantee their security or an adequate standard of living. In general, IDPs have not been adequately consulted on the sustainability of plans for their futures (HRC, 13 February 2009; OSCE, November 2008).

The Georgian government and the international community continue to emphasise the right of return of Georgian IDPs, but the Georgian government has predicted that about 37,600 people displaced in August 2008 will not return in the foreseeable future (CHR, 13 February 2009). The de facto South Ossetian authorities have assured the UN High Commissioner for Refugees and the Human Rights Commissioner of the Council of Europe that they were committed to the right of return, including for ethnic Georgians who fled in August 2008, and that the latter group would face no discrimination and have their security fully guaranteed (HRW, 23 January 2009). In practice, however, South Ossetian villages previously under Georgian control have been razed to

the ground with the exception of a handful of houses, making the return of IDPs more elusive than ever. The Council of Europe noted that the intention to cleanse the area of ethnic Georgians was clear (CoE, 29 April 2009, “consequences of war”). Another major obstacle to return is the presence of unexploded ordnance and other dangerous remnants of the August 2008 fighting (CoE, 8 September 2008).

People displaced in the early 1990s

Prior to the August conflict, some 6,000 refugees and IDPs had returned to South Ossetia, the vast majority of them before 2005 due to the volatile security situation and poor economy in South Ossetia since then (UNCT, November 2006).

From the mid-1990s to the mid-2000s, an estimated 45,000 ethnic Georgian IDPs returned to the Gali district of Abkhazia. The authorities there have long maintained that the return of IDPs to Abkhazia – other than to Gali – was impossible (Civil Georgia, 17 February 2007). The living conditions of the returnees are extremely poor, with inadequate housing, limited economic opportunities and a general lack of public services (CHR, 22 March 2006; DRC, February 2006). In January 2009, OSCE’s High Commissioner on National Minorities travelled to Abkhazia and said he found the situation “difficult” for Georgian parents eager for their children to be educated in their mother tongue. In March 2009, teachers in Gali said that they were pressurised by local officials to drop Georgian-language instruction; they were concerned about the fate of students, for whom school is a critical link to Georgian identity (RFE/RL, 22 March 2009). According to many local and international accounts, ethnic Georgians in Gali have been pressurised to acquire Abkhaz “citizenship” for which they are required to renounce the Georgian one. Most returning IDPs have reportedly not complied, among other reasons so that they continue to be eligible to receive pensions and other benefits from the Georgian government.

Continuing humanitarian needs of IDPs

IDPs still face barriers to their enjoyment of economic and social rights. About 70 per cent of Georgia’s long-term IDPs live in urban areas, primarily in Zugdidi in western Georgia, but also in Tbilisi and Kutaisi (World Bank, May 2005). Close to half of the displaced population live in collective centres in former hotels, schools, kindergartens, factories and hospitals. As of May 2009, some 12,500 people internally displaced in 2008 were also residing in collective centres or temporary private accommodation (CoE, 12 May 2009).

Returned villagers whose homes were damaged or destroyed during the conflict face particularly difficult conditions. In February 2009 the Representative of the UN Secretary-General on the human rights of IDPs (the RSG on IDPs) reported that people who were displaced in 2008 and had since returned to areas close to South Ossetia were in need of assistance to restore their livelihoods and repair or rebuild their houses (HRC, 13 February 2009).

The 2008 war with the Russian Federation and the global financial crisis seriously undermined Georgia’s economy, and declines in growth are likely to affect the most vulnerable groups, such as IDPs (ICG, 26 November 2008). As they continue to be seen as outsiders, IDPs are reported to struggle to find work, and many inhabitants of collective centres remain extremely poor and depend on external assistance. There seem to be insufficient opportunities for income generation for IDPs or information among IDPs of existing opportunities (UNHCR, October 2008).

Elderly IDPs and female-headed households may face particular difficulties; they are less likely to have an income or support for maintaining their homes in collective centres, and often live in insanitary dwellings. According to UNFPA, pregnant women displaced in August 2008 were particularly vulnerable, as the destruction of infrastructure, lack of access to reproductive health services and poverty led to an increased risk of complications during pregnancy and delivery

(UNFPA, October 2008). Children in collective centres still live in inadequate cramped conditions, and are often seen as outsiders by other children and their families. One of the most serious causes of IDP vulnerability is related to their emotional conditions, as the conflicts and their difficult situation since have created feelings of dependency, helplessness and depression.

Abkhaz authorities have also closed the administrative border with Georgia since summer 2008. As a result, it has become increasingly difficult for returnees in Gali to maintain family contacts, sell their produce, access health care or pick up financial entitlements on the other side of the administrative border (CoE, 12 May 2009; CoE, 28 January 2009, Res.1648).

In 2009, the RSG on IDPs reported to the UN Human Rights Council that his biggest concern was the fate of the Georgians displaced in the 1990s because “they remain largely forgotten and marginalised”. He encouraged the government to implement its plans to improve the living conditions of IDPs, in particular by closing collective centres, raising the monthly financial allowance to IDPs on the basis of up-to-date needs assessments, and by offering income-generating projects and providing land plots (HRC, 13 February 2009).

National response to internal displacement

Since 1996, a comprehensive law on IDPs (the Law of Georgia on Internally Displaced Persons, most recently amended on 9 June 2006) has offered some support, including the use of public utilities free of charge in collective centres and modest monthly financial allowances. However it has not been effective in lifting most IDPs out of poverty. Following a 2006 government decree on social assistance to the general population, IDPs can enrol into a programme of social assistance if they give up their monthly IDP allowances. This programme is managed by the Ministry of Labour, Health and Social Affairs.

In the early 2000s, the government took steps to improve the living conditions of IDPs, who gained the right to vote in local and parliamentary elections in their current residence, rather than in their place of origin, to run for election, and to acquire property while keeping their national IDP status (Brookings, 5 November 2004; OCHA, November 2003).

In 2007, the government adopted the new State Strategy on IDPs which deals with all aspects of displacement: housing, employment, social issues including education and health, and legal status (GoG, 2 February 2007). It stressed that the integration of IDPs in their place of displacement need not bar their future return to their original residence. UN agencies, international NGOs and national civil society bodies provided substantial input to the strategy. Meanwhile, the ICRC created a database to consolidate information on all of Georgia’s collective centres for IDPs.

While an important tool, the Strategy has so far not been implemented, as the action plan drawn up to realise the strategy was revised after the August 2008 war and then only adopted in May 2009. Following the August 2008 conflict, the government of Georgia appointed focal points for the different sectors of the response and charged the Minister of Health, Labour and Social Affairs with the coordination of humanitarian assistance (OCHA, 7 October 2008).

It also resettled, with international donor support, some 18,000 people who had been recently displaced into individual family cottages built for them in three regions of Georgia, and offered financial compensation to almost 4,000 IDPs (CoE, 12 May 2009). However, the criteria used for allocating the new housing were not clear (HRC, 13 February 2009), and some IDPs also criticised the choice of location of the houses, away from basic amenities and in areas with few economic prospects (CoE, 28 January 2009).

In February 2009, the government hosted a donor meeting to present progress on the reintegration of people displaced in the 1990s. Its main goals were to increase IDP self-reliance through the provision of durable housing solutions, and to include the most vulnerable IDPs in the general social assistance programme (UNCT in Georgia, 5 March 2009).

In May 2009, the Georgian government finally started to grant IDP status to the people displaced from the August 2008 conflict, an important measure as the status is linked to a series of benefits (CoE, 12 May 2009).

Property issues

Over the past few years, the government has sold hotels and other public buildings housing IDPs. According to local observers, these cases of privatisation have been most successful when IDPs have been able to negotiate rental conditions directly with the new owners, often with NGO or government support. In practice, thousands of IDPs have left or been evicted from their residences, sometimes without compensation. Because IDPs do not have ownership rights over their accommodation in collective centres, they have to rely on the goodwill of the state for compensation. Many have received compensation but have been unable to buy their own apartment and have ended up living with relatives or have used the compensation to rent an apartment (UNICEF/NRC, October 2006).

In 2009, the government announced a new initiative under the responsibility of the Ministry of Refugees and Accommodation (MRA), according to which IDPs would be able to buy their current apartments in the collective centres. UNHCR called for the government to reach a consensus with the concerned families on rehabilitation standards (UNCT in Georgia, 16 April 2009).

IDPs have not been able to formalise their rights over their properties in conflict areas in the absence of Georgian government control over Abkhazia or South Ossetia. In 2006, the MRA launched a programme called "My House", according to which IDPs could register their ownership rights over their properties in Abkhazia in a state inventory, but the National Agency of Public Registry did not register the property rights as it lacked essential documents proving ownership, such as the cadastral maps of the claimed property. In addition, Abkhaz authorities refused to cooperate in this process. Similarly, a law on restitution of property to the victims of the South Ossetian conflict was passed in December 2006, but as of mid-2009 the law had not been implemented, and the South Ossetian de facto authorities had rejected it.

International response

In the aftermath of the August 2008 crisis, the UN Resident Coordinator / Humanitarian Coordinator led coordination efforts through a Humanitarian Coordination Group involving UN agencies, the Red Cross and NGOs. The cluster approach was formally implemented until the end of March 2009. UNHCR acted as lead agency and played a prominent role in ensuring that protection and assistance needs of IDPs were being addressed promptly and effectively (HRC, 13 February 2009).

In order to respond to the many humanitarian needs of IDPs and other vulnerable populations in Georgia, UN agencies and some NGOs issued a flash appeal to donors for activities to be carried out over the next six months, which was then revised in October (OCHA, 18 August 2008; 7 October 2008). Donor governments mobilised quickly to pledge support to IDPs and other vulnerable populations, and channel assistance through humanitarian agencies present. Both the RSG on IDPs and the Council of Europe's Human Rights Commissioner undertook visits to Georgia to assess the needs of IDPs and advocate for their rights in the aftermath of the conflict. The Russian government also provided funds to rebuild infrastructure in South Ossetia and

offered humanitarian assistance to refugees in North Ossetia and vulnerable populations in South Ossetia.

One of the main constraints to the delivery of assistance has been the poor access due to legal and bureaucratic obstacles as well as continuing insecurity. The Law on Occupied Territories of Georgia allows access to foreigners from the Georgian side only (Government of Georgia, 28 October 2008), but South Ossetian authorities maintain that providers of assistance can only enter the region through the Russian Federation, while the administrative border with Abkhazia has remained closed.

The UN, the World Bank and other organisations have carried out a joint needs assessment at the request of the government to address humanitarian, recovery, reconstruction and development needs for the next three years (UN-World Bank Group, 22 October 2008). The findings, addressing among other things the needs of people displaced in the 1990s and in 2008, were presented at a donors' conference in Brussels in October 2008. Of the \$4.7 billion committed following the conference, \$450 million were allocated to improving the housing conditions and medical costs of the old and new IDP caseloads (WB-EC, 23 October 2008; ICG, 26 November 2008). Since then, programmes have mostly benefitted the new IDPs, reportedly causing tensions between them and many of those displaced since the early 1990s (HRC, 13 February 2009).

CAUSES AND BACKGROUND

Background

Overview of the conflict

Georgia became independent from the Soviet Union in 1991. At the time, it had some 5.44 million inhabitants. The ethnic composition of Georgia then was 68.8 percent Georgian (including several regional subgroups speaking distinct languages in addition to Georgian, such as Mengrelian), 9 percent Armenian, 7.4 percent Russian, 5.1 percent Azerbaijani, 3.2 percent Ossetia, 1.9 percent Greek, and 1.7 percent Abkhazian (**Open Society Institute, 1995, pp.14-15**). Soon after, it had to confront two nationalities within its borders demanding their own independence, Abkhazia on the north eastern Black Sea coast, and South Ossetia, north of the capital Tbilisi. The fighting that followed killed about 10,000 people and caused large scale displacement.

Since his coming to power in 2004, Georgian President Saakashvili has made the restoration of Georgia's territorial integrity and the return of displaced Georgians to Abkhazia and South Ossetia priorities. Under his presidency, the Georgian government devised various peace plans, in particular a plan presented by Presidential Adviser Irakli Alasania in 2006 which proposed autonomy for Abkhazia, but attempts to start negotiations with the breakaway Republics did not succeed.

Major fighting between Georgian and Russia occurred in August 2008 over the fate of South Ossetia, causing the death of several hundred people and large-scale displacement (see below).

Abkhazia

Throughout the twentieth century, the population of Abkhazia was multi-ethnic, comprising Georgians, Abkhaz, Armenians and Russians. In the Soviet Union, it was joined to Georgia in 1931, and Georgia then closed Abkhaz language schools, changed place names and guaranteed Georgians key official positions. Georgia also promoted the resettlement of Georgians into Abkhazia after the second World War. In 1978, however, Soviet authorities reinstated Abkhaz language instruction and assigned official positions to ethnic Abkhaz (**Dale, 1997, sects.2.1-4.2**).

For more information, please see FIDH, 2 June 2005, Ethnic Minorities in Georgia [Internet] <http://www.fidh.org/Ethnic-Minorities-in-Georgia>

In July 1992, Abkhazia declared its independence from Georgia, a decision quickly annulled by the Georgian government. The following month, on 14 August, Georgian and Abkhaz troops exchanged fire. The conflict escalated, and as Georgian troops occupied the town of Sukhumi, the Abkhaz government fled north to Gudauta, its base for the rest of the war. A year later, Abkhaz forces took back Sukhumi and pushed Georgian forces out of Abkhazia (**Dale, 1997, sects.2.1-4.2**).

The number of those who fled Abkhazia or remained there is highly contentious. According to Georgian government estimates, the population of Abkhazia declined from 535,000 in 1992 to 146,000 in 1997. According to OSCE figures, the population in Abkhazia stood at 225,000 following the conflict, while Abkhazia authorities use the estimate of 315,000 (**Council of Europe**,

Commissioner for Human Rights, 13 July 2000, III – Refugees and displaced persons wishing to return to their place of origin).

In 1994 the Georgian and Abkhazian sides, under the auspices of the UN and with the facilitation of the Russian Federation, signed the Moscow Agreement on the separation of forces. A 1,600 Russian contingent patrol Abkhazia, as the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) Peacekeeping Forces. They were not complemented by contingents from other countries. The Peacekeeping Forces were mandated, inter alia, to promote the safe return of refugees and IDPs (**CHR, 22 March 2006**).

A Quadripartite Agreement on Voluntary Return of Refugees and Displaced Persons was also signed in 1994 by the Abkhaz and Georgian sides, the Russian Federation, and UNHCR.

Since 1997, the Georgian and Abkhaz sides have met within the UN-chaired Geneva process, with is facilitated by Russia, with the participation of the OSCE, and observed by the Group of Friends, including France, the UK, the US, Russia and Germany. To advance negotiations, the UN established the Coordinating Council, to map out areas where progress was possible on practical issues. Three working groups were set up, one of them on refugees and IDPs (**ICG, 18 January 2007**).

Over the next years, sporadic fighting between Georgian and Abkhaz troops erupted. One of the worst bouts of fighting occurred in May 1998 in the Gali District of Abkhazia, when an attack by Georgian guerillas on a group of Abkhazian militia led to large-scale Abkhazian response against an increase of such actions, and also drew in Georgian troops. By the time a ceasefire was reached on 25 May, 200 people were estimated to have been killed and most of the Georgian population from Gali, some 40,000 people, had fled again to Georgia, following the destruction of their houses (**AI, 1998, p.14**). These people returned to Gali over the next few years.

UN Security Council Resolution 858 established the UN Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG) in order to observe the ceasefire and contribute to a comprehensive political settlement to the conflict. One of the purposes of UNOMIG, as per its mandate, was to contribute to conditions conducive to the return of IDPs and refugees in Abkhazia. Since the deployment of UNOMIG, the UN Secretary General reported four times a year to the Security Council on its activities. The Security Council enacted resolutions extending UNOMIG's mandate, generally every six month. UNOMIG's contingent was entirely made up of Russians, as peacekeeping was mandated to the Commonwealth of Independent States. Georgia objected to the presence of Russian peacekeepers in South Ossetia and Abkhazia, and in July 2006, its parliament passed a resolution requesting the government to expedite the withdrawal of both Russian peacekeeping contingents.

One of the tasks of UNOMIG was “to contribute, by its presence, to the improvement of the humanitarian situation and the creation of conditions conducive to the safe and dignified return of IDPs and refugees, including through the facilitation of people-to-people contacts (**UNSC, 3 February 2009**).

South Ossetia

What was under the Soviet Union the South Ossetian Autonomous Oblast declared its intention in 1989 to raise its status to that of an Autonomous Republic within Georgia. Georgian authorities annulled this decision and further revoked South Ossetia's status as an Autonomous Oblast. A violent conflict ensued (**OCHA, 15 January 2004**). Following 18 months of chaos and war, some 1,000 are estimated to have been killed, 100 missing, and many fled their homes. There was also an extensive destruction of homes and infrastructure (**ICG, 19 April 2005**).

Before the 1989-1992 conflict, populations were closely inter-mixed. According to the last pre-war census in 1989, Ossetians living in South Ossetia numbered 65,000, with 98,000 in the rest of Georgia. The overall population of South Ossetia was approximately 99,700, including some 26,000 ethnic Georgians. Following the war, much of the inter-ethnic mixing was lost, and a handful of ethnically mixed villages survived in South Ossetia. South Ossetia had around 65,000 inhabitants as of 2004 (**ICG, 26 November 2004, p.5**). Only 38,028 ethnic Ossetians remained in Georgia proper (State department for statistics of Georgia, quoted by **ICG, 19 April 2005**). This means that up to 60,000 Ossetians left Georgia mainly for South Ossetia or Russia.

In 1992, the leaders of Georgia and Russia signed an agreement that ended hostilities between informal Georgian and South Ossetian militias, the “Agreement on the Principles of the Settlement of the Georgian-Ossetian Conflict between Georgia and Russia”. The agreement foresaw a ceasefire, a Joint Control Commission (JCC), a quadrilateral body with Georgian, Russian, North and South Ossetian representatives. The JCC was tasked to supervise the agreement, and – inter alia – to devise and carry out measures to facilitate IDP and refugee return (**ICG, 7 June 2007**).

Following the agreement, a 1,500 Russian/Georgian/South Ossetian peacekeeping force was deployed. Each national contingent patrolled the conflict zone separately, leading to the Georgian perception that the Russian selectively extended protection to Ossetian civilians, while ignoring the minority Georgian population (**RFE/RL, 19 July 2006**).

According to the 1992 ceasefire agreement (Article 4), the two sides pledged to create conditions for the return of refugees and IDPs. In 1997, a procedure “on the voluntary return of IDPs and refugees resulting from the Georgian-Ossetian conflict to their permanent place of residence” was agreed by the JCC. In 2002, a detailed plan on refugees and IDPs was devised: “Draft Programme on the Return, Settlement, Integration, and Re-integration of Refugees, Forcibly Displaced and Other Persons Affected by the Georgian-Ossetian Conflict Comprising Measures for the Restoration of the Economy in the Places of their Return (JCC decision, Annex no.9, 9 July 2002, quoted by **ICG, 26 November 2004, pp.25-26**). In practice, nothing was implemented.

The 1992 ceasefire remained in place until 2004, when Georgia took control of a Georgian-Ossetian trading post in order to end smuggling, but angering South Ossetians who drew their income from the market at the same time. A new ceasefire was agreed upon in August 2004, but daily shootings and frequent criminal incidents continued after that.

Following his coming to power in 2004, Georgian President Sakashvili presented a plan for South Ossetia’s wide autonomy, called “Initiatives of the Georgian Government with Respect to the Peaceful Resolution of the Conflict in South Ossetia”. The offer was immediately rejected by the Ossetian leadership. The plan was revived in 2007, again without success. In a bid to gain influence over South Ossetia, the Georgian government supported since November 2006 an alternative de facto South Ossetian administration which appeared when two sets of de facto presidential elections in South Ossetia were held (**ICG, 7 June 2007**).

The August 2008 conflict

Both Abkhazia and South Ossetia have owed their de facto independence largely due to Russian backing. Abkhaz and Ossetians have Russian passports and residency documents, allowing free movement into Russia. They also receive Russian pensions, which are higher than Georgian ones. The currency is the Russian ruble (**Alertnet, 19 November 2004**). According to the International Crisis Group (ICG), Russia’s interests have involved since the early 1990s. At the time, Russia seemed eager to stop the fighting and to facilitate a status agreement, as it was concerned that independent Republics could set a precedent for its own volatile North Caucasus, especially Chechnya (**ICG, 18 January 2007**).

Relations between Russia and Georgia significantly deteriorated since mid-2004, as Georgia accused Russia of de facto annexation of its territory through the distribution of passports and pensions, but also financial support and military training. In December 2005 and 2006, Russia banned imports of Georgia's agricultural products and alcohol, dealing Georgia a significant economic blow. In 2006, Russia began talking about Kosovo as a precedent for international recognition of Abkhazia (**ICG, 18 January 2007**). Relations soured further in 2007, following various security incidents and in August 2008, conflict broke out between Georgia and the Russian Federation over the fate of South Ossetia. Hundreds of people were killed and tens of thousand displaced (see causes of displacement section for more information). An internationally-brokered ceasefire came a week later, but Russia recognised the independence of both regions following the crisis. Forces on both sides in the conflict appear to have killed and injured civilians through indiscriminate attacks on Gori and the South Ossetian capital Tskhinvali (**HRW, 14 August 2008**). Thousands of Russian soldiers remained based in both regions in the aftermath of the crisis and Russia recognised the independence of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. Following the signing of border pacts between the Russian Federation and the breakaway regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia at the end of April 2009, Russia assumed immediate responsibility for guarding the regions' de facto borders with Georgia, effective for 10 years (**AFP, 2 May 2009**).

In October 2008, the EU Monitoring Mission (EUMM) to Georgia was deployed to monitor the fragile August 2008 ceasefire between Russia, Georgia and Georgia's breakaway territories. The EUMM has been prevented by Russia and the de facto authorities of Abkhazia and South Ossetia to enter the breakaway regions. In addition, 20 OSCE military monitors oversaw a ceasefire with Russia until their mandate ran out at the end of June 2009.

The August 2008 conflict changed the context in which UNOMIG was operating. Georgian withdrew from the Moscow agreement, and the Collective Peacekeeping Forces of the CIS departed (**CoE, 12 May 2009**). According to various reports, UNOMIG had not been able to go to South Ossetia and Abkhazia since August 2008. In June 2009, the UNOMIG mission ended when the UN Security Council was unable to reach an agreement in order to extend the presence of the peacekeeping mission, due to Russia's veto (**EU, 19 June 2009**).

The UN, the EU and the OSCE chaired several rounds of international discussions in Geneva following the August 2008 crisis, which included delegations from Georgia, the Russian Federation, the United States, as well as Abkhaz and South Ossetian representatives. One of the issues discussed was how to improve the living conditions of IDPs (**UNSC, 3 February 2009**).

See also (in Other References, below):

HRW, 13 August 2008, Georgian villages in South Ossetia burnt, looted [Internet]
<http://www.hrw.org/en/news/2008/08/12/georgian-villages-south-ossetia-burnt-looted>

Amnesty International, 1 October 2008, Georgia-Russia conflict: Protection of civilians and accountability for abuses should be a priority for all [Internet]
<http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/EUR04/004/2008/en/3b540f63-8ef1-11dd-8d03-3f760a3cc4a3/eur040042008en.pdf>

Causes of displacement

IDPs from Abkhazia

The 1992-1993 war in Abkhazia led to the displacement of over 250,000 persons and the devastation of this once thriving agricultural centre and tourist destination.

The largest group affected by the war in Abkhazia was ethnic Georgians, the vast majority of whom left Abkhazia and have settled in other parts of Georgia. However, a number of Georgians never left Abkhazia, even during the fighting, particularly members of mixed marriages and many older people.

While it is difficult to say whether there existed on the Georgian or the Abkhaz side at the highest level a clearly formulated intention to eradicate an ethnic group, it is clear that both groups fled due to the threat of personal violence for reasons of ethnicity. Much of the Abkhaz displacement during the war can be attributed to fear of ethnic violence. In addition, many in the Abkhaz leadership have argued that anti-Abkhaz ethnic violence was intentional and planned. On the Georgian side, almost all displaced Georgians state clearly that they left because their lives were in danger precisely because they were Georgians, and many have recounted highly personal stories of atrocities committed by Abkhaz forces against civilians. In addition, most displaced Georgians say that their homes were subsequently destroyed or occupied by others. Georgian authorities tend to label the violence against Georgians from Abkhazia as “ethnic cleansing.” (Dale, 1997, sects. 2.1-4.2). This was echoed by the UN Special Rapporteur of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, “...the challenge to the territorial integrity of Georgia has been accompanied by processes of ethnic cleansing [In Abkhazia].” (CHR, 6 July 1994, para.31). The OSCE Lisbon Summit also “condemned the ‘ethnic cleansing’ resulting in mass destruction and forcible expulsion of the predominantly Georgian population in Abkhazia” (OSCE, 3 December 1996, para.20). In addition, about two percent of Abkhazia’s displaced in the early 1990s were ethnic Jews, Ukrainians, Greeks, Abkhaz, Armenians, or Russians (USCR, 2000, p.239).

In August 2008, while Russia and Georgia were fighting in South Ossetia, Abkhaz forces retook from Georgia the Kodori valley, which was the last pocket of Abkhazia still under Georgian control. Some 2,000 ethnic Georgians from Kodori fled to Georgia proper (IWPR, 22 January 2009).

IDPs from South Ossetia and administrative border area

The 1989-1992 conflict in South Ossetia is estimated to have displaced some 60,000 people, including about 10,000 Georgians. The vast majority, however, were ethnic Ossets from both the breakaway territory and other parts of Georgia, most of whom fled abroad, primarily to North Ossetia, Russian Federation. 5,000 became internally displaced within South Ossetia. Causes of displacement including the fighting in and around South Ossetia, as well as the fear, harassment and forcible evictions (CHR, 22 March 2006).

In August 2004, the Georgian government temporarily relocated women and children of some ethnic Georgian villages in South Ossetia, following the shelling of these villages and significant damage to houses and basic infrastructure (OCHA, 31 August 2004).

In August 2008, conflict broke out between Georgia and the Russian Federation over the fate of South Ossetia. Hundreds of people were killed and at least 158,000 ethnic Georgians and Ossetians fled their homes in South Ossetia and Georgia. 128,000 of the people displaced were ethnic Georgians from South Ossetia, from areas in Georgia proper neighbouring South Ossetia and from Abkhazia. In addition, 30,000 ethnic Ossetians found refuge temporarily within the Russian Federation in North Ossetia (OCHA, 18 August 2008). According to the Human Right

Commissioner of the Council of Europe: “More than half of the population in South Ossetia fled, the overwhelming majority of them after the Georgian artillery and tank attack on Tskhinvali and the assaults on Georgian villages by South Ossetian militia and criminal gangs. Lawlessness spread in the 'buffer zone' controlled by Russia between Tskhinvali and Karaleti and forced many to leave even from there. When several houses and apartment buildings in Gori were hit by Russian rockets, a further wave of displacement took place” **(CoE, 8 September 2008)**.

The August conflict resulted in the temporary displacement of most of the ethnic Georgian population in and close to the South Ossetian administrative border (“buffer zone”), and entire villages were emptied, as their overwhelmingly ethnic Georgian population were forced out under threat or fear of physical violence, as military forces from Russia and South Ossetia advanced. The arrival of these forces resulted in direct threats to the population, instructions to leave, looting and house burning, particularly from South Ossetian militia **(OSCE, November 2008)**.

Since the August 2008 conflict, several thousand ethnic Georgians have remained in the Akhlagori district of South Ossetia, now under Russian and South Ossetian control. These people have not been forced to leave, but are at risk of displacement **(CoE, 29 April 2009)**.

Displacement due to natural disasters

According to a November 2006 UN report, the Georgian state is not obliged to provide natural disaster victims with material or other types of assistance. The “Law on Internally Displaced Persons-the Persecuted” does not envisage persons displaced as a result of natural and/or human made disasters. The estimated total number of natural disasters migrants in Georgia ranges between 120,000 and 170,000, including those displaced back in the 1980s **(UNCT in Georgia, November 2006)**.

IDP POPULATION FIGURES

Number of IDPs, disaggregated by age and sex where data are available

Some 257,000- 277,000 IDPs as of 2009

In August 2008, conflict broke out between Georgia and the Russian Federation over the fate of the secessionist territory of South Ossetia, causing large-scale displacement. Most of the displaced have been able to return to their homes in areas next to South Ossetia, and most ethnic Ossets returned to their homes in South Ossetia. However, some 37,000 ethnic Georgians who fled South Ossetia had not been able to return as of June 2009.

In addition to the people displaced in 2008, some 220,000 to 247,000 people from Georgia's secessionist territories of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, and are still waiting for a solution to their displacement following conflicts which broke out in the early 1990s.

Latest displacement

Due to military offensives by Georgia and the Russian Federation in August 2008, hundreds of people were killed and at least 158,000 ethnic Georgians and Ossetians fled their homes in South Ossetia and Georgia, 128,000 of whom became IDPs. IDPs included both ethnic Ossetians who found refuge in other parts of South Ossetia and ethnic Georgians who found refuge in other parts of Georgia, in particular the capital Tbilisi. According to UN agencies in Georgia, as well as Russian and Georgian authorities, 158,703 people fled their homes, including 75,852 from South Ossetia, 65,800 from Gori and surrounding villages, 12,701 from Western Georgia, and 4,350 from Abkhazia. 128,000 of them were estimated to find refuge in Georgia, including 30,000 within South Ossetia. The Russian Federation estimates that 30,000 South Ossetians fled across the border to North Ossetia in the Russian Federation, most of whom had returned as of the end of 2008 (**CoE, 29 April 2009**). UNICEF estimated that as of 1 January 2009, 12,000 children were displaced in Georgia since August 2008 (**UNSC, 26 March 2009**).

According to government estimates of November 2008, about 37,605 people displaced in August 2008 will not return in the foreseeable future. This figure includes 19,111 IDPs from the Tskhinvali region/South Ossetia, 1,821 IDPs from the upper Kodori Valley, as well as those IDPs who spent the winter in displacement, namely 11,500 who cannot return to the area adjacent to the Tskhinvali region/South Ossetia for reasons such as security or destruction of property, and some 5,173 IDPs from Akhgori, a disputed pocket of South Ossetia that for years was de facto controlled by Tbilisi (**CHR, 13 February 2009**).

For more details on the new IDP caseload in the days after the August 2008 conflict, see OCHA, 18 August 2008, Georgia Crisis Flash Appeal 2008 [Internet]

[http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/\(httpDocuments\)/0DFA568E97A5033AC12574AB006291F3/\\$file/Flash_2008_Georgia_SCREEN.pdf](http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/(httpDocuments)/0DFA568E97A5033AC12574AB006291F3/$file/Flash_2008_Georgia_SCREEN.pdf)

People displaced in the early 1990s

In addition, some 300,000 people fled conflicts in or were expelled from Abkhazia and South Ossetia in the early 1990s. Some 45,000 of them returned to Gali, Abkhazia a few years ago.

Since then, the number of IDPs has not decreased, as children of IDPs are also counted as IDPs. In 2004-2005, the Ministry of Refugees and Accommodation (MRA) undertook with the support of UNHCR and of the Swiss government a verification exercise to update the number of IDPs. Some 221,000 people were verified, but this number has not been endorsed by Georgian authorities, who used the estimate of 247,000 as of early 2007, 12,000 of whom were from South Ossetia. More than 103,000 of these are children (**Government of Georgia, 2 February 2007**).

In addition, some 5,000 persons remained displaced within Tskhinvali Region/South Ossetia since the early 1990s. The number of persons displaced inside Abkhazia since the early 1990s was not known (**CHR, 22 March 2006**). Also, the Georgian government registered some of the hundreds of Georgian citizens deported in 2006 from Russia as IDPs (**UNCT in Georgia, November 2006**).

Before the 2004-2005 verification exercise, the IDP registration was from 1996, and was then updated annually. However, accurate and up-to-date statistics on the numbers, locations and living arrangements of IDPs is not available. The agency responsible for this information, the Ministry of Refugees and Accommodation, has provided some statistical accounting of IDPs but the numbers are not always consistent and data on types of accommodation, living arrangement and/or locations are very general. In addition, there are few surveys allowing the comparison between the situation of the general population and of IDPs (**Dershem/Gurgenidze/Holzman, November 2002, p.4**).

IDP Demographic structure

A November 1999 survey conducted by the International Federation of the Red Cross (IFRC) under the title of "Internally Displaced Persons: A Socio-Economic Survey", as well as surveys conducted by Save the Children on an annual basis from 2000 to 2002 designed to provide comparable data of IDPs living in collective centres and local households in the regions of Samagrelo and Imereti, Western Georgia, concurred that there were a larger proportion of younger, 0-17 years of age, and a smaller proportion of retired people among IDPs living in collective centres than in the general population. The size of households was only slightly smaller among IDPs living in collective centres than the local population, 3.5 vs. 3.7 members, but lower among IDPs living in private accommodations (3.4 members).

Information from the end of the 1990s painted a grim picture regarding the future demographic situation of the IDP situation in Georgia. It indicated: increased mortality (9.7 per 1000 population compared to 8.7 per 1,000 of general population in 1999) and decreased birth rate (3.5 per 1,000 population, compared to 10.17 per 1,000 population in general population), with twice as large divorce rates (1.8 compared to 0.9)

According to NGO representatives, a child born to IDP parent(s) is registered at the hospital to receive a birth certificate. The child's IDP registration occurs later. IDP benefits only start at the time of registration, which leaves a time (sometimes months) between birth and receipt of benefits (**Dershem/Gurgenidze/Holzman, November 2002, p.30**).

For more information on demographic trends, see Zoidze & Djibuti, 2004 IDP Health Profile Review in Georgia, prepared under the New Approach to IDP Assistance Initiative, Tbilisi [Internet] http://www.undp.org/ge/news/IDP%20Health%20Profile%20Review_eng.pdf

Location(s) of IDP populations

IDPs in collective centres and in private accommodations

About 40-45 percent of the IDPs displaced in the 1990s live in collective centres, such as hostels, hotels, hospitals, school buildings, and other state owned premises. The rest are in host families (with relatives and friends) and in private accommodations by themselves (rented or bought an apartment/house). The highest number of IDPs residing in collective centres – according to 2003 government figures – were in Tbilisi, followed by Zugdidi and Kutaisi (**Sumbadze & Tarkhan-Mouravi, July 2003, pp.16-17**).

Detailed breakdown of IDPs by type of accommodation, as per the IFRC survey:

According to government figures from 2003, the highest proportion of IDPs compared to host populations was in Zugdidi. From 2000 to 2003, there was a trend of IDPs from Abkhazia settled in other regions to move to Tbilisi. Meanwhile, the majority of IDPs from South Ossetia had found refuge in Kartli and in Tbilisi (**Sumbadze & Tarkhan-Mouravi, July 2003, pp.16-17**).

Some 40,000 IDPs have returned to Gali district, Abkhazia, but are still counted as IDPs by authorities. There is no official data on returnees, which can be partly explained by the consequences of granting IDP status: this status automatically entitles the person who has obtained it, by law at least, to a series of advantages and allowances as long as they remain under Georgian jurisdiction. At the same time, both the civil services and non-official bodies have no interest either in reporting a decline in the number of IDPs under their care, because they would then face what would be a virtually automatic reduction in their funds, which are calculated according to the number of IDPs they are looking after (**Council of Europe, Commissioner for Human Rights, 13 July 2000, III – Refugees and displaced persons wishing to return to their place of origin**).

According to UNHCR, of the 10,000 ethnic Georgians displaced during the fighting in South Ossetia in the early 1990s, 1,285 have returned to South Ossetia. Similarly, 10,000 Ossetians moved to North Ossetia, of whom some 1,462 have returned. Within South Ossetia, about 5,000 people were internally displaced, of whom 2,082 have gone back to their prewar homes (UNHCR, "Population Movements as a Consequence of the Georgian-South Ossetian Conflict", 1 September 2004, quoted by **ICG, 19 April 2005**).

In 2006, a UNICEF/NRC study provides data on 17 collective centres, including their names, the number and origin of people living there – including the number of young people per age group – the conditions of the centres and access to basic services for its residents (**UNICEF/NRC, Annex 1, October 2006**).

IDP POPULATION MOVEMENTS AND PATTERNS

Population movements and information on patterns of concentration of IDPs

Population movements in 2008

Many of the people displaced in 2008 due to the conflict between Georgian and the Russian Federation, first found refuge in Tbilisi, and then moved to the Shida Kartli region (the main town of which is Gori) (HRC, 13 February 2009).

Population movements in the early 1990s

Flight from Abkhazia in the early 1990s was chaotic. Most of the ethnic Georgian IDPs traveled on their own, and whole villages seldom made the journey and settled together (Dale, 1997, sect.5.1). Meanwhile, most internally displaced Abkhaz remained within Abkhazia. When Abkhaz authorities retreated to Gudauta, in the North of Abkhazia, Abkhaz who were not engaged in fighting left the main city of Sukhumi for the north until the end of the war. Those from villages in the south either fled to the north or sought safety to the east, in Tkvarcheli. As the war progressed, local residents and IDPs in Tkvarcheli tried to flee the city, when Georgian forces blocked this mountainous city. In December 1992, Georgian forces are reported to have downed a Russian Mi-8 helicopter evacuating women and children from that city, in consequence raising the level of general malevolence in the war, and generating more concerted Russian military intervention on the Abkhaz side.

After the war ended, many Abkhaz returned home, but many others were unable to do so, due to the destruction of both living space and economic infrastructure. They then migrated either into cities, or into former Georgian houses and flats in other villages. Those from destroyed urban areas left for the countryside to carry out subsistence agriculture. Many young people left for Abkhaz cities or for Russia (Dale, 1997, sects.2.1-4.2).

Following the conflict, ethnic Georgians displaced from Gali district of Abkhazia started to return home. By 2004, some 45,000 had been estimated to have returned spontaneously. There is a clear seasonal pattern to return to Gali. Many IDPs live in Western Georgia in fall and winter and go to Gali in connection with the cultivating season, particularly to tend and harvest hazelnuts. "Seasonal returnees" often go back and forth between Georgia proper and their home areas several times a season (UN Country Team in Georgia, 28 February 2006).

During the 1989-1992 South Ossetia conflict, due to fear, harassment and forcible eviction, 60,000 people left South Ossetia and Georgia "proper", including about 10,000 ethnic Georgians who fled South Ossetia. An additional 5,000 became internally displaced within South Ossetia. Some 1,285 ethnic Georgians returned to South Ossetia following the war. Within South Ossetia, 2,082 out of the 5,000 were estimated to have returned by 2005 (CHR, 22 March 2006; ICG, 19 April 2005).

Concentration of IDPs

Between 1991 and 1994, most IDPs lived in private housing, usually with family members or friends. After 1995, however, many displaced families moved into collective centres, as the likelihood of return shrank to very low level, and due to the desire to "stick together", to have better access to humanitarian aid and protection, and to not burden host families, as the latter did not receive assistance to receive IDPs. Almost all the IDPs who fled Abkhazia in 1998 were housed in public shelters (Dershem/Gurgenidze/Holzman, November 2002, pp.25-26; Buck, September 2000, pp.5-6).

Today, about 40-45 percent of the IDPs displaced in the 1990s live in collective centres, such as hostels, hotels, hospitals, school buildings, other state owned premises. The rest are in host families (with relatives and friends) and in private accommodations by themselves (rented or bought an apartment/house). The highest number of IDPs residing in collective centres – according to 2003 government figures – were in Tbilisi, followed by Zugdidi and Kutaisi (**Sumbadze & Tarkhan-Mouravi, July 2003, pp.16-17**). Approximately 73 percent of IDPs live in urban areas (**World Bank, May 2005**). Local NGOs have reported that some IDPs have moved from one living arrangement to another (such as from collective center into a private accommodation or vice versa), and may have refrained from registering their new location for fear of losing benefits (**Dershem & Gurgenidze, November 2002, p.9**).

They are large ethnic Georgian IDP populations in Tbilisi, Kutaisi and Zugdidi. In addition, within the districts where they have settled, IDPs tend to live in clearly bounded spaces in close proximity to one another. It is particularly true for the half of the 1990s IDPs who continue to live in collective centres. Most of them did not know each other before the war, but certain patterns were clear: Zugdidi, just across the border from Abkhazia, has a disproportionately large IDP population from the adjacent Gali district, while Kutaisi has a high concentration from Oчамchire district, primarily because transportation between the two places was made available during the war, and because the word went out among IDPs that Kutaisi while father away, had a lot of living space available (**Dale, 1997, sect.5.1**).

PHYSICAL SECURITY AND INTEGRITY

Physical security, dignity, mental and moral integrity

Security situation in areas of return: Abkhazia and South Ossetia

Abkhazia

Following the conflict in the 1990s between Georgia and Abkhazia, there were various security incidents, leading for example to the killing of 10 persons in October 2004, during militia attacks and robberies (**UNSC, 14 January 2004, para.20-23**). Several peacekeeping staff (UNOMIG) were also kidnapped over the years.

The most insecure areas of Abkhazia were reported to be the Gali district and the Kodori Valley. In general, in the Gali district of Abkhazia where most of the IDP return has taken place, weak law enforcement has contributed to numerous cases of extortion, murder, robbery, and abduction, generating a feeling of insecurity among residents (**UNSC, 17 January 2005, para.17**). Insecurity has also hampered assessments and possible additional reports to returning IDPs and others in the area by international organisations.

Georgians residing in Gali – including children - have also been reported to be forced by armed men to gather hazel nuts during the summer harvest. It is not clear whether these armed men were linked to Abkhaz authorities, or were bandits (**UNICEF/NRC, October 2006; IBC, 20 August 2007**). There were also reports of forced recruitment of returning ethnic Georgians in Gali by the Abkhaz “army”. A U.S. Department of State Report stated that they were underage (**U.S. DOS, 6 March 2007**). A UNICEF/Norwegian Refugee Council report stated that they were over 18, but that if they refused to join the army, they had to pay a “fine” anywhere from 50 lari to 500 USD, depending on who caught them. Also, this fine was not registered, might be applied multiple times to the same individual, and the youth’s family could face harassment for evading army service (**UNICEF/NRC, October 2006**). The U.S. Dept of State also indicated that some reports mentioned that displaced children were a particular target for traffickers (**U.S. DOS, 6 March 2007**).

South Ossetia

According to Institute for War and Peace Reporting (IWPR), some people displaced in August 2008 said they had been pressured to return to their home villages close to the South Ossetian administrative border. According to these villagers, authorities said that they could not allow the villages to be “depopulated”. Interviewed IDPs said that their villages remain dangerous, while state officials say that the areas are safe (**IWPR, 27 February 2009**). Prior to the August 2008 conflict, criminality was already an acute problem, in particular robberies, despite cooperation on the subject between the Georgian and South Ossetian sides since the early 2000s. Various incidents and unproductive investigations provoked dissatisfaction among the local population, and many feared this could increase ethnic tensions (**OCHA, 15 January 2004**).

Physical security and mental integrity of displaced adults and children in Georgia

There is little information on violations to the right to life and security of the people displaced since the early 1990s and who found refuge in “Georgia proper” (i.e. not South Ossetia or

Abkhazia) or those displaced since August 2008. There is even less information on IDPs in South Ossetia and Abkhazia. In any case, no major security incidents targeting IDPs have been reported.

In 2006, UNICEF and the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) implemented a rapid assessment on the protection and livelihood situation of displaced children and youth living in collective centres in Georgia, as little to no information is available on the over 103,000 displaced children and youth from 0 to 16 years old who were displaced in Georgia at the time. The report found that while displaced children face protection issues very similar to other Georgian children and youth, due to poverty, violence and crime, they also face specific vulnerabilities due to:

the social stigma IDP children receive, related to inferiority and leading to further social isolation; isolation because of separate schools for displaced children (called schools in exile)
risks and dangers related to temporary return to conflict zones (Gali)
the lack of appropriate housing in collective centres, but also the uncertainty related to their possible closure, which would involve a big life change.

The report also touched on issues which can affect adults living in collective centres. While some collective centres were viewed as offering adequate safety, others were located on a major road, or serving as a public space, such as a hospital. Children then reported to be afraid of strangers that frequent their buildings, and said there was no way to ensure their personal security, or the safety of their possessions. The lack of public transport in rural areas was seen as another concern for some of the collective centres, as well as the presence of gangs involved in drug taking, selling and other criminal activity in and around the collective centre. Robbery and assaults were reported by young people to frequently occur at night. There were few reported cases of sexual violence and abuse, either because it rarely occurred or because it was not reported as this topic is considered taboo. However, child marriages of 14 year old girls and older were reported to occur in collective centres. In a few cases, 12 year old girls were reported to have been married. Reasons given for these marriages included pushing girls to get married to alleviate family stress related to their economic and space limitations, or to avoid that sexual relations occur outside marriage, as sexual activity outside of marriage is extremely taboo for girls and can result in rejection from the community (UNICEF/NRC, October 2006).

Sexual violence

There is little information on the prevalence of sexual violence among IDPs and returnees to Gali, but according to an UNHCR assessment, anecdotal evidence indicates that many incidents go unreported, with victims unaware of their rights and having little faith in law enforcement. It also reported that Georgian legislation on domestic violence had yet to be implemented in practice, and that attitudes towards sexual violence and the subordinate status of women and girls in Georgia meant there was considerable social pressure not to bring cases before the courts (UNHCR, October 2008).

Liberty and freedom of movement

Most IDPs are prevented to return to Abkhazia and South Ossetia

IDMC has no access to reports of arbitrary arrest, detention because of one being displaced, or of confinement to collective centres. However, most ethnic Georgians from Abkhazia –except for those from Gali – or from South Ossetia were prevented to return to their homes, as return of ethnic Georgians to Abkhazia – other than to the Gali district – and to South Ossetia has not been allowed by de facto authorities.

For more information, see section on return

BASIC NECESSITIES OF LIFE

Food and water

Food and Water

Following the August 2008 crisis, UN agencies and NGOs launched two rapid surveys in August-September (“Internally Displaced Persons Survey” and an “Initial Rapid Assessment”). The first one led by WFP gave information on the new IDPs’ demographics, food security and livelihoods, assets and relocation options. It found that people displaced in August 2008 were totally dependent on government and international aid to meet their basic needs. About 60% had no incomes whatsoever as a result of their displacement. IDP families had a high proportion of elderly, children, disabled and female-headed households. Education levels were high, suggesting flexibility in adapting to new livelihoods. In the event that return to their original homes is not possible, over half of IDPs surveyed preferred relocation to urban areas (**OCHA, 7 October 2008**).

There are few surveys specifically assessing the nutritional status of long-term IDPs, whether adult or children. Small surveys on the nutrition state of children were carried out by IFRC in 1999. In 2002, various studies found that the provision of electricity and water was poor throughout Georgia, and that IDPs in collective centres received almost equal amounts and quality of electricity and water as the general population (**Dershem/Gurgenidze/Holtzman, November 2002, pp.6-7**).

According to OCHA however, water supply systems in most collective centres were either completely out of order or the centres did not receive water because of delays in payment for the service. IDPs faced a severe lack of clean drinking water, and were forced to carry water from remote areas. Legally, IDPs in collective centres are entitled to financial support for utilities. In regions such as Samagrelo, Imereti, Bolnisi and Rustavi, electricity was supplied to IDPs for a few hours or not at all, and IDPs had to pay for firewood, candles and kerosene. Some IDPs in private accommodations and who are fighters or family members dependent on a deceased fighter can also have electricity free of charge (**OCHA, June 2003, p.18**).

According to a UNICEF/Norwegian Refugee Council 2006 survey in some collective centres, poor nutrition and poor water quality were mentioned by IDPs they interviewed as concerns (**UNICEF/NRC, October 2006**).

Shelter and housing

Shelter and housing

Following August 2008 conflict

The vast majority of displaced Georgians, from both South Ossetia and its surrounding areas and from the Kodori gorge in Abkhazia, were first accommodated in Tbilisi in public buildings, such as

schools. A minority were temporarily housed in tented camps (**AI, 18 November 2008**). Over the following months, the Georgian government built thousands of individual family cottages, as many IDPs had found shelter in temporary collective centres. Some initial concerns as to the quality of housing were reported. In most settlements, outdoor taps are shared by multiple households and latrines are outdoors. While this may be similar to what people experienced prior to displacement, it still needs improvement. Poor overall insulation of the new houses also mean that resettled IDPs will require a lot of energy for heating in the winter. Some IDPs have received small land plots, while others have not, depending on their location (**TI, 3 April 2009**). Some 12,500 people displaced since August 2008 lived in collective centres and temporary private accommodation as of May 2009. According the Council of Europe's Human Rights Commissioner, the overall conditions of some of the facilities housing the displaced remained "substandard, unsanitary, as well as potentially hazardous, especially for children" (**CoE, 12 May 2009**).

According to the UN Special Representative on the Human Rights of IDPs, people displaced from areas close to South Ossetia and who have since returned to their homes are in need of assistance to restore their livelihoods and repair damage to their property, including the rebuilding of destroyed houses. The Representatives quoted an initial assessment of the Public Defender of Georgia of 13 communities and 31 villages, which concluded that some 1,200 houses were damaged to a medium to serious extent (**HRC, 13 February 2009**).

IDPs displaced in the 1990s

In March 2009, the UN Special Representative on the Human Rights of IDP said to the UN Human Rights Council that his biggest concern was the fate of the Georgians displaced in the 1990s because "they remain largely forgotten and marginalised" (**Reuters, 13 March 2009; HRC, 13 February 2009**).

Today, close to half of people displaced since the early 1990s are still in collective centres, while the others live in private accommodation. These two categories devised by the Georgian government could be broken down into:

collective centres, i.e. legally allocated in state-owned buildings of former hotels, hostels, schools, hospitals, etc.

private housing owned by relatives/friends, where IDPs can basically live there for free.

rented apartments/houses.

purchased apartments or houses.

squatting of abandoned apartments or houses, whether private or public

(**Sumbadze & Tarkhan-Mouravi, July 2003, p.29**).

In 2003, OCHA reported that a majority of IDPs desired strongly to move from private accommodations to collective centres, as they could not afford to pay the rent, or could no longer abuse their hosts' hospitality (**OCHA, November 2003, p.13**). As of 2004, out of a total of 1683 collective centres in Georgia, 70 percent needed urgent repair, particularly those in the countryside. On average, IDPs had 7 to 9 sq. metres per person in collective centres, compared to 18-30 sq. meters per person of the local population (**Sumbadze & Tarkhan-Mouravi, July 2003, p.29**). This is however more than the minimum of 3.5 sq metres per person prescribed in the sphere standards.

Following a visit to Georgia, the UN Special Representative on the human rights of IDPs reported in 2006 that the conditions of vulnerable groups among the displaced in collective centres, such as elderly, traumatised and disabled persons, as well as female-headed households, were of great concern. He also said that while there was little information on the more than half of IDPs who had been accommodated with host families since their flights, he had been informed by civil society representatives that living space for IDPs and their children had often been extremely overcrowded for many years, leading to further impoverishment, interpersonal tensions, and negative effects on the psychosocial development of children (**CHR, 22 March 2006**). In 2009 the

UN Special Representative on the Human Rights of IDPs said he was concerned that almost half of the “old” IDPs were still residing in public buildings of a deplorable standard and that their economic situation was similarly grave. He encouraged the government to implement its plans to improve the living conditions of IDPs, in particular by closing collective centres, raising the monthly financial allowance to which IDPs are entitled on the basis of up-to-date needs assessments, and by offering income-generating projects and providing land plots (**HRC, 13 February 2009**).

Housing conditions of IDPs who returned to Gali, Abkhazia

Living conditions for the 40,000 IDPs who have returned to Gali district, Abkhazia, are reported to be generally difficult, mainly due to the inaccessibility of basic services. According to a Housing Assessment project in Gali, undertaken in 2005 by the Danish Refugee Council, some 25 percent of all pre-war houses in Gali had been damaged. In addition, around 45 percent of the damaged houses were inhabited and in need of profound structural rehabilitation and new builds. The assessment included a technical damage assessment covering all settlements in Gali district, a complementary sample survey (conducted in 10 villages covering 150 households), and a beneficiary capacity assessment focusing on target population. The assessment concluded that while beneficiaries had already done some repair and were motivated to work on the rehabilitation of their houses with some support, there also needed to be more long-term interventions to ensure the sustainability of returns (**Danish Refugee Council/ECHO, February 2006**).

See also (in Other References, below):

1.OCHA, Study on IDP rights, June 2003, section 3.6 on shelter, pp.24-25 [Internet]
<http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/rwb.nsf/AllDocsByUNID/18e77cb4325ae44fc1256d56003e717c>

2.[United Nations Commission on Human Rights \(CHR\), 25 January 2001, Report of the Representative of the Secretary-General on internally displaced persons, Mr. Francis Deng, submitted pursuant to Commission on Human Rights resolution 2000/53, Addendum, Profiles in displacement: Georgia, E/CN.4/2001/5/Add.4](http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/3e717c.html) [Internet]
[http://www.unhcr.ch/Huridocda/Huridoca.nsf/\(Symbol\)/E.CN.4.2001.5.Add.4.En?Opendocument](http://www.unhcr.ch/Huridocda/Huridoca.nsf/(Symbol)/E.CN.4.2001.5.Add.4.En?Opendocument)

3.UN Association of Georgia, 2000, Consolidated Report on IDP settlement issue [Internet]
<http://www.una.org.ge/research/idpsetreport.pdf>

Medical care and sanitation

Medical care and sanitation

IDPs displaced in August 2008

According to UNFPA, women and girls displaced in August 2008 were particularly vulnerable, as destroyed infrastructure, lack of access to quality reproductive health services and poverty led to increased risk of complications during pregnancy and delivery (**UNFPA, October 2008**).

The NGO Transition International has found that among the people displaced in August 2008 and who were resettled by the government in individual cottages the following months, there is little information on the health benefits they should get, and a prevalent worry as to whether they will get medication in the long run. This is a particular problem, given the high proportion of older IDPs in Georgia with chronic health problems (**TI, 3 April 2009**).

IDPs displaced in the 1990s

IDMC does not have access to recent information on the health status of long-term IDPs in Georgia. In 2004, various studies suggested that compared to the general population, the overall health status of IDPs was worse, particularly for those in collective centres. IDPs legally have access to free medical care, as per clause 2 of Article 5 of the “Law of Georgia on Internally Displaced Persons – the Persecuted” which states that “cost of medical treatment of vulnerable IDP at the medical institution shall be compensated by the state according to the pre-determined procedure and within state standards and tariffs” (Zoidze & Djibuti, 2004).

According to 2004 data provided by the Abkhaz Ministry of Health in exile, i.e. authorities which used to be in place in Abkhazia until the early 1990s and which continue to cater to Abkhaz IDPs in Georgia, the IDP morbidity rate exceeded the average indicators for the general population 2-2.5 times. IDPs mainly suffered from diseases of the circulatory, respiratory, and digestive systems (OCHA, 19 November 2004).

Poor sanitary conditions and inadequate hygiene were also reported to be prevalent in collective centres, as most of them were not constructed with long-term and often overcrowded accommodation in mind. Thirty-seven to forty percent of IDPs had unshared access to a toilet compared to 70-90 percent of the local population as of 2003 (Sumbadze & Tarkhan-Mouravi, July 2003, p.29). According to a UNICEF/Norwegian Refugee Council 2006 survey in some collective centres, common ailments mentioned included body infections due to mosquito and other insect bites, digestive problems and diarrhea caused by poor sanitation and water quality, and respiratory ailments. In cases where families live in hospitals, parents expressed fear for their children’s health as they share corridors and toilets with patients who may have serious and acute infectious disease. Interviews with a gynecologist also highlighted the poor sexual health of girls, due to bad sanitary conditions in collective centres, the lack of openness about female sexual health in the family, as well as the infrequency of check ups, leading to serious diseases by the time patients sought treatment. Another problem is the use of marijuana which was reported to be universally present among boys at collective centres, which was not considered as a drug or serious concern. Marijuana was reported to be cultivated locally (Gali or Svaneti regions) and to be very cheap. Other drugs reported to be used by mostly young men and adolescents included Subutex, heroin and over the counter drugs. Drug use and trade has led to reported insecure environment, and to large numbers of adolescents being diagnosed with hepatitis B and C; needles discarded in yards represent health risk to children living in collective centres.

According to this UNICEF/NRC survey, many displaced children and their families have medical insurance (see related information below), but there are still numerous barriers in receiving healthcare. IDPs mentioned having to wait months to get assistance to their children. Many medications and procedures still carry costs, which either prohibits access to treatment by the poorest IDPs or result in families incurring serious debt to heal themselves and their children. IDPs also reported that special clinics serving IDPs were easier to access than hospitals used by the general public, as some have been refused care at these medical institutions. In order to remedy the gaps in health coverage, some IDPs have created outpatient care services that they finance themselves, with the people of the NGO “Welfare Foundation”, or have given money to a family in need (UNICEF/NRC, October 2006). Special clinics serving IDPs were reported to often lack modern and adequate medical equipment and medicine (UN Country Team in Georgia, 30 November 2005). Also, IDPs often could not pay for transport to the clinics/hospitals, and had to pay for part or all the cost of medicine which should have been provided to them free of charge (OCHA, June 2003, pp.21-22).

Another specific problem is the prevalence of depression and psychosomatic illnesses among IDPs, particularly in collective centres. Following the 1990s conflicts and memories of exposure to

violence and death, separation from beloved ones, condition of being uprooted, ambiguous identity, economic hardships, existence in a dilapidated environment and over a decade of uncertainty led to feelings of dependency, passivity and depression, which in turn hindered social adaptability and economic self-reliance of the IDP population (**Sumbadze & Tarkhan-Mouravi, July 2003, pp.26-27**). A 2000 Save the Children study measuring depression level among IDPs in Georgia, and among the general population, found that depression was more prevalent among IDPs than the rest of the population, and that women, divorced individuals, widows, but also the elderly, were particularly at risk (**Dershem/Gurgenidze/Holzman, November 2002, pp.35-36**). Earlier studies also highlighted how the trauma of displacement had affected the psychological well-being of men in profound ways. While many displaced women worked tirelessly and relentlessly to provide desperately needed income and provisions for their families through petty street trade and other menial labour. Meanwhile, many men, feeling unable to fulfil their traditional role as leaders of their families, seemed “paralysed” by the problems of the present day, and their lives were often characterized by escapism, routine time-passing, and a growing pattern of alcoholism (**Buck, September 2000, pp.6-7**). According to another report, psychological problems, together with hard socio-economic conditions, were named as main motives compelling IDPs to increasingly migrate towards Tbilisi and from Georgia (**OCHA, November 2003, p.14**).

See also, “**Monitoring of Legal and Actual Status of Internally Displaced Persons in Georgia**”, a survey by the Georgian Young Lawyers’ Association (GYLA), 1999, section on health care [Internal link]

[http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/\(httpDocuments\)/19DAA3A76F6E2EC1802570B7005901F7/\\$file/GYLA++IDPmonitoring.pdf](http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/(httpDocuments)/19DAA3A76F6E2EC1802570B7005901F7/$file/GYLA++IDPmonitoring.pdf)

Since 2006, the government has started to roll out a Health Insurance Package available to the poorest families – whether displaced or not. For more information, please see the Response Section.

PROPERTY, LIVELIHOODS, EDUCATION AND OTHER ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS

Land and Property

Privatisation of collective centres

Before independence, Georgia was under the Soviet regime of “propiska” housing rights, which provided tenancy, allowing occupancy on an indefinite basis and inheritance by members of the household, rather than ownership. From 1991 to 1992, based on a government resolution, privatisation of apartments was initiated. As of 2002, 90 percent of apartments had been privatised (**Dershem/Gurgenidze/Holtzman, November 2002, p.24**).

In 2004, Georgian President Saakashvili unveiled a large-scale privatisation plan that included several Tbilisi hotels housing IDPs from Abkhazia. The goal was to sell collective centres in prime locations such as hotels to private investors, while assisting IDPs to acquire private apartments. Civil society representatives told the UN Special Representative on the Human Rights of IDPs that they feared that vulnerable groups among IDPs might lose out in the process, in the absence of a comprehensive privatisation policy (**CHR, 22 March 2006**).

Thousands of IDPs had to move out from collective centres, or were evicted, often without alternative adequate housing being provided for (**NRC, July 2007**). Those could not buy their own apartment ended up living with relatives, or using the compensation money to rent an apartment. In interviews, many of the respondents whose collective centre had been privatised said that they had not been consulted prior to or during the process, and that privatisation had represented a second displacement. Following the changing of their residence, some IDPs were reported to live too far away to retain their jobs. Social networks, composed of neighbours, friends, relatives, employers, health care workers, etc., built since displacement were fractured or destroyed. Family budgets were further strained by the new expenses for electricity and water (**UNICEF/NRC, October 2006**).

In 2007, the UN Human Rights Committee stated that: “the Committee regrets the reported cases of forced eviction from collective centres in Tbilisi, Kutaisi and Adjara regions, without a court decision or agreement of the persons concerned, and without proper compensation and support by governmental agencies.” (**HRC, 15 November 2007, para.12**).

In 2009, the Georgian government announced a new privatisation programme under the responsibility of the Ministry of Refugees and Accommodation (MRA), under which IDPs could buy apartments they lived in in the collective centres. UNHCR said it was advocating for the suspension of the privatisation process until after consensus was reached with the concerned families on rehabilitation standards. UNHCR initiated a Working Group on privatisation with the Ministry of Justice, MRA and the Danish Refugee Council as well as Legal Aid NGOs every week (**UNCT in Georgia, 16 April 2009**).

Voucher system allows IDPs to acquire housing

In October 2005, the Ministry of Refugees and Accommodation (MRA), the city of Kutaisi and the Urban Institute (UI) signed a “Statement of Cooperation” to launch the “Housing Purchase Voucher Pilot Programme”. The one year programme was designed to provide some 130 displaced families with permanent housing. Vouchers were non-transferable (**Embassy of the United States in Georgia, 21 October 2005**).

Relevant law and analysis

IDPs legally settled/residing in (privatised) buildings: According to the Georgian Law on IDPs, Article 5(4), “IDPs shall not be expelled from their places of temporary residence unless: (a) a written agreement has been reached with IDPs [or] (b) [adequate alternative accommodation] is allocated...” While the owner of the building has primary responsibility for implementing the guarantees listed in Article 5(4), the Georgian Ministry of Refugees and Accommodation (MRA) has the general responsibility for securing the right of IDPs to a [and at their] place of temporary residence (Law of Georgia on IDPs, Articles 5.2, 5.3, 5.4). The Ministry of Economic Development (MoED) must “ensure that during the process of privatisation of those CC...the State guarantees [allocated in] article 5(4) are satisfied and the process of withdrawal of IDPs is realised through the rules considered by the indicated norms” (Decree 157). According to the Georgian Law on Privatisation, there is however no requirement to a) notify investors about IDP occupancy of the building; or b) give particular notice to residents of privatisation at any stage; or c) accord special rights of participation of IDPs in the privatisation process. As IDPs do not have property rights to their accommodation in collective centres, they have no “right” to compensation per se in law. Financial allocations therefore become a matter of public policy rather than based on legal requirements. In terms of MRA’s responsibility for allocating adequate alternative accommodation, this obligation is met by making “a good faith offer” (**NRC, July 2007**).

See also: Eurasianet, 22 August 2007, Property Rights Controversy dogs Georgia’s Privatization Campaign, by Paul Rimple [Internet]

<http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/insight/articles/eav082207a.shtml>

IDP property left in Abkhazia, South Ossetia and villages close to South Ossetia

2008 IDPs

Many IDPs from ethnic Georgian villages close to the South Ossetian administrative border lost their homes, their livestock, their vehicles and other property during the August 2008 conflict. IDPs described the widespread and deliberate burning of houses by “Ossetians”. International agencies estimate that some 300 to 500 houses in the area were deliberately burned and that about 2,000 houses were otherwise damaged during the conflict (**OSCE, November 2008**).

1990s IDPs

Before independence, Georgia was under the Soviet regime of “propiska” housing rights, which provided tenancy, allowing occupancy on an indefinite basis and inheritance by members of the household, rather than ownership. If a person was absent for over six months without a reason determined by the law, he or she could lose tenancy rights. Displacement was not considered a valid reason for absence. This housing code was abolished in Georgia, but is still applied in Abkhazia and South Ossetia. There were four basic scenarios of what happened with their housing after displacement:

a. Some IDPs fled so quickly that they did not even have time to take essential documents or these documents were burnt or lost. The old Soviet passport contained the 'propiska' stamp documenting their residency. Another important document proving their right to occupancy was the one titled, 'Forma #1.' To complicate this situation, some archives have been destroyed making it even more difficult to reconstruct residency. A number of these houses were either totally destroyed or arbitrarily occupied by other persons who later legalised their stay according to the Housing Code.

b. Some IDPs sold their property at a very low price. And, in many cases there were no legal documents showing the sale of the property.

c. Over time, some second-occupants have sold their legalised apartments to other people.

d. Finally, a number of houses were not destroyed or occupied. *However, there is no statistical data available on this issue.* (**Dershem/Gurgenidze/Holtzman, November 2002**).

My House programme for property left in Abkhazia

In order to document the ownership of Georgian IDPs to property left in Abkhazia, President Saakashvili started in February 2006 the process of registering all property IDPs had left in Abkhazia. The Ministry for Refugees and Accommodation (MRA) began implementing a 3 million Georgia Lari (then 1.69 million dollars) three-year IDP property registration project called “My House”. Based on cartography and commercial satellite photos, the government planned to inventory all such property and to issue certificate to original owners to protect property and inheritance rights (**ICG, 15 September 2006**).

Despite the absence of resolution to the Georgian-Abkhaz conflict, some 45,000 IDPs have progressively returned to Gali district, Abkhazia, either seasonally or permanently, and cultivate land there (for more information, see Return section, Documented returns, settled locally and settled elsewhere).

In 2002, the Georgian Parliament passed a resolution on “the unlawful misappropriation of state property and refugees and internally displaced persons’ private property in Abkhazia [Internet]

http://www.brookings.edu/fp/projects/idp/Georgia_resolution.pdf

Restitution law for property left in South Ossetia

A “***Law of Georgia on Property Restitution and Compensation on the territory of Georgia for the Victims of Conflict in Former South Ossetia District***” (URL: http://www3.brookings.edu/fp/projects/idp/Georgia_PropertyLaw.pdf) was passed by the Georgian Parliament in December 2006. In the absence of cooperation with South Ossetian authorities, the law has not been implemented.

For more information on housing and property restitution in Georgia, please see the following publications (not available online):

Report on the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement and the Law of Georgia, by Giorgi Chkeidze and Konstantin Korkelia, in: The Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement and the Law of the South Caucasus – Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Studies in Transnational Legal Policy, No. 34, The American Society on International Law, The Brookings Institution SAIS Project on Internal Displacement, 2003

Housing and Property Restitution in the Republic of Georgia, by Zurab Burduli and Anna Dolidze, in: Returning Home: Housing and Property Restitution Rights of Refugees and Displaced Persons, edited by Scott Leckie, Transnational Publishers, 2003

Primary education and educational programmes

Separate schools for some IDPs

Almost all IDP children are enrolled in primary and secondary education which is free for all children in Georgia. A particular issue in Georgia is the existence of separate schools for some of the displaced children. The so-called “IDP schools” – or more specifically the Abkhazian schools in exile – under the Abkhazian Ministry of Education and Culture in Exile, were opened in 1994-98. Many of these schools were located near the collective centres where IDPs were living, in order to create equal opportunities for IDP students to enjoy full access to education. As of March 2009, 3,000 displaced children continued to go to separate IDP schools, many of them connected to collective centres. Some regions, such as Gori, had no separate schools, Ajara had one and Imereti a few, and Samegrelo mostly had a separate education system. “IDP schools” are under the responsibility of Abkhazian Ministry of Education and Culture in Exile, but based on national standards for secondary education in Georgia, established by the Ministry of Education and Science (NRC, 31 March 2009; NRC, July 2007; UNA, 2000).

Schools Physical Conditions

Due to severe under-funding, the conditions of IDP schools are very poor and continue to deteriorate. The majority of both IDP kindergartens and schools are in dilapidated buildings in urgent need of repair. Children are accommodated in buildings not primarily constructed for being schools. Insufficient facilities, education material and even proper hygienic conditions hinder access to quality education for displaced children, which in turn may influence negatively their future prospects for higher education and employment (NRC, July 2007).

Teaching Quality

Some of the schools moved with their whole staff, for example in Zugdidi. Other schools in collective centres (or near collective centres) employed IDP teachers and staff from different parts

of Abkhazia (**Matiashvili, 2004, p.16**). Teachers of IDP schools had little opportunities for training and generally use outdated methods inherited from the Soviet system. The salaries of IDP teachers were lower than the salaries of teachers in general schools, as IDP teachers were unable to participate in the attestation in 1996, which served as the basis for increasing teacher salaries in the country. In general, IDP schools had lower educational standards and were less involved in the educational reforms taking place in the country (**NRC, July 2007; Matiashvili, 2004, pp.7-8**).

Socio-economic factors affecting school attendance and education quality

The majority of IDP children in collective centres live in a confined space, where they are deprived of minimum conditions necessary for study, which has a very negative impact on their achievements. In addition, according to a 2006 UNICEF/NRC survey, the education of displaced children is adversely affected by: the lack of socially acceptable or weather specific clothing; transportation costs; costs of books and other materials; confined living space in collective centres, making for a difficult study environment; absences due to the need to provide economically for one self or family; shame due to not being able to provide requested school fees; inability to access classes in computers and English outside of school (**UNICEF/NRC, October 2006**). Due to financial constraints, IDPs in collective centres were also found to be less likely to attend university than the general population, according to an IFRC report (**UNA, 2000**). IDPs, most likely, are at a disadvantage when it comes to having "connections" and being able to offer "bribes" which often accompany the admission process (**Dershem/Gurgenidze/Holtzman, November 2002, p.7**).

Psychological state of IDP children

Symptoms of depression were reported among IDP children, which have negative implications on their education. According to IDP teachers, psychological problems are observed even among children who have not been directly affected by the war, but have been influenced by the emotional state of their parents. IDP children, like their parents, often feel isolated and excluded, hate to be labelled as IDPs and experience difficulties with integrating in the broader communities. A high level of absenteeism and illiteracy was noted among IDP children (**Matiashvili, 2004, pp.7-8; NRC, July 2007**). At the same time, while IDP schools seem to contribute to the isolation of displaced children from the local children, they are often preferred by displaced children as a way to escape the prejudice they feel (**UNICEF/NRC, October 2006**).

Why have IDP schools been maintained for so long?

A main factor for keeping the IDP schools for so many years was, according to a 2004 study, to retain the employment of teachers from Abkhazia. Indeed, teachers resisted school desegregation reportedly for fear for their employment, and out of concern that they would not be competitive enough in an integrated education system. Employees of the Abkhazian Ministry of Education and Culture in Exile, were also reported to be afraid to lose their *raison d'être* with change. In addition, for years, some IDP parents maintained that IDP teachers understood their children better and were more sensitive to their needs and problems. Education by teachers from Abkhazia was also seen as a way to preserve cultural values and traditions (**Matiashvili, 2004, pp.7-8**).

Already in 2004, an *OCHA IDP Education Profile Review in Georgia* concluded by the need to integrate the IDP schools into the general educational system and for IDP schools to participate in educational reform (**OCHA, 19 November 2004**).

The State Strategy for IDPs adopted in February 2007 calls for closing down the segregated schools and for integrating IDP-children and youth into the national educational system (**Government of Georgia, 2 February 2007**).

See also "[Monitoring of Legal and Actual Status of Internally Displaced Persons in Georgia](#)", section 2 on Education (pp. 10-14), report by the Georgian Young Lawyer Association [[Internal link](#)]

[http://www.internal-](http://www.internal-displacement.org/idmc/website/countries.nsf/AllDocWeb/6FC60D63BD2A6CE0C12569E3002EFCF0/$file/GYLA+-+IDPmonitoring.pdf)

[displacement.org/idmc/website/countries.nsf/AllDocWeb/6FC60D63BD2A6CE0C12569E3002EFCF0/\\$file/GYLA+-+IDPmonitoring.pdf](http://www.internal-displacement.org/idmc/website/countries.nsf/AllDocWeb/6FC60D63BD2A6CE0C12569E3002EFCF0/$file/GYLA+-+IDPmonitoring.pdf)

Disruption of education for displaced children who returned to Gali, Abkhazia

In Upper Gali, as in the rest of Abkhazia, Abkhazian and Russian are the required language of instruction in schools. De facto authorities accept teaching of Georgian only as a foreign language. Most of the children who returned to Gali are ethnic Georgian, and they usually have poor skills in Abkhazian and Russian language, which creates difficulties in acquiring the necessary knowledge for higher education or employment (**NRC, July 2007**). During a mission to Georgia, the Special Representative on the Human Rights of IDPs was informed that following an August 2005 order from the Head of the de facto Dept of Education in Gali district, de facto Abkhaz authorities had tried to restrict or eliminate the use of Georgian language in public schools. De facto authorities then told the Special Representative that this policy was not directed against the Georgian language, but aimed at preventing books which conveyed a distorted account of Georgian and Abkhaz history. He was informed by other sources that the withdrawal of teaching material and of some Georgian-speaking teachers had led to the shortage of material and teachers and to an interruption of the regular functioning of local schools or impacting on the quality of education (**CHR, 22 March 2006**).

Over the past years, the issue of Georgian language in schools has become a matter of growing concern in the Gali district of Abkhazia. Teachers in Gali said in March 2009 that they were coming under pressure from local officials to drop all Georgian-language instruction and give up their standard textbooks. They expressed concerns about the fate of students, for whom school is a critical link to Georgian identity. While the Abkhaz constitution offers nominal protection to ethnic minorities to receive education in their native languages, Abkhaz laws also place formal limits on school hours spent in non-Russian instruction. The Abkhaz head of the Gali administration said that students were studying the same way they had before, and that reports saying otherwise were not true. In January 2009, OSCE's high commissioner on national minorities travelled to Abkhazia and said he found the situation "difficult" for Georgian parents eager for their children to be educated in their mother tongue (**RFE/RL, 22 March 2009**).

In lower Gali, however, ten Georgian schools are in operation, according to Georgian authorities (**ICG, 18 January 2007**).

The closure of the administrative border between Abkhazia and Georgia proper has also disrupted the education for students from Gali who were attending school across the border (**OSCE, November 2008**).

Work and livelihood opportunities and coping strategies

Livelihoods of women: before and after displacement

Before the war, Abkhazia was considered the richest region within Georgia, with its very fertile lands accounting for much of Georgia's agricultural output, and its beautiful coastline attracting tourists from the Soviet Union. Many of the women who fled the region were trained professionals, who had worked as teachers, economists, and in manufacturing and healthcare. Seventy-two percent of IDP women surveyed had been fully employed prior to the war. Over 21 percent of displaced women had completed higher education degrees, and 31 percent had completed vocational or professional schooling. After the war, displaced women and men have struggled under the massive weight of poverty and displacement. Faced with such very difficult conditions, displaced women have quietly taken the lead in providing basic income and food for their families, and according to a 1998 survey by the Women's Study Center of Tbilisi State University, 72 percent of displaced women have become the main breadwinner of their families. Many sell food, alcohol and cigarettes in street kiosks, crowded bazaars or street corners, as part of the informal economy. Corruption, extortion and high taxes were reported to impede the transformation of informal trading into formal employment. In any case, informal traders generally had to pay bribes to the police, local administration and tax collectors. Meanwhile, in eastern Georgia, women make up the vast majority of the seasonal agricultural force on tea plantation and corn farming, or go to Gali, Abkhazia, to tend to family farms abandoned during the conflict (**Buck, September 2000, pp.7-9**).

IDPs employment compared to the general population

The August 2008 war with Russia and the global financial crisis have seriously undermined Georgia's economy. Declines in growth affect the most marginalised, including IDPs (**ICG, 26 November 2008**).

Employment rate and type

According to an UNHCR assessment, the level of education of IDPs is generally much lower than the local population and those who are highly qualified are often unemployed or under-employed (**UNHCR, October 2008**).

A 2005 World Bank study found that between 1991 and 1999, rates of unemployment among IDPs were significantly higher than among the general population, due to the following factors: a) displacement from their former employment; b) displacement to a collapsed economy with few employment opportunities; c) uncertainty about the length of displacement. Many IDPs were able to continue working for the governmental structures of Abkhazia, many of which remained intact and have since then been considered "in exile". It also found that since 2002 the rate of employment for IDPs had been increasing and had even surpassed the employment rate of the general population, due to an improved general employment situation, and the need to provide for one's family. The study did not find any barriers or obstacles for IDPs in terms of obtaining employment. In general, IDPs had the same chance to be employed as the general population when having the same level of education, skills and experience. However, IDPs had less "quality" employment, i.e. were holding fewer managerial positions. It also found that IDPs were predominately employed in the lower paying government sphere, while the general population was mostly working in the private sector. Most IDPs did not have the material or financial resources to start a small business, lacking collateral to obtain even a small credit. The study also noted that due to the destruction or fragmentation of their social capital since displacement, IDPs had limited access to information about scarce employment opportunities (**WB, May 2005**).

In 2002, a previous World Bank study noted that rate of unemployment was greater among IDPs than the general population, ranging from 40 percent unemployment rate among IDPs in collective centres, compared to 20 percent for the general population. Government transfers,

although small and paid sporadically, are one source of needed cash income. 80-90 percent of IDPs received benefits based on their IDP status, as well as the old-age pension, veterans, multi-child, and multi-child, subsidised utilities, etc, compared to 40-50 percent of the general population (**Dershem/Gurgenidze/Holtzman, November 2002, pp.5-6**).

IDPs have less productive assets than host population

According to an UNHCR assessment, there are insufficient opportunities for income generation for IDPs in Georgia, and information among IDPs that opportunities exist (**UNHCR, October 2008**). Access to land and to productive assets in general, is one of the main differences between IDPs and the general population. While most households in Georgia rely on subsistence agriculture due to the collapse of the economy, most surveys found that IDPs in collective centres have little access in which to produce food, or potentially, a surplus to sell. IDPs in collective centres are three and a half times less likely to have access to land than the local population, and twice less than IDPs in private accommodations. And for the few IDPs that reported having access to land, it was generally quite small; approximately 400 square meters on average reported by IFRC, which is three times less than the amount of land used by IDPs living in private accommodations and six times less than the host population. IFRC and Save the Children surveys also found that it was less likely for IDPs in collective centres to own equipment (car, tractors, etc.), livestock and poultry than IDPs in private accommodations, who themselves owned less equipment, livestock and poultry than the host population (**Dershem/Gurgenidze/Holtzman, November 2002, pp.5-6**).

IDP location and type of accommodation impact on self-reliance

In 2003, it was noted that an IDP settlement called Jvari in Samagrelo - a former settlement for construction workers - did not offer arable land, employment or petty trade opportunities. In Tsqaltubo and Borjomi, IDPs were found to inhabit the areas' main productive assets, causing economic stagnation, degradation of infrastructure and tensions with the host population. Another example is IDPs from Gagra district in Abkhazia who were the first to arrive in Tbilisi, and in many cases found better housing, compared to IDPs from Gali, many of whom live close to the conflict zone and shuttle to plots in Abkhazia, and are prone to insecurity (**Sumbadze & Tarkhan-Mouravi, July 2003, p.31**).

Relations between IDPs and host communities

IFRC studies in 1999, and Save the Children 2000 to 2002 studies found that as the size of collective centres increased in a community, the relations between IDPs and the general population were described by both groups as becoming less friendly (**Dershem/Gurgenidze/Holtzman, November 2002, p.36**).

Other references:

The International Federation of the Red Cross conducted a survey of the IDP population in 1999. IFRC published this survey in November 1999 under the title "Internally Displaced Persons: A Socio-Economic Survey".

Save the Children conducted a survey on an annual basis from 2000 to 2002. This survey was designed to provide comparable data of IDPs living in collective centres and local households in the regions of Samegrelo and Imereti, Western Georgia.

Risky work of some displaced children

According to a 2006 UNICEF/NRC study, some IDP children are working in potentially hazardous jobs, such as collecting and moving scrap metal, working in construction and crossing into the conflict areas to harvest crops. Children who cross to Gali District, Abkhazia, to earn a living,

endure multiple risks including forced recruitment into the Abkhazian army, forced labour, fear of abuse and financial extortion. It reported that other youths had turned to illegal activities such as committing robberies, selling drugs or smuggling goods, such as cigarettes. Some boys join gangs, in order to gain access to social networks and access to resources of livelihood **(UNICEF/NRC, October 2006)**.

FAMILY LIFE, PARTICIPATION, ACCESS TO JUSTICE AND OTHER CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS

Documentation and citizenship

Coping with the loss of identity documents or new laws affecting identity

Many IDPs from Abkhazia lost their personal identity documents when they fled in the early 1990s. They have to obtain new documents through courts, as the archives in Abkhazia containing birth and death records burnt down during the conflict (**IDMC, May 2006**).

During displacement

For many IDPs, IDP cards have become a main identity document. As of 1997, 99 percent of IDPs claimed to be registered with the Ministry of Refugees and Accommodation, and possess IDP cards, according to an NRC survey (**NRC, 1997, p.17**).

Issues specific to IDPs who returned to Gali

In October 2005, de facto Abkhazian authorities adopted the “Law of the Republic of Abkhazia on Citizenship of the Republic of Abkhazia”. Certain parts of the “law” – which has no international significance – contain provisions discriminating against ethnic Georgian returning IDPs. For example, the “law” makes the granting of citizenship conditional upon residence in Abkhazia soon after the ceasing of hostilities, when many Georgians had fled the region. It also grants the possibility of dual citizenship to ethnic Abkhaz, while stating that non-Abkhaz have a right to obtain Russian citizenship only. This clearly prohibits ethnic Georgians to keep their Georgian passport while acquiring Abkhaz “citizenship”. The UN Representative on the Human Rights of IDPs stated that the “law” may be seen as creating a hostile atmosphere towards returnees and thus constitute a psychological obstacle to return. Abkhaz officials offered different accounts to the Representative as for the impact of the “law”, ranging from an exclusion from the right to vote and the obligation to perform military service, to the possible non-acknowledgement of their legal identity by administrative authorities, and their treatment as foreigners including the possibility of expulsion (**CHR, 22 March 2006**).

As of the end of 2008, most ethnic Georgians in Gali had not obtained Abkhaz citizenship. According to many accounts – both from local and international sources – it is necessary to renounce the Georgian citizenship in order to obtain the Abkhaz one. Giving up their Georgian citizenship would mean not to be eligible to receive pensions and other government benefits. It would make the visit of relatives in Georgia and attending Georgian universities very difficult. Some ethnic Georgians were also reported to be reluctant to obtain Abkhaz citizenship for fear of being seen as traitors to Georgia (**OSCE, November 2008**).

Voting and participation in public affairs

Voting and participation in public affairs

In 2001 and 2003, amendments to the law gave IDPs the same right to vote and stand for local and parliamentary elections as other citizens. IDPs communities and civil society played a crucial role for the review of national electoral legislation, and for ensuring that this process includes attention to IDP voting rights. In August 2001, the Georgian Parliament adopted “the Organic Law on the Unified election Code of Georgia”, which allowed IDPs to participate in local elections according to their current place of residence. Further amendments to the Code in August 2003 allowed IDPs to vote for the member of Parliament representing the district in which they were currently residing (**Brookings-SAIS Project on Internal Displacement, 5 November 2004, pp.35, 37, 38**). The international election observation mission of the OSCE noted that the Code had incorporated many recommendations made by the OSCE/ODIHR and the Council of Europe’s Venice Commission to realise IDPs’ electoral rights (**OSCE, 28 January 2004, p.6**). IDPs first exercised their political rights, both to elect and be elected in December 2003 (**OCHA, December 2003, p.9**). However, IDP voters were not included systematically in lists, and many IDPs also failed to exercise their right to vote (**OSCE, 28 January 2004, p.10**). A survey on IDP voting commissioned by UNDP at the time, and undertaken by a consortium of Georgian research organisations found that strong feelings of alienation and lack of faith in “the improvement of the situation in the country through the elections” could partly explain the low turnout (**BCG Research, May 2004, p.5**).

Until then, IDPs’ rights had been restricted for political reasons, according to then Special Representative on IDPs Francis Deng. It was feared that if IDPs were to have a stake in the political processes in the areas where they resided, this would encourage their local integration and they would consequently lose the impetus to return to the territories of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. Another concern which was raised was that in a number of districts, IDPs outnumbered the local population and could therefore determine the outcome of the elections (**Deng, 10 June 2003**).

Until late 2004, Abkhazia and the IDP community were represented in the parliament by eight MPs, who had been elected in 1992. In September 2004, an article allowing these MPs to stay in the parliament “until the jurisdiction of Georgia is fully restored in Abkhazia and necessary conditions are established for elections of Members of the Parliament of Georgia” was abolished (article 127 of the 2001 election code). IDPs now do not have their own political parties, and IDP issues are rarely featured in political party programmes (**ICG, 15 September 2006**).

With the support of the Danish Refugee Council, some collective centres in the city of Kutaisi have chosen a representative who is registered as a “lobbyist”, in accordance with Georgian legislation which gives registered people the privilege to have access to parliament structures. Chosen representatives collect IDPs requests from collective centres and then advocates for IDPs’ rights to the Parliament. The main issue is the privatisation of collective centres (**IDMC, May 2006**).

Right to information and participation, including women

IDPs advocate for their rights

IDPs have created several NGOs to advocate for their rights and provide assistance. In 2002, a Caucasus-wide coalition of IDP NGOs, CRINGO, was set up (see www.cringo.net). The Abkhazian government in exile has a TV station than transmits weekly, a radio station, and a newspaper (the Voice of Abkhazia) with a small circulation (Official website: <http://www.abkhazia.gov.ge/index.php?lng=eng>).

According to a study by Transparency International, the main source of information for IDPs in Georgia is television and word of mouth. The study found a lack of clear structure to which addressing questions and asking for support. As a result, IDPs either fall into the role of passive aid recipients, or at the contrary contact multiple structures with the same problem, such as local IDP leaders, local government representatives from their villages of origin or the area where they are now, different ministries, etc. (TI, 3 April 2009).

According to a number of reports, the Georgian government has failed to provide adequate information to many people displaced since the August 2008 crisis on its plans for their future, and has not consulted them on planning and management of durable solutions for them. Also according to reports, IDPs complained that they had not chosen voluntarily to return to villages on the Georgian side of the administrative border with South Ossetia, but had to return (see for example OSCE, November 2008).

IDMC does not have access to recent information on the participation of women to political processes. Information from 2000 highlights the lack of displaced women's participation in such processes. See:

[Buck, Thomas, September 2000, Aftermath: Effects of Conflict on Internally Displaced Women in Georgia, Working Paper No. 310, \(Washington: Center for Development Information and Evaluation, U.S. Agency for International Development\)](#)

Internet: http://pdf.dec.org/pdf_docs/pnacj947.pdf

PROTECTION OF SPECIAL CATEGORIES OF IDPS (AGE, GENDER, DIVERSITY)

Gender- Women and Men; Impact of displacement on gender identity and roles

Gender- Women and Men; Impact of displacement on gender identity and roles

According to a 2003 report, IDPs in Georgia often have conflicting sense of security and identity. On one hand, the feeling insecure in a new social and physical environment, losing cultural values and traditions, pushes IDPs to cling to their community, live close to one another in collective centres. On the other hand, IDP identity often evokes in them a defensive reaction, and to be called an IDP is perceived by many as an offensive label aimed to marginalise them in society (**Sumbadze & Tarkhan-Mouravi, July 2003, pp.26-27**).

While many women had university or professional degrees prior to displacement, most had to resort to petty trade in the informal economy during displacement. They are reported to often be the main breadwinner of their families, and to have adapted much more readily than men to the extreme stresses of the life of an IDP. Still, these skilled workers are reported to be rarely proud of their activities, and the large majority made barely enough to make ends meet as of 2000. Traditional gender roles have also often been altered in the countryside. Women make up the vast majority of the seasonal agricultural work force in Western Georgia.

While many women are the main breadwinner of their families, this had not led to a growing sense of empowerment within the family or IDP communities in general, as of the year 2000. On the contrary, gender roles had remained clearly delineated, as women had to perform traditional household duties of feeding and caring for their children, even after long days trading. Men were found to spend much of their time in and around their households, but did little to help in chores traditionally reserved for women in Georgian society. The double burden for women of both caring and providing for their families left little time for rest, and contributed to growing levels of stress diagnosed in displaced women (**Buck, September 2000, pp.7-9**). Displacement was reported to have impacted negatively on men as well though. Frustration and depression were reported to be high among displaced men, due to their loss of function as main breadwinner and provider, reflected in increased mortality and morbidity. Elder men were reported to be frequently in worse psychological condition due to feeling of guilt coming from the time they appeared to be unable to protect their homes and families during the conflict (**Sumbadze & Tarkhan-Mouravi, July 2003, p.31**).

Boys, girls and adolescents

Impact of displacement on children's identity

As of 2003, a quarter of displaced children had either been born out of Abkhazia or were under 6 years old when they had to flee, and therefore only had a vague understanding of where their

family came from. In their parents' mind, along with negative images of the conflict, there were memories of friendship and good relations, which the younger generation did not experience (**Sumbadze & Tarkhan-Mouravi, July 2003, p.30**). In addition, according to a 2006 UNICEF/NRC survey on the protection and livelihood situation of displaced children and youth living in collective centres in Georgia, IDP children in Georgia face social stigma, leading to feelings of inferiority and further isolation (**UNICEF/NRC, October 2006**).

Indigenous peoples, minorities, peasants, pastoralists and other groups with a special dependency on and attachment to their lands

Pressure on ethnic Georgians returnees in Gali, Abkhazia

For years, there have been reports of pressure against the 45,000 ethnic Georgian IDPs who returned to Gali. In April 2009, the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities urged the de facto authorities to put an end to the pressure being exercised on the Georgian population in Gali through the limitation of their education rights, compulsory taking of Abkhazian passports, forced conscription into the Abkhaz military forces and restrictions on their freedom of movement (**OSCE, 14 April 2009**).

DURABLE SOLUTIONS (RETURN, LOCAL INTEGRATION, SETTLEMENT ELSEWHERE IN THE COUNTRY)

Documented returns, settled locally and settled elsewhere

Documented returns, settled locally and settled elsewhere

IDPs displaced in August 2008 - Return & Resettlement

Most of the displaced who had fled their homes in Georgia proper in August 2008, were able to return home over the next months. Some 17,000 people from South Ossetia have left collective centres for new settlements built by the government with the assistance of the international community (**UN CT in Georgia, 23 March 2009**).

According to various accounts, some people displaced in August 2008 were pressured to return to their home villages close to the South Ossetian administrative border (**OSCE, November 2008**). According to these villagers, authorities said that they could not allow the villages to be “depopulated”. An employee of the Ministry for Refugees and Accommodation for the region of Kvemo-Kartli stated that IDPs were no longer eligible for assistance where they were, but that aid would now be given out in the return areas. However, the first deputy minister assured that persons refusing to go back to their homes because of a lack of security guarantees would continue to receive whatever aid they are entitled to. Interviewed IDPs said that their villages remain dangerous, while state officials say that the areas are safe (**IWPR, 27 February 2009**).

IDPs displaced in the 1990s- Return to Gali district, Abkhazia

From the mid-1990s to the mid-2000s, some 45,000 ethnic Georgians were estimated to have returned spontaneously to the Gali district of Abkhazia, out of a total of 79,000 displaced from the district (**UN Country Team in Georgia, 28 February 2006**). According to many observers, IDPs go back and forth between Gali and Western Georgia, particularly Zugdidi. Those remaining in Gali are said to often rely economically on relatives in Western Georgia. Crossing the administrative border has become however much more dangerous since the August 2008 conflict due to restrictions by authorities (*see response section, humanitarian access*).

IDPs displaced in the 1990s- Return to South Ossetia

From the mid-1990s to the mid-2000s, returns tended to strengthen the dominance of majority populations rather than promote multi-ethnic coexistence. Few minorities chose to regain their pre-war residences. Between 1997 and 2005, UNHCR reported that it had assisted 1,709 returnee families (5,735 individuals, both IDPs and refugees) to South Ossetia (**UN Country Team in Georgia, 30 November 2005**).

The UN Special Representative on the Human Rights of IDPs noted in 2006 that he had visited a settlement of returning IDPs in South Ossetia, where houses had been provided by the humanitarian community. Due to insufficient resources, houses had not been adequately insulated against cold weather, and did not have water or sanitary facilities (**CHR, 22 March 2006**).

Resettlement (locally and elsewhere)

Following the August 2008 crisis, the Georgian government resettled with international donor support some 17,000 people who had been recently displaced into individual family cottages, in

three regions of Georgia, i.e. Shida Kartli, Kvemo Kartli and Mtskheta-Mtianeti (**UNCT in Georgia, 23 March 2009**). Some IDPs have complained about the lack of clarity of the criteria used to allocate these houses, as well as the location of the houses, away from basic amenities and in areas with few economic prospects (**CoE, 28 January 2009**).

Prior to the August 2008 crisis, there was anecdotal information on the permanent resettlement of ethnic Ossets from Georgia to South Ossetia, and also of ethnic Georgian from Abkhazia to Georgia, but IDMC does not have access to comprehensive information on IDP resettlement in Georgia proper or the breakaway territories of Abkhazia and South Ossetia.

See for example: **United Nations Commission on Human Rights (CHR)**, 25 January 2001, Report of the Representative of the Secretary-General on internally displaced persons, Mr. Francis Deng, submitted pursuant to Commission on Human Rights resolution 2000/53, Addendum, Profiles in displacement: Georgia, E/CN.4/2001/5/Add.4, para. 105-107 [Internet] [http://www.unhcr.ch/Huridocda/Huridoca.nsf/\(Symbol\)/E.CN.4.2001.5.Add.4.En?Opendocument](http://www.unhcr.ch/Huridocda/Huridoca.nsf/(Symbol)/E.CN.4.2001.5.Add.4.En?Opendocument)

For a thorough discussion on return options, please see:
Prospects for Return of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) to Abkhazia in Georgia, Background Paper by Inger Christine Svendsen, Tbilisi, Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), November 2005 [Internet] [http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/\(httpDocuments\)/C97FE3315475FCE8C125713E004DBD2C/\\$file/Abkhazia+NRC+Nov+05.pdf](http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/(httpDocuments)/C97FE3315475FCE8C125713E004DBD2C/$file/Abkhazia+NRC+Nov+05.pdf)

Prospects for and obstacles to voluntary return, local settlement and settlement elsewhere

Review of obstacles to return and to local settlement

Obstacles to return to Abkhazia

Return to Abkhazia – other than to the Gali district – has been ruled out for now by de facto authorities. While 45,000 ethnic Georgians are estimated to have spontaneously returned to the Gali district, there are obstacles to further returns, including a very poor economic situation, destroyed infrastructure and inadequate basic services, as well as continuing criminality, poor law enforcement, a bar on the return of former fighters, and the unwillingness to live under Abkhaz de facto rule. According to the UN Special Representative on the human rights of IDPs, “the scarcity of resources to rehabilitate or reconstruct houses in the Gali district is said to be among the main concerns of IDPs with regard to return.” Most industries and State farms have been heavily damaged or destroyed, and livelihoods – both urban and rural are now based on subsistence farming (**ICG, 15 September 2006; CHR, 22 March 2006**).

Obstacles to return for IDPs displaced by Georgian-South Ossetian conflict

The Council of Europe noted that the villages in South Ossetia under Georgian control until 2008 had been razed to the ground with the exception of a handful of houses, and that the intention to cleanse the area of ethnic Georgians was clear (**CoE, 29 April 2009**). Another major obstacle to return is the fact that large areas are full of bombs, shells, unexploded ordnances and other dangerous remnants of the August 2008 conflict (**CoE, 8 September 2008**).

Prior to the August 2008 conflict, both ethnic Georgians from South Ossetia and ethnic Ossets from Georgia proper generally named the occupancy of houses as the main reason for not being able to return (**Sumbadze & Tarkhan-Mouravi, July 2003**). In addition, the UN Special Representative on the Human Rights of IDPs noted in 2006 that “the poor economic situation in the Tskhinvali Region/South Ossetia has deterred many from returning home as opportunities for income generation and basic services are largely absent” (**CHR, 22 March 2006**).

Obstacles to local integration and resettlement

In Georgia proper, at least 120,000 IDPs live in cramped “temporary” conditions in collective centres, and due to the political stalemate, the majority of these temporary shelters have turned into permanent residences. With the passing years, returning home has become more and more of a distant dream, and as a result, frustration has been building up among IDPs. Many are reported to feel living nowhere: neither properly accommodated in their adopted communities, nor with any realistic hope of a return to their former lives (**UNDP, 2004**).

The UN Special Representative on IDPs noted in 2003 that in Georgia and other countries of the South Caucasus ethnic and external factors foster a general attitude of sympathy and solidarity with the displaced. For years though, the government’s pursuit of the goal of return, which is also shared by the overwhelming majority of IDPs in Georgia, was “so absolute as to deny displaced persons the ability to enjoy their full rights as citizens and lead productive lives in the interim.” (**Deng, 10 June 2003**).

Support for return integration and reintegration

National

IDPs’ wishes

The overwhelming majority of IDPs who met with the UN Special Representative on the Human Rights of IDPs expressed their wish to return, whether return would in all likelihood be possible in the near future or not (**HRC, 13 February 2009**).

For personal accounts of IDPs resettled in Gori, see :

IWPR, 22 December 2008, Georgia: Uneasy calm on South Ossetian border [Internet]

<http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/rwb.nsf/db900sid/RMOI-7ML46Z?OpenDocument&rc=3&cc=geo>

The Georgian government and the 2008 IDPs

The Georgian government offered durable housing solutions to around 18,000 people, and financial compensation to almost 4,000.

According to a report commissioned by the OSCE, some IDPs appear to have been pressured by Georgian authorities to return to their homes close to the South Ossetian administrative border before conditions were in place to guarantee their security or an adequate standard of living. It also found that in most instances, IDPs had not been adequately consulted on planning for their futures in regard to durable solutions. Returned villagers whose homes were damaged or destroyed during the conflict face particularly difficult conditions (**OSCE, November 2008**).

The UN Special Representative on the Human Rights of IDPs reported that many of the IDPs whom he met had expressed their frustration at the lack of detailed information about government proposals and the different options available to them. The Representative subsequently raised with the government the issue of the need to provide detailed information on the eligibility criteria for determining the allocation of housing (**HRC, 13 February 2009**).

As of May 2009, some 12,500 people displaced since August 2008 were still residing in collective centres or temporary private accommodation (**CoE, 12 May 2009**).

The Georgian government and the 1990s IDPs

The Georgian government has reiterated year by year the necessity for IDPs to return to their homes, and for the territories of Abkhazia and South Ossetia to be under Georgian control. See for example:

[Saakashvili vows to secure IDPs return to Abkhazia in months](http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/RWB.NSF/db900SID/SHES-79DSQD?OpenDocument), **United Nations Association of Georgia**, 28 November 2007 [Internet]
<http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/RWB.NSF/db900SID/SHES-79DSQD?OpenDocument>

The Georgian government has done little to support spontaneous IDP return to Gali, Abkhazia. Some senior figures were reported to be categorically against return until Gali is under government's control and to be critical of international help for returnees (**ICG, 18 January 2007**).

De facto Abkhaz authorities on 2008 and 1990s IDPs

The vast majority of the inhabitants of upper Kodori Valley left their homes in August 2008. According to the Abkhaz de facto local administration, 172 inhabitants remained from the winter 2008/2009. The authorities announced that all the local population, estimated in 2002 at up to 2,000, could return if the displaced persons obtained Abkhaz "passports" and gave up their Georgian citizenship (**UNSC, 3 February 2009**).

In March 1999, de facto Abkhaz authorities unilaterally declared their acceptance of the return of IDPs and refugees to Gali. However, they told to the Special Representative on the Human Rights of IDPs that return in safety and dignity to areas beyond the Gali district could not be ensured for ethnic Georgian returnees. In October 2005, de facto Abkhazian authorities adopted the "Law of the Republic of Abkhazia on Citizenship of the Republic of Abkhazia". Certain parts of the "law" – which has no international significance – contain provisions discriminating against ethnic Georgian returning IDPs. The UN Representative on the Human Rights of IDPs stated that the "law" may be seen as creating a hostile atmosphere towards returnees and thus constitute a psychological obstacle to return (**CHR, 22 March 2006**).

De facto Abkhaz authorities repeatedly said that the return of Georgian IDPs to Abkhazia apart from Gali was impossible. In January 2006, the de facto Foreign Minister of Abkhazia, Sergey Shamba said in an interview with a Russian news agency that "in the current situation of refugees in other parts of Abkhazia [apart of Gali district] will trigger renewal of violence, ethnic conflicts and consequently to Georgian-Abkhaz war" (**UN Association of Georgia, 10 January 2006**). In February 2007, Shamba's successor, Sergey Bagapsh, also said that the return to Georgian IDPs to the entire territory of Abkhazia was impossible now and "could lead to new bloodshed and consequently to a new Georgian-Abkhaz war" (**Civil Georgia, 17 February 2007**).

De facto South Ossetian authorities on the 2008 IDPs

Following the August 2008 crisis, South Ossetian authorities first said they did not intend to let the Georgian return to the destroyed villages in South Ossetia. Soon after, they changed their position and assured the UN High Commissioner for Refugees and the Human Rights Commissioner of the Council of Europe that they were committed to the right of return, including for ethnic Georgians who fled during the hostilities, and that they would face no discrimination and have their security fully guaranteed (**HRW, 23 January 2009**). In practice, ethnic Georgians have not been able to return to live in South Ossetia. However, some IDPs reported that they had been able to return briefly to their homes with the help of Russian soldiers to look for missing relatives (**OSCE, November 2008**).

International

United Nations

In numerous reports to the UN Security Council on the situation in Georgia, the UN Secretary-General expressed the UN support to the return of IDPs to their homes in safety and dignity.

On April 4, 1994, a *Quadripartite Agreement on the Voluntary Return of Refugees and Displaced Persons* (<http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/pdfid/3ae6b31a90.pdf>), which was signed in Moscow by Abkhazia, Georgia, Russia and the UNHCR. According to the Quadripartite agreement, the Parties reaffirmed their “willingness to create conditions for the voluntary, safe and dignified return of displaced persons to their permanent places of residence in all regions of Abkhazia”, expressed their “desire [...] to cooperate with each other to achieve full observance of the principles and safeguards governing voluntary repatriation” and agreed to guarantee “security and living conditions in the areas of return” before implementing repatriation operations. The Agreement obliges the Parties to ensure that returnees will be protected from harassment, that they have their expired identity and residence documents extended and their lost property restituted or, if not possible, will be duly compensated, to which end the establishment of a property claims mechanism was envisaged.

A Quadripartite Commission was established under the Agreement to implement its provisions. It devised a repatriation plan, also endorsed by the four parties, which called for the repatriation of IDPs in stages, starting with the people who had fled Gali. It included, among other features, an electronic inventory of all potential returnees, the provision of materials for home reconstruction, a media campaign to inform populations on both sides of the conflict, and a controversial prior review process whereby Abkhaz authorities reserved the right to screen potential returnees, excluding anyone who had taken up arms on the Georgian side (i.e. the majority of able-bodied men). An exclusionary clause in the Quadripartite Agreement allowed de facto authorities to exclude former Georgian combatants from repatriating to their homes, and by autumn 1994, the NGO community believed Abkhaz officials had compiled a list of 14,000 to 25,000 Georgians not allowed to return. In the end, only 311 people opted to repatriate under the UNHCR plan by 1995 (**OSI, 1995, pp.27-31**). The work of the Commission was then stalled due to disagreement between the parties and the Quadripartite Agreement remains the only document relevant to the return of IDPs and refugees signed by the parties (**CHR, 22 March 2006**).

In practice though, according to the International Crisis Group, UNHCR suggested that in Abkhazia „in the absence of a full political settlement organised return is not foreseen. Future returns may best continue in the spontaneous mode.” (**ICG, 18 January 2007**). Meanwhile, UNHCR monitored the needs and facilitated the return of refugees and IDPs in the Georgian-Ossetian conflict zone since 1997. It has also supported the rehabilitation of housing and facilities such as schools, hospitals, water distribution networks, etc. (**UN Country Team in Georgia, 30 November 2005**).

See also:

[Legal aspects of return of internally displaced persons and refugees to Abkhazia, Georgia. Walter Kälin, RSG on human rights of IDPs, Brookings-SAIS Project on Internal Displacement, 29 November 2007 \[Internet\]](http://www.brookings.edu/speeches/2007/1129_georgia_kalin.aspx)
http://www.brookings.edu/speeches/2007/1129_georgia_kalin.aspx

The European Union

The European Union has reiterated its full support to the territorial integrity of Georgia within its internationally recognised borders, and that all refugees and IDPs should be given the right to a safe, secure and dignified return to their homes (**EU, 5 March 2007**).

The Council of Europe

The Council of Europe, of which Georgia is a member, affirmed in several resolutions the need for voluntary return in a safe and dignified manner, of all IDPs and refugees from the recent and earlier conflicts, in safety and dignity (**see for example CoE, 29 April 2009**).

The Human Rights Commissioner also repeatedly emphasised that IDPs have a right to return to their homes, regardless of their ethnicity or nationality. In his most recent report, he noted the right of ethnic Georgians to return to their homes in South Ossetia (**CoE, 12 May 2009**).

NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE

International human rights and humanitarian law framework including references to the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement

National laws

The principal law which regulates IDPs' rights is the 'Law of Georgia on Internally Displaced Persons – Persecuted' [URL: http://www.brookings.edu/projects/idp/Laws-and-Policies/~media/Files/Projects/IDP/Laws%20and%20Policies/Georgia/Georgia_IDPLaw_2006.pdf] of June 28, 1996 (and later revised).

This law states that "a citizen of Georgia or a stateless person permanently residing in Georgia can be considered as an Internally Displaced Person, if he/she was forced to leave his/her place of residence and has been displaced (within the territory of Georgia) on the grounds of threat to life, health or freedom of his/her family members as a result of aggression from a foreign state, internal conflict or mass violation of human rights." The law includes specific provisions on children, including the right to free education in public schools, and the right for a child to get IDP status upon the parents' consent if one of the parents is not an IDP.

Unlike the UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, the Georgian legislation does not view victims of natural and human made disasters as IDPs. According to OCHA, this may be explained by the fact that Georgian authorities were then advised by UNHCR which did not have a mandate for this category of IDPs, and because by 1996, persons displaced as a result of armed conflict experienced the most serious problems (**UN OCHA June 2003, p. 7**).

The rights of IDPs in Georgia evolved throughout the years, as amendments were made to rectify discriminatory provisions. In 2002, the election code restored IDPs' right to vote in elections, and was further amended in 2003 to give IDPs the right to become elected. (For more information, please see section on Family Life, Participation, Access to Justice, Documentation, and Other Civil and Political Rights, under *Voting and participation in public affairs*). In November 2003, the constitutional court also declared that legal provisions preventing IDPs from acquiring property without losing their IDP status were unconstitutional (For more information, please see section on *Land and Property*).

For more information on the implementation of IDP legislation in Georgia, see:

1. OCHA, June 2003, Georgia: Study on IDP Rights [Internet]
<http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/9ca65951ee22658ec125663300408599/18e77cb4325ae44fc1256d56003e717c?OpenDocument>
2. Georgian Young Lawyers' Association, 1999, Monitoring of Legal and Actual Status of Internally Displaced Persons in Georgia [Internet]
[http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/\(httpDocuments\)/19DAA3A76F6E2EC1802570B7005901F7/\\$file/GYLA+++IDPmonitoring.pdf](http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/(httpDocuments)/19DAA3A76F6E2EC1802570B7005901F7/$file/GYLA+++IDPmonitoring.pdf)

3. The Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement are available in Georgian [Internet] http://www.unhcr.ch/html/menu2/7/b/principles_geo1.htm and in Abkhaz [Internet] <http://www.brookings.edu/fp/projects/idp/resources/GPAbkhaz.pdf>

National Response

Government IDP focal points, strategy and programmes

National Strategy on IDPs

For years, efforts to enforce IDPs' political and civil rights were neglected, mainly due to political considerations. Mismanagement, corruption and the lack of funds also impacted on the state's action to support durable solutions for IDPs. In recent years however, the government has made clear that local integration was not incompatible with return at a later stage, and should therefore be supported.

In 2007, the government adopted a national strategy on IDPs, which deals with all aspects of displacement – housing, employment, and legal status (**GoG, 2 February 2007**). In the strategy, the government has stressed that integration of IDPs does not hinder their future return to the habitual residence. Thematic working groups involving relevant government agencies, UN agencies, international NGOs and civil society provided substantial input to draft the strategy. The Strategy aims to serve as a foundation for the government's action plan, which will be implemented with anticipated support from the UN and other international organisations. It aims to serve as an umbrella for all short- and long-term projects aimed at resolving the problems of IDPs, including their current integration and reintegration upon the return. The action plan to guide the implementation of the strategy was adopted in July 2008, but its implementation was delayed due to the August 2008 conflict and the influx of new IDPs.

Following the August 2008 conflict, the Georgian government moved rapidly to respond to the needs of the new IDPs, especially compared to its response in the 1990s during previous waves of displacement. On 12 September 2008, the Georgian Prime Minister was reported to have endorsed a strategic paper to fully support local integration of IDPs from South Ossetia and Abkhazia (**OCHA, 7 October 2008**). The government then resettled with international donor support some 17,000 people who had been recently displaced into individual family cottages, in three regions of Georgia (**UNCT in Georgia, 23 March 2009**). In February 2009, the government hosted a meet for donors to present progress on reintegration of persons displaced by the earlier conflicts. Its main goals are to increase IDP self-reliance through the provision of durable housing solutions, and to include the most vulnerable IDPs in the general social assistance programme (**UNCT in Georgia, 5 March 2009**).

MRA, focal point on IDPs

The Ministry for Refugees and Accommodation (MRA) acts as the government focal point on internal displacement. It manages the distribution to allowances to IDPs, as per the Law of Georgia on Internally Displaced Persons – Persecuted (http://www.brookings.edu/projects/idp/Laws-and-Policies/~media/Files/Projects/IDP/Laws%20and%20Policies/Georgia/Georgia_IDPLaw_2006.pdf), of June 28, 1996, and revised several times after), which determines IDPs' legal, economic and social guarantees. The MRA has local branches in the provinces, but according to local observers, these branches lack staff and resources in order to provide accurate information to IDPs, and in return provide a comprehensive picture of their needs.

Other Relevant Ministries

Following the August 2008 conflict, the Civil Registry Agency (CRA) of the Ministry of Justice set up an electronic system for the registration of IDPs.

The Ministry of Agriculture (MoA), the Ministry of Education and Science (MoES), and the Ministry of Labour, Health, and Social Affairs (MoLHSA) are also involved in assisting the displaced. Following the August 2008 conflict, the government of Georgia appointed the Minister of MoLHSA as Coordinator for humanitarian assistance, with government focal points now identified for the relevant sectors (**OCHA, 7 October 2008**).

Prior to the August 2008 crisis, it was reported to be difficult or impossible to have certain individual cases of IDPs resolved effectively, as the distribution of responsibilities among the various levels and branches of government addressing internal displacement were unclear and cooperation between them inefficient (**CHR, 22 March 2006**).

There is no formally established state agency to respond to natural disasters or emergencies (**OCHA 19 November 2004**).

Abkhazian government in exile

Since the early 1990s, a virtual government of Abkhazia was restored in order to facilitate the tracing of relatives, the finding of accommodations, the collection of benefits from humanitarian assistance, and in general easing the coping with displacement. Each ministry or department of the central Georgian government allowed its counterpart from the “government in exile” to use its facilities. These structures allowed IDPs to continue to work, not just in the government bureaucracy, but also as teachers, doctors, and other specialists. IDPs also had their own military commissariat, tax authorities, police force, etc. The Georgian government recognised the virtual government of Abkhazia as the representatives of the displaced (**Kharashvili, 2001, pp.234-235**).

IDP allowances

In May 2009, the Georgian government started to grant IDP status to the people displaced from the August 2008 conflict, an important measure as the status is linked to a series of benefits (**CoE, 12 May 2009**).

IDPs get monthly allowances based on their registration with authorities. While very low, state allowances to IDPs represent the main source of income for many of them. Allowances are paid to IDPs whether they work or not. For IDPs residing in collective centres, utility expenses, such as electricity and water, are covered in addition to monthly allowances (**NRC, July 2007**). IDPs of the pension age and those who fought for the territorial integrity of Georgia receive pensions as well (**OCHA, June 2003**).

According to the Georgian Law, any public entitlement in health for the general population is also available for IDPs. There are specific programmes for young children, as well as prenatal care and delivery for pregnant women at the state’s expense. IDPs are also entitled to a package of outpatient and inpatient care benefits, but their health status remains poorer in general than the rest of the population. Major barriers for obtaining free services included the under-funded and overstretched State Health Programmes, which failed to improve access and affordability of health services for many Georgians, as well as the complexity and lack of transparency of health entitlements (**Zoidze & Djibuti, 2004, pp.29-30**).

At the same time, the Ministry of Labour, Health and Social Affairs (MoLHSA) and the State Agency of Employment and Social Assistance (SAESA) have been developing a “State Programme on Identification, Socio-Economic Assessment and Development of a Database of the most Destitute Households of Georgia.” The programme, which gives benefits based on

needs rather than status, aims to end extreme poverty in 10 years. The programme was split into two stages, first the provision of a Health Insurance Package, and then the provision of cash assistance to destitute households. The Health Insurance Package, available to households applying to the programme and who were assessed as “destitute” by a State Social Agent, includes free medical check ups free diagnostic procedures such as blood tests, electric cardiograms, X-ray investigations, emergency medical service, planned and emergency surgery. Information centres were opened in some collective centres to ensure that people would register for the new programme (**UN Country Team in Georgia, 31 May 2006**). According to Government decree # 145, from 28 July 2006 on Social assistance to the Georgian population, IDPs are eligible to enrol in this programme if they give up their monthly IDP allowances. The IDP monthly allowances are given to IDPs who are yet to register in the Program.

Civil Society Organisations

In Georgia, numerous national NGOs run projects beneficial to or expressly targeting IDPs, such as income-generation projects, medical assistance and psychosocial rehabilitation, extra-curricular education for IDP children, promoting human rights awareness and vocational training (**CHR, 22 March 2006**).

IDPs have mobilised to find solutions to pressing economic and social issues burdening their communities. Many organisations were started by women, who were desperate to improve the living conditions of their families and who developed small, community-based organisations (**Buck, September 2000, p.10**). Many organisations have evolved into advocacy organisations for displaced people on a national level. They have helped bring the government, donor, and even general public’s attention to issues such as collective centres degradation and psychosocial trauma. Other organisations have been effective partners for donors both in providing humanitarian assistance to the most vulnerable displaced persons and for developing microcredit and small and medium-size enterprise programs. Some national NGOs, such as the Georgian Young Lawyers’ Association (GYLA), have provided legal aid to IDPs. NRC’s NGO partners, Legal Protection Institute, Society & Justice and Social Programs Foundation, work throughout Georgia to advocate on behalf of IDPs’ rights to local authorities, and to bring up cases to the courts when necessary.

Some 75 NGOs in the Caucasus are part of the CRINGO network supported by the Danish Refugee Council (DRC). About 20-30 are in Georgia, and 16 of them are in Tbilisi. CRINGO managed the civil society input to develop the IDP strategy.

For more information on CRINGO, see:

1.Caucasian Refugee and IDP NGO Network - CRINGO, 2006, Suggested CRINGO Input towards IDP strategy process

[Internet]

[http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/\(httpDocuments\)/42A285B9572C6C78C12571CC00661EFF/\\$file/CRINGO+input+to+IDP+Strategy.pdf](http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/(httpDocuments)/42A285B9572C6C78C12571CC00661EFF/$file/CRINGO+input+to+IDP+Strategy.pdf)

2.Caucasian Refugee and IDP NGO Network - CRINGO - Programme Document 2006 - 2010

[Internet]

[http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/\(httpDocuments\)/35C826A4782044CCC12571CC00664BED/\\$file/CRINGO+PD_eng_ADOPTED+AT+GA.doc](http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/(httpDocuments)/35C826A4782044CCC12571CC00664BED/$file/CRINGO+PD_eng_ADOPTED+AT+GA.doc)

3. Caucasian Refugee and IDP NGO Network – CRINGO, 2006, Introduction to the CRINGO network
[Internet] [http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/\(httpDocuments\)/456504CA683975B6C12571CC00667237/\\$file/Introduction+to+CRINGO+network+\(1\).doc](http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/(httpDocuments)/456504CA683975B6C12571CC00667237/$file/Introduction+to+CRINGO+network+(1).doc)

For more information on the civil society's input into the State Strategy on IDPs, see:
Social Programs Foundation, November 2008, [The State Strategy for Internally Displaced Persons – Persecuted in Georgia and The Action Plan on Implementation of the Strategy](http://idmc.nrc.ch/8025708F004CE90B/(httpDocuments)/706CF94132DAF029C125754C00552391/$file/Research_on_State_Strategy_for_IDPs_and_its_Action_Plan-final-eng.pdf)
[Internet]
[http://idmc.nrc.ch/8025708F004CE90B/\(httpDocuments\)/706CF94132DAF029C125754C00552391/\\$file/Research_on_State_Strategy_for_IDPs_and_its_Action_Plan-final-eng.pdf](http://idmc.nrc.ch/8025708F004CE90B/(httpDocuments)/706CF94132DAF029C125754C00552391/$file/Research_on_State_Strategy_for_IDPs_and_its_Action_Plan-final-eng.pdf)

For more information on the international and local organisations working with IDPs in Georgia, please see:
CALTRIDER, Luc, IDP Assistance Partners, prepared under the New Approach to IDP Assistance Initiative, Tbilisi 2004 [Internet]
<http://www.undp.org.ge/news/IDP%20Assistance%20Partners.pdf>

See also USAID Research Paper "Aftermath: Women's Organizations in Postconflict Georgia", September 2000 [Internet]
NEW URL: <http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/lib.nsf/db900SID/LGEL-5JHCTY?OpenDocument>

You can also consult Assistance Georgian, a web site initiated by the Save the Children's Georgian Assistance Initiative (GAI) which provides information in support of humanitarian and development aid activities in Georgia [Internet: <http://www.assistancegeorgia.org.ge>], and particularly its information on organizations working with IDPs and refugees: <http://www.assistancegeorgia.org.ge/Content/ActIndex.aspx?ActID=410846bf-6bd2-4b6e-b35e-784f4377519f>

Humanitarian access and assistance

Humanitarian access to Gali and South Ossetia

Impact of Law on Occupied Territories

The Law on Occupied Territories of Georgia, which was adopted on 23 October 2008 restricts access to Abkhazia and South Ossetia for foreigners and Stateless persons, who may enter those territories only from the Georgian side (**Government of Georgia, 23 October 2008**). The European Commission for Democracy Through Law (the Venice Commission) reviewed the law, and found that „it impeded humanitarian aid and was contrary to the rule of customary international law” (**Venice Commission, 17 March 2009**). Meanwhile, South Ossetian de facto authorities maintain that assistance can only enter the region through the Russian Federation (**CoE, 12 May 2009**).

UN Security Council Resolution 1866, adopted on 13 February 2009, calls for facilitating, and refraining from placing and impediment to, humanitarian access (**UNSC, 13 February 2009**).

Access to Gali district and Kodori Valley, Abkhazia

The volatile security situation in Gali district and in Kodori Valley has complicated the provision of humanitarian assistance, and killings, shootings and abductions have been reported throughout the years. New restrictions were reported to have been imposed on movement across the administrative border since August 2008, which rendered the population of Gali more isolated than before. It has become increasingly difficult for returnees in Gali to maintain family contacts, sell their produce, have access to health care or pick up financial entitlements on the other side of the de facto border. Abkhaz de facto authorities said that the closing of the administrative border is a temporary measure which is necessary for security reasons and in order to thwart criminality (CoE, 12 May 2009; CoE, 28 January 2009, Res.1648).

Access to South Ossetia

There has been no access to South Ossetia from Georgia since the August 2008 conflict. Areas on both sides of the South Ossetia administrative border are seen as insecure (CoE, 29 April 2009). In March 2009 for example, two roadside bombs exploded near the South Ossetian side, killing a Georgian policeman and wounding six others (AFP, 29 March 2009). Even prior to the August 2008 conflict, kidnapping and killings on the Georgian and on the South Ossetian sides, often linked to criminal activities, frequently led to road closures (ICG, 7 June 2007).

See also:

Council of Europe (CoE), 28 January 2009, Georgia-Russia war: PACE calls for humanitarian access to South Ossetia and Abkhazia [Internet]

<http://assembly.coe.int/ASP/Press/StopPressView.asp?ID=2124>

International Response

Main actors, policies and programmes

Massive aid in the early 1990s

At the end of the war between Georgia and Abkhazia in 1994, the international community started to provide massive relief aid, in parallel with some development-oriented support. Since the mid-1990s, most aid organisations shifted from humanitarian assistance programmes to more transitional/development programmes. This is despite the fact – according to OCHA – that purely humanitarian needs actually persisted, particularly in Abkhazia and South Ossetia, and among many IDPs (OCHA, 19 November 2004).

New Approach to IDPs in the late 1990s

In 1999, a group of organisations (UNDP, UNHCR, OCHA, and the World Bank), and the Government of Georgia forged a partnership to improve the lives of IDPs in Georgia and of their host communities by reforming government policy and supporting a transition from humanitarian assistance to development centred activities. This 'new approach' addressed the contradictory aspects of the long-term IDP problem - providing both for a proper life in their new adopted homes, as well as leaving the way open for a return to their former lives (UNDP, 2004). The UN Special Representative on IDPs expressed his support to this approach (UNHCHR, 25 January 2001). Later, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) joined this initiative. The New Approach, guided by an emphasis on sustainable development, aimed at overcoming legislative obstacles to the participation of IDPs in civil society, creating capacity building programmes for IDPs, rationalising subsidies to IDPs, implementing comprehensive policy/advocacy activities, and piloting development-oriented assistance to IDPs (OCHA, 19 November 2004). A Self-Reliance Fund was created to support innovative programmes that strengthened IDPs' self-reliance. Under the

New Approach, several in-depth reports on IDP issues were conducted in 2003 and 2004, in particular on health, education and financial instruments (**OCHA, June 2003; Zoidze & Djibuti 2004; Matiashvili 2004; Gaganidze & Sabadze 2004**). Due to implementation delays and other administrative obstacles, the New Approach caused some disappointment. According to the International Crisis Group, ultimately, the program was mainly seen as a financial mechanism for local NGOs (**ICG, 15 September 2006**).

For more information on the New Approach, see:

Gaganidze Giorgi and Sabadze Eka, A Study of Effectiveness of the Financial Instruments Applied to Assist Entrepreneurial Activities of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) within the UNDP Project “New Approach to IDP Assistance”, Tbilisi 2004 [Internet]

[http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/\(httpDocuments\)/A9217B4A2EAEEC0B802570B700590108/\\$file/NA+Brochure.pdf](http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/(httpDocuments)/A9217B4A2EAEEC0B802570B700590108/$file/NA+Brochure.pdf)

Renewed focus on IDPs

OCHA closed its office in Georgia at the end of 2004, and the office’s functions were gradually handed over to UNDP and others (OCHA reopened an office in Georgia following the August 2008 crisis, see below). A new Transition Unit was created under the Office of the UN Resident Coordinator in order to facilitate and coordinate the work of the UN Country Team agencies, as well as continue cooperation the Government, NGOs and donors on relevant issues (**OCHA 30 December 2004**). In 2004, widespread donor disenchantment was replaced by a more optimistic approach towards the new government of Sakashvili, resulting in more funding.

In December 2005, the UN Secretary-General’s Representative on the Human Rights of IDPs, Walter Kälin, visited Georgia and said that he was “shocked by the misery” in which some of the 240,000 IDPs still lived, more than a decade after the main hostilities between Georgia and its secessionist territories of Abkhazia and South Ossetia had ceased. Kälin recommended that the government design a comprehensive policy to address the displacement crisis, in close consultation with civil society and the displaced themselves. (**Brookings Institution, 3 May 2006**).

Support to the national strategy on IDPs

UN agencies and international NGOs working on IDP issues supported the Ministry for Refugees and Accommodation (MRA) to develop a national policy on IDPs in 2006-2007. Thematic groups provided input to a commission comprised of Ministers and overseeing the process. Thematic groups were co-chaired by relevant Ministries and by international organisations. Each thematic group was comprised of two government representatives, two UN representatives, two INGOs representatives, and two national NGO representatives. The process emphasised the participation of civil society, and organisations working with IDPs had direct representation in the working groups developing the strategy. UNDP’s Resident Coordinator/Humanitarian Coordinator chaired the meetings to support the development of the national strategy on IDPs (**IDMC May 2006**). UNDP supported the development of the national strategy through a New Approach Support Unit. UNHCR assisted the government in developing the strategy on IDPs, and also supports projects responding to the immediate needs of IDPs and returning IDPs. ICRC developed a database on collective centres throughout Georgia to support the implementation of the national strategy on IDPs. In November 2006, the UN Country Team in Georgia formulated recommendations in regard to the national strategy, including the need from strong leadership from MRA and coordination with relevant parties and the continuing mobilisation of civil society on IDP issues (**UNCT in Georgia, November 2006**).

Until the August 2008 crisis, most humanitarian organisations had increasingly mainstreamed IDPs into programmes benefiting the general population. Most international NGOs are based in

Tbilisi, although their activities cover parts of the country. A few international organisations, such as ICRC, UNICEF, UNHCR and NRC also provided some humanitarian assistance to IDPs and returnees in South Ossetia, such as basic shelter until the latest conflict (**CHR, 22 March 2006; UNSC, 18 July 2007**). Major donors to Georgia, including the regions affected by conflict include the European Union, USAID and the Swiss Development Agency.

Aftermath of the August 2008 conflict

The UN Resident/Humanitarian Coordinator led coordination efforts through a Humanitarian Coordination Group, which included UN agencies, the Red Cross and NGOs. The cluster approach was then implemented, and OCHA reopened an office following the crisis, which closed at the end of March 2009. In order to respond to the many humanitarian needs of IDPs and other vulnerable populations in Georgia, UN agencies and some NGOs issued a special flash appeal to donors seeking some \$59 million for activities to be carried out over the next six months (**OCHA, 18 August 2008**). The flash appeal was revised in October 2008 to over \$109 million to cover humanitarian needs until March 2009 (**OCHA, 7 October 2008**). International donor governments mobilised quickly to pledge support to IDPs and other vulnerable populations. Assistance was channelled through humanitarian agencies present on the ground. UN Agencies, the ICRC, international and local NGOs carried out a wide range of programmes benefiting IDPs. From August 2008 to February 2009, UNHCR reported that it had assisted and protected 133,000 IDPs and returnees, managed tent camps, provided shelter, winterised up to 150 collective centres, and distributed several hundred thousands of non-food items. Meanwhile, UNICEF said it had provided school recreation and hygiene supplies to 73,000 children as well as mine risk education and psychosocial training for teachers in all conflict affected areas. WFP reported that it had provided recreation and hygiene supplies to 73,000 children as well as mine risk education and psychosocial training for teachers in all conflict affected areas. The three agencies also launched a common cash assistance programme for IDPs (**UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP, 18 February 2009**). As the humanitarian crisis eased, UNDP sought to help Georgia address the longer-term challenge of restoring livelihoods and improving the delivery of public services in areas next to South Ossetia and to Abkhazia (**UNDP, 5 February 2009**).

For a detailed account of support of IDPs in the aftermath of the August crisis, see:

UNHCR, 13 September 2008, Five Challenging Weeks - UNHCR's response to humanitarian crisis in Georgia - 8 August to 13 September 2008 [Internet]

<http://www.unhcr.org/48e0cf6a2.html>

For an account of support to vulnerable groups in the aftermath of the crisis, see:

UNICEF, 15 August 2008, Georgia: UNICEF immediate needs - Response to the needs of children and women affected by the conflict in and around South Ossetia, Georgia [Internet]

http://www.unicef.org/emerg/index_45197.html

According to a study by Transparency International in the aftermath of the August 2008 crisis, IDPs often receive different aid packages and at different times, due to NGOs uncoordinated activities, schedules and logistics. This often leads IDPs to believe that different groups are being treated unequally, and that aid delivery is dependent on personal connections (**TI, 3 April 2009**).

The UN, the World Bank and other organisations carried out a joint needs assessment (JNA) the request of the Government in order to address humanitarian, recovery and reconstruction, as well as development needs (**UN-World Bank Group, 22 October 2008**). Among other, the assessment addresses the needs of people displaced in the 1990s and in 2008. The drafting of the JNA was coordinated with the revision of the UN Flash Appeal, in order to ensure consistency amongst the humanitarian and the transitional and development-oriented actions (**OCHA, 7 October 2008**). The findings were presented at a donors' conference in Brussels in October 2008. The conference raised 4.7 billion USD, 450 million of which is planned for the improvement of housing conditions of the old and new caseloads and their medical costs (**WB-EC, 23 October**

2008; ICG, 26 November 2008). Programmes have since then mostly benefitted the new IDPs, causing tensions between them and many of those displaced since the early 1990s.

See also:

TI, 9 December 2008, Access to information, accountability, and aid to Georgia [Internet]
http://www.transparency.ge/files/215_447_426697_Aid%20to%20Georgia%20ENG.pdf

In August 2008, the Russian government allocated 10 billion roubles for South Ossetia to repair buildings and infrastructure and for a new gas line from North to South Ossetia. According to the Council of Europe, this should help over 3,000 people still housed in collective centres in South Ossetia since the early 1990s (**CoE, 29 April 2009**).

UN agencies and NGOs have also continued to provide assistance to returnees in Gali district, Abkhazia. Involving Abkhaz, Georgian and Armenian populations, UNDP has begun installing basic irrigation systems in Gali district to improve agricultural production and WFP has provided together with World Vision International work-for-food programmes in Gali. The Danish Refugee Council is rehabilitating damaged houses in Gali and other parts of Abkhazia (**UNSC, 18 May 2009, para.51-53**).

UN Secretary-General and IDPs

In its periodic reports to the UN Security Council, the UN Secretary-General regularly stresses the need for progress on the question of refugees and internally displaced persons in Georgia.

Special Representative on the Human Rights of IDPs

The current Representative and his predecessor have carried out a series of visits to Georgia, and made recommendations to improve the rights of IDPs.

See:

1.Report of the Representative of the Secretary-General on the human rights of internally displaced persons, Walter Kälin, Mission to Georgia, 13 February 2009 [pdf]

2.Report of the Representative of the Secretary-General on the human rights of internally displaced persons, Walter Kälin, Mission to Georgia (21 to 24 December 2005) [pdf]

3.Report of the Representative of the UN Secretary-General on IDPs to the Commission of Human Rights, Profiles in displacement: Georgia, 17 January 2001 [pdf]

European Union

The European Commission is the largest donor in the regions of South Ossetia and Abkhazia. In 2006, it started an innovative, three-year, 4 million EURO project to support rehabilitation and reconstruction in the conflict zone so as to create conditions for IDP and refugee return and reintegration to Abkhazia (**ICG, 18 January 2007**).

For more information on these EC projects, see [Internet]

<http://www.delgeo.cec.eu.int/en/programmes/Abkhazia.htm#A1>

EU-ECHO, 17 February 2009, Commission decision of on the financing of humanitarian actions from the general budget of the European Communities in Georgia [Internet]

http://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/funding/decisions/2009/georgia_01000.pdf

EU-ECHO, 20 February 2009, European Commission's crisis response assistance to Georgia in 2008 reaches €120 million [Internet]

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/09/78&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

Council of Europe

The Council of Europe (CoE) has followed closely developments related to IDPs in Georgia. Its Parliament has passed a series of resolutions on the obligations and commitments by Georgia, as a state party to the Council of Europe. The CoE's Commissioner for Human Rights has visited Georgia, including IDP collective centres, and made specific recommendations to improve the human rights situation.

For more information, see:

1. [Council of Europe \(COE\)](#), 12 May 2009, Georgia: Report on human rights issues following the August 2008 armed conflict [Internet]

[http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/RWFiles2009.nsf/FilesByRWDocUnidFilename/PSLG-7S3DE7-full_report.pdf/\\$File/full_report.pdf](http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/RWFiles2009.nsf/FilesByRWDocUnidFilename/PSLG-7S3DE7-full_report.pdf/$File/full_report.pdf)

2. [Council of Europe \(COE\)](#), 28 January 2009, The humanitarian consequences of the war between Georgia and the Russia - Resolution 1648 (2009) [Internet]

<http://assembly.coe.int/Mainf.asp?link=/Documents/AdoptedText/ta09/ERES1648.htm>

3. [Council of Europe \(COE\)](#), 8 September 2008, Human rights in areas affected by the South Ossetia conflict [Internet]

<https://wcd.coe.int/ViewDoc.jsp?id=1338365&Site=CommDH>

4. Government of Georgia, 15 February 2007, Information on the meeting between the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Georgia and the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights [Internet]

<http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/rwb.nsf/db900sid/EGUA-6YMN3X?OpenDocument&rc=3&cc=geo>

5. Council of Europe (COE), Parliamentary Assembly, [15 December 2005, Implementation of resolution 1415 \(2005\) on the honouring of obligations and commitments by Georgia](#), 15 December 2005 – *The resolution mentions the need to “ensure the equal rights of internally displaced persons, along the lines of Assembly Resolution on refugees and displaced persons in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia.”* [Internet] NEW URL:

[http://portal.coe.ge/downloads/Resolution%201477%20\(2006\)%20Eng.pdf](http://portal.coe.ge/downloads/Resolution%201477%20(2006)%20Eng.pdf)

6. Committee on Migration, Refugees and Demography for the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, 4 June 2002, [Report on the situation of refugees and displaced persons in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia](#) [Internet]

<http://assembly.coe.int/Main.asp?link=http%3A%2F%2Fassembly.coe.int%2FDocuments%2FWorkingDocs%2FDoc02%2FEDOC9480.htm>

7. CoE, Parliamentary Assembly, 24 September 1996, [Recommendation 1305 \(1996\) on the humanitarian situation of the displaced persons in Georgia](#) [Internet]

<http://assembly.coe.int/Main.asp?link=http%3A%2F%2Fassembly.coe.int%2FDocuments%2FAdoptedText%2Fta96%2FEREC1305.htm>

8. Council of Europe Information Office, Tbilisi [Internet]

<http://portal.coe.ge/index.php?lan=en&id=index>

LIST OF SOURCES USED

(alphabetical order)

Agence France-Presse (AFP), 29 March 2009, Georgian policeman killed near rebel region: official

Internet : <http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/rwb.nsf/db900sid/RMOI-7QLLS3?OpenDocument> , accessed 12 May 2009

Agence France-Presse (AFP), 2 May 2009, Russia guarding Georgian separatist zones

Internet : <http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/rwb.nsf/db900sid/RMOI-7RNHUX?OpenDocument&rc=3&cc=geo> , accessed 12 May 2009

Amnesty International (AI), August 1998, Georgia - Summary of Amnesty International's Concerns, AI Index: EUR 56/02/98

Internet : <http://web.amnesty.org/library/Index/ENGEUR560021998?open&of=ENG-GEO> , accessed 10 January 2000

Amnesty International (AI), 18 November 2008, Civilians in the line of fire: The Georgia/Russia conflict

Internet : [http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/\(httpDocuments\)/62A2FE5E451EA89BC12575C900587A48/\\$file/full_report+AI.pdf](http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/(httpDocuments)/62A2FE5E451EA89BC12575C900587A48/$file/full_report+AI.pdf) ,

Apsnypress, 25 April 2006, Sukhumi changes rules for foreign NGO registration

Internet : <http://www.unomig.org/media/headlines/?id=5820&y=2006&m=4&d=25> , accessed 16 August 2006

BCG Research, May 2004, Internally Displaced Persons and Their Behavior During the Elections, UNDP

Internet : [http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/\(httpDocuments\)/CDD53AD0308797D5802570B70059054E/\\$file/report-exit+poll+refugees.pdf](http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/(httpDocuments)/CDD53AD0308797D5802570B70059054E/$file/report-exit+poll+refugees.pdf) ,

Brookings-SAIS Project on Internal Displacement, 5 November 2004, Internally Displaced Persons' Voting Rights in the OSCE Region

Internet : http://www.brook.edu/dybdocroot/fp/projects/idp/20041105_osce.pdf , accessed 22 March 2005

Buck, Thomas, September 2000, Aftermath: Effects of Conflict on Internally Displaced Women in Georgia, Working Paper No. 310, (Washington: Center for Development Information and Evaluation, U.S. Agency for International Development)

Internet : http://www.dec.org/pdf_docs/PNACJ947.pdf , accessed 29 January 2001

Civil Georgia, 17 February 2007, Abkhaz Official: Confidence-Building is Needed for IDP Return

Internet : <http://www.civil.ge/eng/article.php?id=14648> , accessed 28 February 2007

Council of Europe (COE), 12 May 2009, Georgia: Report on human rights issues following the August 2008 armed conflict

Internet : <http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/rwb.nsf/db900sid/PSLG-7S3DE7?OpenDocument> , accessed 9 June 2009

Council of Europe (COE), 17 March 2009, European Commission for Democracy through law (Venice Commission): opinion on the law on Occupied Territories of Georgia

Internet : [http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/\(httpDocuments\)/A59B91D77DCE768BC12575C900306F98/\\$file/CDL-AD\(2009\)015-e.pdf](http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/(httpDocuments)/A59B91D77DCE768BC12575C900306F98/$file/CDL-AD(2009)015-e.pdf) ,

Council of Europe (COE), Commissioner for Human Rights, 8 September 2008, Human rights in areas affected by the South Ossetia conflict
Internet : <http://wcd.coe.int/ViewDoc.jsp?id=1338365&Site=CommDH> , accessed 23 June 2009

Council of Europe (COE), Commissioner for Human Rights, 13 July 2000, Report by Mr. Alvaro Gil-Robles Commissioner for Human Rights to the Committee of Ministers and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe on the Visit to Georgia
Internet : [http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/\(httpDocuments\)/5AF7E57953BB7C04802570B7005901D1/\\$file/ReportGeorgiaCOE.pdf](http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/(httpDocuments)/5AF7E57953BB7C04802570B7005901D1/$file/ReportGeorgiaCOE.pdf) ,

Council of Europe (COE), Parliamentary Assembly, 28 January 2009, Georgia-Russia war: PACE calls for humanitarian access to South Ossetia and Abkhazia
Internet : <http://assembly.coe.int/ASP/Press/StopPressView.asp?ID=2124> , accessed 2 June 2009

Council of Europe (COE), Parliamentary Assembly, 28 January 2009, The humanitarian consequences of the war between Georgia and the Russia - Resolution 1648 (2009)
Internet : <http://assembly.coe.int/Mainf.asp?link=/Documents/AdoptedText/ta09/ERES1648.htm> , accessed 2 June 2009

Council of Europe (COE), Parliamentary Assembly, 29 April 2009, The humanitarian consequences of the war between Georgia and Russia: follow-up given to Resolution 1648 (2009) - Resolution 1664 (2009)
Internet : <http://assembly.coe.int/Mainf.asp?link=/Documents/AdoptedText/ta09/ERES1664.htm> , accessed 12 May 2009

Dale, Catherine, August 1997, The Dynamics and Challenges of Ethnic Cleansing: The Georgia-Abkhazia Case
Internet : <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/country,,WRITENET,,GEO,4562d8cf2,3ae6a6c54,0.html> , accessed 8 April 2002

Danish Refugee Council (DRC), February 2006, Housing Assessment Gali District
Internet : [http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/\(httpDocuments\)/CB7F31BB6E4E78EDC12571CC005ADC63/\\$file/Final+Housing+Assesment+Gali+feb+13+2006.doc](http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/(httpDocuments)/CB7F31BB6E4E78EDC12571CC005ADC63/$file/Final+Housing+Assesment+Gali+feb+13+2006.doc) ,

Deng, Dr. Francis M., 10 June 2003, Hearing: Internally Displaced Persons in the Caucasus Region and Southeastern Anatolia, Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe
Internet : [http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/\(httpDocuments\)/FD9A9B12A60F44FC802570B700590553/\\$file/061003.pdf](http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/(httpDocuments)/FD9A9B12A60F44FC802570B700590553/$file/061003.pdf) ,

Dershem, Larry/Gurgenidze, Nana/Holtzman, Steven, November 2002, Poverty and Vulnerability Among Internally Displaced Persons in Georgia: An Update of Their Current Status and Circumstances, paper prepared for the World Bank (draft)

Embassy of the United States in Georgia, 21 October 2005, Georgia's Ministry of Refugees and Accommodation, Kutaisi City and Urban Institute Launch Pilot Program to House Internally Displaced Persons
Internet : <http://georgia.usembassy.gov/events/2005/event20051021HousingV.html> , accessed 16 August 2006

European Commission (EC) and The World Bank Group, 23 October 2008, Joint World Bank – European Commission press release: International donors pledge - US\$4.5 billion (€3.4 billion) in post-conflict support to Georgia

Internet : <http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/COUNTRIES/ECAEXT/GEORGIAEXTN/0,,contentMDK:21949507~menuPK:50003484~pagePK:2865066~piPK:2865079~theSitePK:301746,00.html> , accessed 2 June 2009

European Union, 5 March 2007, Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union concerning the recent so-called "Parliamentary elections" in Abkhazia, Georgia on 4 Mar 2007

Internet : http://www.eu2007.de/en/News/CFSP_Statements/March/0305Abchasien.html , accessed 19 September 2007

European Union (EU), 19 June 2009, Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union on the termination of UNOMIG

Internet : [http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/\(httpDocuments\)/F4BD5A1FA6CC877FC12575DE0051380A/\\$file/108590-1.doc](http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/(httpDocuments)/F4BD5A1FA6CC877FC12575DE0051380A/$file/108590-1.doc) ,

Gaganidze Giorgi and Sabadze Eka, 2004, A Study of Effectiveness of the Financial Instruments Applied to Assist Entrepreneurial Activities of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) within the UNDP Project "New Approach to IDP Assistance", Tbilisi

Internet : http://www.undp.org.ge/news/Financial%20Instruments_eng.pdf , accessed 22 March 2005

Government of Georgia, 23 October 2008, The Law on Occupied Territories of Georgia

Internet : [http://www.venice.coe.int/docs/2009/CDL\(2009\)004-e.asp](http://www.venice.coe.int/docs/2009/CDL(2009)004-e.asp) , accessed 23 June 2009

Government of Georgia, 2 February 2007, State Strategy for Internally Displaced Persons – Persecuted

Internet : [http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/\(httpDocuments\)/0860F04B3162B38CC12572950056DBED/\\$file/State+Strategy+for+IDP+-+ENG.pdf](http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/(httpDocuments)/0860F04B3162B38CC12572950056DBED/$file/State+Strategy+for+IDP+-+ENG.pdf) ,

Government of Georgia, 2 February 2007, Decree # 47 of the Government of Georgia on approving of the State Strategy for Internally Displaced Persons – Persecuted

Internet : [http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/\(httpDocuments\)/CC4E01DED8D97366C12575A60031A7B5/\\$file/State+Strategy+for+IDP+-+ENG.pdf](http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/(httpDocuments)/CC4E01DED8D97366C12575A60031A7B5/$file/State+Strategy+for+IDP+-+ENG.pdf) ,

Gregory Scarborough, UNICEF Consultant, Tamar Tavartkiladze, Norwegian Refugee Council, Anna Arganashvili, October 2006, Rapid Assessment on the Protection and Livelihoods situation of Internally Displaced Children and Youth Living in Collective Centers in the Republic of Georgia

Internet : [http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/\(httpDocuments\)/06DED7D757A181AFC12572750050D78C/\\$file/Rapid_Assessment_Report+logo.pdf](http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/(httpDocuments)/06DED7D757A181AFC12572750050D78C/$file/Rapid_Assessment_Report+logo.pdf) ,

Human Rights Council, 3 January 2007, Report of the Representative of the Secretary-General on human rights of internally displaced persons, Walter Kälin

Internet : [http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/\(httpDocuments\)/827D1469701AD8B3C125729D004B7BC8/\\$file/RSG-IDPs+2007+report+to+Human+Rights+Council+\(2\).pdf](http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/(httpDocuments)/827D1469701AD8B3C125729D004B7BC8/$file/RSG-IDPs+2007+report+to+Human+Rights+Council+(2).pdf) ,

Human Rights Watch (HRW), 14 August 2008, Russia/Georgia: Investigate civilian deaths

Internet : <http://www.hrw.org/english/docs/2008/08/13/russia19620.htm> , accessed 14 August 2008

Human Rights Watch (HRW), 23 January 2009, Up in Flames

Internet : <http://www.hrw.org/en/reports/2009/01/22/flames-0> , accessed 28 January 2009

Human Rights Watch (HRW), 13 January 2005, World Report 2005

Internet : <http://www.hrw.org/wr2k5/eca/index.htm> , accessed 27 January 2005

Human Rights Watch (HRW), 13 January 2005, World Report 2005

Internet : <http://www.hrw.org/wr2k5/eca/index.htm> , accessed 27 January 2005

Human Rights Watch (HRW), 13 January 2005, World Report 2005

Internet : <http://www.hrw.org/wr2k5/eca/index.htm> , accessed 27 January 2005

Institute for War and Peace Reporting (IWPR), 22 January 2009, Kodori Gorge Refugees in Limbo

Internet : http://www.iwpr.net/?p=crs&s=f&o=349387&apc_state=henh , accessed 28 January 2009

Institute for War and Peace Reporting (IWPR), 27 February 2009, Refugees claim to be put at risk

Internet : <http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/rwb.nsf/db900sid/ASAZ-7PNEYC?OpenDocument&rc=3&cc=geo> , accessed 19 March 2009

Institute for War & Peace Reporting (IWPR), 5 March 2006, Georgia-Russian relations at boiling point

Internet : http://www.iwpr.net/?p=crs&s=f&o=259985&apc_state=henh , accessed 16 August 2006

Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC), May 2006, Interviews in Tbilisi & Kutaisi

International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), 16 January 2004, "Georgia: Vast humanitarian challenges face new leaders", operational update

Internet : <http://www.icrc.org/Web/eng/siteeng0.nsf/iwpList292/B3B42912BD57D543C1256E1D00547A9A> , accessed 11 March 2004

International Crisis Group (ICG), 19 April 2005, Georgia-South Ossetia: Refugee Return the Path to Peace

Internet : <http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=3380&l=1> , accessed 8 July 2009

International Crisis Group (ICG), 7 June 2007, Georgia's South Ossetia Conflict: Make Haste Slowly

Internet : <http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=4887> , accessed 6 July 2007

International Crisis Group (ICG), 15 September 2006, Abkhazia Today, Europe Report N°176

Internet : <http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?l=1&id=4377> , accessed 18 September 2006

International Crisis Group (ICG), 18 January 2007, Georgia: Abkhazia - Ways forward

Internet : <http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?l=1&id=4619> , accessed 19 September 2007

International Crisis Group (ICG), 26 November 2004, Georgia: Avoiding War in South Ossetia Europe Report N°159

Internet : <http://www.icg.org/home/index.cfm?id=3128&l=1> , accessed 1 December 2004

International Crisis Group (ICG), 26 November 2008, Georgia: The risks of winter - ICG report
Internet : [http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/\(httpDocuments\)/1E36541E9B5AF86FC12575C900585148/\\$file/full_report+ICG.pdf](http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/(httpDocuments)/1E36541E9B5AF86FC12575C900585148/$file/full_report+ICG.pdf) ,

International Federation of the Red Cross (IFRC), 30 November 2000, Internally Displaced Persons: A Socio-Economic Survey, Georgia

Kharashvili, Julia, 2001, "Georgia: Coping by Organising. Displaced Georgians from Abkhazia" in: Caught Between Borders - Response Strategies of the Internally Displaced, Ed. Marc Vincent and Birgitte Refslund Sorensen (London: Pluto Press)

Matiashvili, Anna, 2004, IDP Education Profile Review in Georgia, prepared under the New Approach to IDP Assistance Initiative, Tbilisi
Internet : http://www.undp.org.ge/news/IDP%20Education%20Profile%20Review_eng.pdf , accessed 22 March 2005

Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), July 2007, Submission from the Norwegian Refugee Council Regional Office for Caucasus and Central Asia to the Committee on the Rights of the Child
Internet : [http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/\(httpDocuments\)/0BACB4FB0BB5EB2FC12573370042D349/\\$file/NRC+Report+to+the+Committee+on+the+Rights+of+the+Child.pdf](http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/(httpDocuments)/0BACB4FB0BB5EB2FC12573370042D349/$file/NRC+Report+to+the+Committee+on+the+Rights+of+the+Child.pdf) ,

Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), 1997, Survey on Internally Displaced People in Georgia - Living Conditions and Future Options of IDPs from Abkhazia

Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), 31 March 2009, E-mail correspondence

Open Society Institute, June 1995, Repatriation in Georgia
Internet : http://www.osi.hu/fmp/html/repatria_georgia_summary.html , accessed 22 January 2003

Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), 3 December 1996, Lisbon Document 1996
Internet : http://www.osce.org/documents/mcs/1996/12/4049_en.pdf , accessed 8 July 2009

Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), 14 April 2009, OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities deeply concerned by recent developments in Abkhazia
Internet : <http://www.osce.org/item/37226.html> , accessed 12 May 2009

Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), 28 January 2004, Georgia - Parliamentary Elections 2 November 2003, OSCE-ODIHR Election Observation Mission Report, Part 1 (Warsaw)
Internet : http://www.osce.org/documents/odihr/2004/01/1992_en.pdf , accessed 11 March 2004

Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), 27 November 2008, Human Rights in the war-affected areas following the conflict in Georgia
Internet : [http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/\(httpDocuments\)/6E4F7E8D6D1E3062C12575C90058AF5B/\\$file/35656_en+OSCE+ODHIR.pdf](http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/(httpDocuments)/6E4F7E8D6D1E3062C12575C90058AF5B/$file/35656_en+OSCE+ODHIR.pdf) ,

Pravda.ru, 2 October 2006, Russia launches economic blockade of Georgia, puts troops on high alert

Internet : http://english.pravda.ru/hotspots/conflicts/02-10-2006/84808-Russia_Georgia-0 ,
accessed 19 September 2007

Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL), 22 March 2009, Teachers in Abkhazia's Gali district under pressure to give up Georgian language

Internet :
http://www.rferl.org/content/Teachers_In_Abkhazias_Gali_District_Under_Pressure_To_Give_Up_Georgian_Language/1514767.html , accessed 12 May 2009

Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL), 31 March 2006, Georgia: Russia pledges to complete military pullout on schedule, by Jean-Christophe Peuch

Internet : <http://www.rferl.org/featuresarticle/2006/03/e5dd0364-b60c-4868-991c-8ba1e7ad2134.html> , accessed 16 August 2006

Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL), 19 July 2006, Georgia: Issue of Russian peacekeepers heats up

Internet : <http://www.rferl.org/featuresarticle/2006/07/77d16340-8d1f-4df4-af44-f2b9377fbb54.html> , accessed 16 August 2006

Reuters, 3 August 2006, Two Russian troops killed in rebel Georgian region

Internet : <http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/RWB.NSF/db900SID/LSGZ-6SBBXL?OpenDocument&rc=3&cc=geo> , accessed 16 August 2006

Reuters AlertNet, 19 November 2004, Crisis Profile: Why is tension resurfacing in Georgia?

Internet : <http://www.alertnet.org/thefacts/reliefresources/111997309085.htm> , accessed 21 March 2005

Reuters AlertNet, 13 March 2009, Georgians who fled war unable to return home -U.N.

Internet : <http://www.alertnet.org/thenews/newsdesk/LD614270.htm> , accessed 12 May 2009

Sumbadze Nana & Tarkhan-Mouravi George (UNDP Tbilisi), July 2003, Working Paper on IDP Vulnerability and Economic Self-Reliance

Internet : <http://www.undp.org/ge/news/EconomicSelfReliance.pdf> , accessed 12 April 2005

Swiss Peace Foundation, August 2007, FAST Update Georgia: Trends in conflict and cooperation Jun-Jul 2007

Internet :
http://www.swisspeace.ch/typo3/fileadmin/user_upload/pdf/FAST/Updates/2007/Georgia_FAST_Update_3_2007.pdf , accessed 19 September 2007

The Brookings Institution, 3 May 2006, Georgia must act on promises to end displacement crisis

Internet : http://www.brookings.edu/fp/projects/idp/articles/200605_FMR_WK_Georgia.pdf ,
accessed 16 August 2006

Transparency International (TI), 3 April 2009, Internally displaced persons in Georgia: Issues of concern

Internet : [http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/\(httpDocuments\)/4BDF541F03CCF7DEC12575B4004AADB3/\\$file/full_report+Transparency+International.pdf](http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/(httpDocuments)/4BDF541F03CCF7DEC12575B4004AADB3/$file/full_report+Transparency+International.pdf) ,

Transparency International (TI), 3 April 2009, Internally Displaced Persons in Georgia: Issues of Concern

Internet : [http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/\(httpDocuments\)/9C8F67B26287FF84C12575A6002F531](http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/(httpDocuments)/9C8F67B26287FF84C12575A6002F531)

[4/\\$file/215_500_756716_IDPs+in+Georgia+-+Issues+of+Concern+\(TI+Georgia\)+April+2009+ENG.pdf](#) ,

UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA), 7 October 2008, Consolidated Appeals Process (CAP): Revision of the Georgia Crisis Flash Appeal 2008

Internet :
[http://ochadms.unog.ch/quickplace/cap/main.nsf/h_Index/Revision_2008_Georgia_FA/\\$FILE/Revision_2008_Georgia_FA_SCREEN.pdf?OpenElement](http://ochadms.unog.ch/quickplace/cap/main.nsf/h_Index/Revision_2008_Georgia_FA/$FILE/Revision_2008_Georgia_FA_SCREEN.pdf?OpenElement) , accessed 23 June 2009

UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA), December 2003, IDP Bulletin, Issue No. 5

Internet :
<http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/rwb.nsf/AllDocsByUNID/7f763461ba18bdd3c1256e0b003d393f> , accessed 23 January 2004

UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA), 30 September 2004, OCHA Georgia Information Bulletin Sep 2004

Internet : <http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/RWB.NSF/db900SID/JCDR-65KMLK?OpenDocument&rc=3&cc=geo> , accessed 22 March 2005

UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA), 31 August 2004, OCHA Georgia Information Bulletin Aug 2004

Internet : <http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/RWB.NSF/db900SID/JMAN-64LBEU?OpenDocument&rc=3&cc=geo> , accessed 22 March 2005

UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA), 30 December 2004, OCHA Georgia Information Bulletin Dec 2004

Internet : <http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/RWB.NSF/db900SID/SZIE-686TCM?OpenDocument&rc=3&cc=geo> , accessed 21 March 2005

UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA), 19 November 2004, OCHA Georgia Humanitarian Situation and Strategy 2005

Internet :
<http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/6686f45896f15dbc852567ae00530132/a1247e3f7af5c9b6c1256f51004d0416?OpenDocument> , accessed 1 December 2004

UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA), June 2003, Georgia: Study on IDP Rights

Internet :
<http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/9ca65951ee22658ec125663300408599/18e77cb4325ae44fc1256d56003e717c?OpenDocument> , accessed 1 July 2003

UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA), November 2003, Georgia Humanitarian Situation and Strategy 2004

Internet :
<http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/f303799b16d2074285256830007fb33f/6fe35a80f260fe4549256de40025b995?OpenDocument> , accessed 9 March 2004

UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA), 15 January 2004, South Ossetia Briefing Note January 2004

Internet :
<http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/f303799b16d2074285256830007fb33f/92b9c3f690c7e18285256e1c0061274c?OpenDocument> , accessed 9 March 2004

UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA), 18 August 2008, Consolidated Appeals Process (CAP): Georgia Crisis Flash Appeal 2008

Internet : [http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/\(httpDocuments\)/0DFA568E97A5033AC12574AB006291F3/\\$file/Flash_2008_Georgia_SCREEN.pdf](http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/(httpDocuments)/0DFA568E97A5033AC12574AB006291F3/$file/Flash_2008_Georgia_SCREEN.pdf) ,

UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA), 16 August 2008, Situation Report No. 3 on the Situation in Georgia 16 Aug 2008

Internet : [http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/\(httpDocuments\)/B73620CA824361E6C12574A8006313A9/\\$file/geo_situation-report-3_16aug08.pdf](http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/(httpDocuments)/B73620CA824361E6C12574A8006313A9/$file/geo_situation-report-3_16aug08.pdf) ,

UNICEF/NRC, October 2006, Profile of Collective Centers, Annex 1

Internet : [http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/\(httpDocuments\)/E3BDC290B2826B91C125727500515EFF/\\$file/Collective_Center_Matrix.pdf](http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/(httpDocuments)/E3BDC290B2826B91C125727500515EFF/$file/Collective_Center_Matrix.pdf) ,

United Nations and World Bank, 22 October 2008, Georgia - Summary of Joint Needs Assessment Findings

Internet : [http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/\(httpDocuments\)/4A6AA6E803A44C07C12575C90032C3C7/\\$file/full_report+UN+and+World+Bank.pdf](http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/(httpDocuments)/4A6AA6E803A44C07C12575C90032C3C7/$file/full_report+UN+and+World+Bank.pdf) ,

United Nations Association of Georgia, 12 October 2004, Ossetian peacekeeper dies in an attack

Internet : <http://www.civil.ge/eng/article.php?id=8054> , accessed 22 March 2005

United Nations Association of Georgia, 10 January 2006, Georgia: Abkhaz official comments on Gali, IDPs

Internet : <http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/RWB.NSF/db900SID/RMOI-6KX32M?OpenDocument&rc=3&cc=geo> , accessed 16 August 2006

United Nations Association of Georgia, 2000, Cumulative Report on Education Among IDPs, Tbilisi

Internet : <http://www.una.org.ge/research/idpedureport.pdf> , accessed 29 January 2001

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), 18 February 2009, Three UN agencies launch joint cash assistance programme for displaced persons in Georgia

Internet : http://www.unicef.org/georgia/media_11138.html , accessed 12 May 2009

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), 2006, Georgia: Background

Internet : http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/georgia_background.html , accessed 16 August 2006

United Nations Commission on Human Rights (CHR), 6 July 1994, Protection of Minorities

Internet : <http://www.unhchr.ch/Huridocda/Huridoca.nsf/0/3b97f341e43ed3e980256736005757f3?Opendocument> , accessed 8 July 2009

United Nations Commission on Human Rights (CHR), 25 January 2001, Report of the Representative of the Secretary-General on internally displaced persons, Mr. Francis Deng, submitted pursuant to Commission on Human Rights resolution 2000/53, Addendum, Profiles in displacement: Georgia, E/CN.4/2001/5/Add.4

Internet : [http://www.unhchr.ch/Huridocda/Huridoca.nsf/\(Symbol\)/E.CN.4.2001.5.Add.4.En?Opendocument](http://www.unhchr.ch/Huridocda/Huridoca.nsf/(Symbol)/E.CN.4.2001.5.Add.4.En?Opendocument) accessed 19 October 2001

United Nations Commission on Human Rights (CHR), 22 March 2006, Report of the Representative of the Secretary-General on the human rights of internally displaced persons, Walter Kälin, Mission to Georgia (21 to 24 December 2005)

Internet : [http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/\(httpDocuments\)/2E2A676959437AA0C12571CC00525CA6/\\$file/Kalin+CHR+62+Georgia+mission+report.pdf](http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/(httpDocuments)/2E2A676959437AA0C12571CC00525CA6/$file/Kalin+CHR+62+Georgia+mission+report.pdf) , ,

United Nations Country Team in Georgia, 5 March 2009, Georgia: Humanitarian bulletin no. 4, 19 Feb - 05 Mar 2009

Internet : <http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/rwb.nsf/db900sid/ASAZ-7PVEGA?OpenDocument&rc=3&cc=geo> , accessed 19 March 2009

United Nations Country Team in Georgia, 13 August 2008, Georgia: Situation Report on the Conflict - No. 6, 13 Aug 2008

Internet : <http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/rwb.nsf/db900SID/EGUA-7HGMZB?OpenDocument&rc=3&cc=geo> , accessed 14 August 2008

United Nations Country Team in Georgia, 10 August 2008, Georgia: Situation Report on the Conflict - No. 3, 10 Aug 2008

Internet : <http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/rwb.nsf/db900sid/EGUA-7HGPTA?OpenDocument&rc=3&cc=geo> , accessed 14 August 2008

United Nations Country Team in Georgia, 30 November 2005, Georgia: Humanitarian situation and transition to development 2006 - Consolidated Policy Recommendations

Internet : <http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/RWB.NSF/db900SID/EVOD-6JLEJ2?OpenDocument&rc=3&cc=geo> , accessed 16 August 2006

United Nations Country Team in Georgia, 28 February 2006, Georgia: Humanitarian and development update Feb 2006

Internet : <http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/RWB.NSF/db900SID/EVOD-6MPKFX?OpenDocument&rc=3&cc=geo> , accessed 16 August 2006

United Nations Country Team in Georgia, 31 May 2006, Georgia: Humanitarian and transitional recovery update Apr-May 2006

Internet : <http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/RWB.NSF/db900SID/EVOD-6QPGJA?OpenDocument&rc=3&cc=geo> , accessed 16 August 2006

United Nations Country Team in Georgia, November 2006, Transition to Development 2006: Progress Report

Internet : [http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/\(httpDocuments\)/2E08EBBB8CD5C5C125725F004D8264/\\$file/HSTDreport7Dec06final_eng_.pdf](http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/(httpDocuments)/2E08EBBB8CD5C5C125725F004D8264/$file/HSTDreport7Dec06final_eng_.pdf) ,

United Nations Country Team in Georgia, 16 April 2009, Georgia: Humanitarian bulletin no. 6, 19 Mar - 16 Apr 2009

Internet : [http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/\(httpDocuments\)/75064964078EF61AC12575B4004A1575/\\$file/full_report+Humanitarian+Bulletin+nb+6+Georgia.pdf](http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/(httpDocuments)/75064964078EF61AC12575B4004A1575/$file/full_report+Humanitarian+Bulletin+nb+6+Georgia.pdf) ,

United Nations Country Team in Georgia, 23 March 2009, Georgia: Humanitarian bulletin no. 5, 05 - 19 Mar 2009

Internet : [http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/\(httpDocuments\)/B9BB44930F48B15CC12575B4004F4A1/\\$file/I+Humanitarian+bulletin+no5.pdf](http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/(httpDocuments)/B9BB44930F48B15CC12575B4004F4A1/$file/I+Humanitarian+bulletin+no5.pdf) ,

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), 5 February 2009, UNDP helps Georgia overcome impact of conflict
Internet : <http://content.undp.org/go/newsroom/2009/february/undp-helps-georgia-overcome-impact-of-conflict.en%3Bjsessionid=axbWzt8vXD9?categoryID=349434&lang=en> , accessed 2 June 2009

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), 2005, Abkhazia Briefing Note
Internet : <http://www.undp.org/ge/news/UNDPBriefNoteAbkhaziaJan2005.pdf> , accessed 16 August 2006

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), 2004, The New Approach to IDP Assistance in Georgia
Internet : [http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/\(httpDocuments\)/A9217B4A2EAEEC0B802570B700590108/\\$file/NA+Brochure.pdf](http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/(httpDocuments)/A9217B4A2EAEEC0B802570B700590108/$file/NA+Brochure.pdf) ,

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), 31 October 2008, Refugee Realities - Global Needs Assessment - Pilot report, October 2008
Internet : [http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/\(httpDocuments\)/A2598B44A99971B9C12575C90058FD5B/\\$file/48ef09a62+UNHCR+refugee+realities.pdf](http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/(httpDocuments)/A2598B44A99971B9C12575C90058FD5B/$file/48ef09a62+UNHCR+refugee+realities.pdf) ,

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), 30 June 2002, Global Report 2001 - Strategies and Activities (Geneva: UNHCR)

United Nations Human Rights Committee (HRC), 15 November 2007, Concluding observations of the Human Rights Committee. Georgia
Internet : [http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/\(httpDocuments\)/EC633EE317A50B5AC12573D40059A937/\\$file/HRC+Georgia+Concluding+Observations.pdf](http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/(httpDocuments)/EC633EE317A50B5AC12573D40059A937/$file/HRC+Georgia+Concluding+Observations.pdf) ,

United Nations Human Rights Council (UN HRC), 13 February 2009, Report of the Representative of the Secretary-General on the human rights of internally displaced persons, Walter Kälin, Addendum, Mission to Georgia A/HRC/10/13/Add.2
Internet : [http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/\(httpDocuments\)/84DB6D0D670BCDC4C12575B4005207B9/\\$file/A.HRC.10.13.Add.2_en+RSG+mission+13+Feb+2009.pdf](http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/(httpDocuments)/84DB6D0D670BCDC4C12575B4005207B9/$file/A.HRC.10.13.Add.2_en+RSG+mission+13+Feb+2009.pdf) ,

United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)

, 30 October 2008, UNFPA emergency response. Georgia, October 2008.
Internet : [http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/\(httpDocuments\)/B529101889BCB8B3C12575C900330928/\\$file/UNFPA+EMERGENCY+RESPONSE+October.pdf](http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/(httpDocuments)/B529101889BCB8B3C12575C900330928/$file/UNFPA+EMERGENCY+RESPONSE+October.pdf) ,

United Nations Security Council (UN SC), 28 September 2006, Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Abkhazia, Georgia (S/2006/771)
Internet : <http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/rwb.nsf/db900sid/EGUA-6U8Q4H?OpenDocument&rc=3&cc=geo> , accessed 19 September 2007

United Nations Security Council (UN SC), 17 January 2005, Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Abkhazia, Georgia
Internet : <http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/RWB.NSF/db900SID/HMYT-68TMQD?OpenDocument&rc=3&cc=geo> , accessed 21 March 2005

United Nations Security Council (UN SC), 24 March 2006, Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Abkhazia, Georgia (S/2006/173)

Internet : <http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/RWB.NSF/db900SID/HMYT-6N7LNM?OpenDocument&rc=3&cc=geo> , accessed 16 August 2006

United Nations Security Council (UN SC), 31 March 2006, Georgia: Resolution 1666 (2006) adopted by the Security Council at its 5405th meeting, on 31 March 2006 (S/RES/1666)

Internet : <http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/RWB.NSF/db900SID/LTIO-6NHKKH?OpenDocument&rc=3&cc=geo> , accessed 16 August 2006

United Nations Security Council (UN SC), 14 January 2004, Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Abkhazia, Georgia, S/2004/26

Internet : <http://www.un.org/Docs/sc/sgrep04.html> , accessed 13 February 2004

United Nations Security Council (UN SC), 13 February 2009, Security Council extends mandate of current United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia for four months, unanimously adopting resolution 1866 (2009) SC/9594

Internet : <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2009/sc9594.doc.htm> , accessed 12 May 2009

United Nations Security Council (UN SC), 3 February 2009, Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Abkhazia, Georgia, pursuant to Security Council resolution 1839 (2008) (S/2009/69)

Internet : [http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/\(httpDocuments\)/04F40F24B0B306DAC12575C90031801D/\\$file/full_report+SG+3+Febr+2009.pdf](http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/(httpDocuments)/04F40F24B0B306DAC12575C90031801D/$file/full_report+SG+3+Febr+2009.pdf) ,

United Nations Security Council (UN SC), 26 March 2009, Children and armed conflict - Report of the Secretary-General (A/63/785-S/2009/158)

Internet : [http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/\(httpDocuments\)/10F4A89E0768BD4BC12575B4004EFB8/\\$file/full_reportChildren+and+armed+conflict+--+Report+of+the+Secretary-General.pdf](http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/(httpDocuments)/10F4A89E0768BD4BC12575B4004EFB8/$file/full_reportChildren+and+armed+conflict+--+Report+of+the+Secretary-General.pdf) ,

United Nations Security Council (UN SC), 18 July 2007, Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Abkhazia, Georgia (S/2007/439)

Internet : [http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/\(httpDocuments\)/A4AA56B54392F493C125733700429A4/\\$file/Full_Report.pdf](http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/(httpDocuments)/A4AA56B54392F493C125733700429A4/$file/Full_Report.pdf) ,

United Nations Security Council (UN SC), 18 May 2009, Georgia: Report of the Secretary-General pursuant to Security Council resolutions 1808 (2008), 1839 (2008) and 1866 (2009) (S/2009/254)

Internet : [http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/\(httpDocuments\)/B3A943071FF2FD27C12575C900578698/\\$file/full_report+18+May+SG.pdf](http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/(httpDocuments)/B3A943071FF2FD27C12575C900578698/$file/full_report+18+May+SG.pdf) ,

U.S. Committee for Refugees (USCR), 2000, World Refugee Survey 2000 (Washington D.C.): Country report Georgia

Internet : <http://web.archive.org/web/20041031023802/www.refugees.org/world/countryrpt/europe/2000/georgia.htm> , accessed 17 July 2002

U.S. Department of State (U.S. DOS), 6 March 2007, Georgia, Country Reports on Human Rights Practices - 2006, Released by the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor

Internet : <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2006/78813.htm> , accessed 19 September 2007

World Bank (WB), May 2005, GEORGIA Social Capital and Employment Opportunities Among Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in Georgia Prepared by G. Tskitishvili, L. Dershem, V. Kechakmadze

Internet : [http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/\(httpDocuments\)/603354B80DBB2ACCC12571CC0067C26/\\$file/IDPs+Employment+Georgia.pdf](http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/(httpDocuments)/603354B80DBB2ACCC12571CC0067C26/$file/IDPs+Employment+Georgia.pdf) ,

World Food Programme (WFP), 13 August 2008, WFP reaches thousands in Georgia displaced by conflict

Internet : <http://www.wfp.org/english/?ModuleID=137&Key=2902> , accessed 14 August 2008

Zoidze, Akaki & Djibuti Mamuka, 2004, IDP Health Profile Review in Georgia, prepared under the New Approach to IDP Assistance Initiative, Tbilisi

Internet : http://www.undp.org.ge/news/IDP%20Health%20Profile%20Review_eng.pdf , accessed 22 March 2005