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Transitioning from Status to Needs Based Assistance for IDPs

A Poverty and Social Impact Analysis

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Transitioning from Status to Needs Based Assistance for Georgia IDPs: A Poverty and Social Impact Analysis

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

AAR	Abkhazian Autonomous Republic
AR	Autonomous Republic
EVIDPs	Extremely vulnerable internally-displaced persons
FGD	Focus group discussion
GEL	Georgian Lari (national currency of Georgia, 1 GEL = 0.42 USD)
Geostat	Georgian National Statistics Institute
GoG	Government of Georgia
HH	Household
IDI	In-depth interview
IDP	Internally displaced person
IHS	Integrated Household Survey (conducted by Geostat)
MDF	Municipal Development Fund
MoA	Ministry of Agriculture
MoES	Ministry of Education and Science
MoLHSA	Ministry of Labor, Health and Social Affairs
MoRDI	Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure
MRA	Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Accommodation, and Refugees
NCL IDPs	New case load IDPs
NGO	Non-governmental organization
OCL IDPs	Old case local IDPs
PSIA	Poverty and Social Impact Analysis
TSA	Targeted Social Assistance
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

Introduction

- 1. This report presents to the Government of Georgia (GoG) an analysis of the implications of potential policy changes to IDP assistance.** It was prepared in response to a request from the Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Accommodation and Refugees of Georgia (MRA). Specifically the MRA has requested the World Bank's help in analyzing the social and economic significance of the IDP benefit¹ and the potential impacts of its removal.
- 2. The scope of the current PSIA has evolved in its initial stage of research.** In 2014, the World Bank initiated a policy review with the broad objective to support the GoG in determining how current policies and programs can be strengthened to support the two major goals of the State Strategy on IDPs: to create conditions for the dignified and safe return of IDPs, and to support decent living conditions for the displaced population and their participation in society. This work was envisioned as a broad policy review including: (i) a legal, policy, and institution review in possible improvements in the enabling environment and coordination to deliver better outcomes for IDPs; (ii) assess current situation and optimal development outcomes for IDPs in areas such as housing, employment, livelihoods, participation; and psycho-social support; (iii) assess options on what can be done to better tailor support to IDPs in these areas; and (iv) how can attention to IDP needs be better mainstreamed in sector policies. A pressing question for policy makers in Georgia is the sustainability of status-based IDP assistance and what efforts can be made to tailor this assistance to favor the poor and vulnerable. In consultation with MRA the scope of this analysis was narrowed down to focus specifically on potential adjustments to the IDP status benefit, and in particular, on the poverty and social implications of such reforms.
- 3. The primary audience for this research is the Georgian Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons (MRA).** However, this research is of relevance to other Government and non-governmental stakeholders as well as development partners. For example, adjustments to the IDP benefit are likely to affect directly the workload of the Ministry of Health Labor and Social Assistance by increasing the number of potential applicants to the Targeted Social Assistance program². If the IDP benefit is one of the main sources of income of an IDP household, it may also affect their ability to access other basic services such as education and health. Changes to the IDP benefit need to be coordinated with other policies and programs, for example those that address the housing needs of IDPs.

¹ In this report, "IDP benefit" refers to the monthly cash benefit, to which all Georgian citizens registered as IDPs from occupied territories, are entitled. It is also often referred to as "IDP allowance" or "social allowance" for IDPs.

² Currently IDPs have to choose between receiving the IDP benefit or Targeted Social Assistance. The IDP benefit is a fixed monthly sum of 45 GEL/month given to any registered IDP citizen with per capita income of less than 1,250 GEL/month. The Targeted Social Assistance (TSA) program is a means-tested cash benefit targeting the poorer segments of the population. The TSA involves a more complex application procedure but could offer an overall more generous benefit depending on the households' characteristics.

4. **Elimination of the IDP benefit has been subject to debate among policymakers.** Several reasons have been brought forth in support of such decision. First, there is an understanding that continuing to provide a fixed benefit to the country's large IDP population poses a significant fiscal burden³. Second, there is an emerging consensus among policymakers in Georgia on the need to use existing resources for those who most need it rather than supporting status-based programs. And third, given the protracted nature of displacement in Georgia starting from the 1990s, it is likely that the vulnerabilities and welfare needs of IDPs have changed over time and IDP assistance policies should reflect these changes.
5. **The World Bank has worked with the Government to support improvements to the socio-economic situation of IDPs in Georgia since 2008.** The IDP Community Development Project, implemented between 2009-2012 improved service delivery, infrastructure, and livelihoods in over 40 IDP communities⁴. A 2013 analytic report by the World Bank identified key constraints for IDPs to secure sustainable livelihoods: (i) lack of access to land; (ii) lack of access to financial services; (iii) weak social capital; (iv) lack of skills and education; (v) psycho-social issues; and (vi) extreme vulnerability.⁵ It analyzed replicable good practices from existing projects for strengthening livelihood support to IDPs.⁶
6. **Evidence on the socio-economic needs of IDPs has been collected by both Government and donors; yet no comprehensive research has been conducted to critically compare their situation to that of the overall population.** In order to understand the potential poverty, economic and welfare impacts of removing the status-based benefit, and analyze whether such decision may be justified, more research was needed. Specifically, it is necessary to review the extent to which IDPs' needs are similar to those of the rest of the population, identify distinct vulnerabilities they face that should be considered when adjusting IDP assistance, and examine other – political, social, institutional – factors that may support or obstruct changes in IDP assistance policy.
7. **The objective of this research is to generate more evidence on the significance of the IDP benefit, and consequences that may be expected if this benefit is removed, in order to inform future policy decisions of the GoG in this regard.** The report examines: (i) the policy and institutional framework and considerations that may support or obstruct a shift in IDP assistance; (ii) quantitative evidence on the socio-economic situation of IDPs as compared to non-IDPs in Georgia; and (iii) qualitative evidence on the significance of the IDP benefit, attitudes towards the benefit program, and

³ With IDPs representing about 6% of the population, Georgia has one of the highest incidences of internal displacement relative to its overall population in the world.

⁴ World Bank. 2013. *Implementation Status and Results Report. Georgia: IDP Community Development Project.* http://imagebank.worldbank.org/servlet/WDSContentServer/IW3P/ECA/2013/03/18/090224b0819f0f8c/1_0/Rendered/PDF/Georgia000IDP00Report000Sequence005.pdf

⁵ World Bank. 2013. "Supporting the Livelihoods of Internally Displaced Persons in Georgia"

⁶ Other international partners (EU, UNHCR, USAID, FAO, SDC, among other) are also providing technical and financial support to address physical and economic needs of IDPs.

vulnerabilities that may arise from its potential elimination. The paper concludes with policy recommendations for mitigating negative poverty and social impacts, should the Government pursue a decision to remove the IDP benefit program.

8. **This report focuses on potential poverty and social impacts of eliminating the IDP benefit.** It does not cover analysis of the fiscal burden of the benefit, or specific legal and regulatory steps for making this transition to alternative assistance for IDPs. These are important aspects of the Government's decision on the program that would require additional investigation.

Context

9. Georgia is a small country in the South Caucasus with a population of about 3.7 million people.

The Georgian economy has grown substantially in the last decade, averaging 6% per annum between 2004 and 2013.⁷ Structural reforms and liberalization policies starting in 2004 have strengthened Georgia's competitiveness and supported new areas of growth. However, poverty levels have remained high and present a serious public policy challenge. As of 2012, 14.8 and 3.7 percent of the population lived in poverty and extreme poverty respectively.⁸ High levels of unemployment partially explain the weak link between growth and poverty reduction. Strong economic growth in 2006-2008 was accompanied by high unemployment in the 12 to 13 percent range and limited wage growth.⁹ Unemployment peaked to 17 percent in 2010 and then fell to 14.3 percent in 2013.¹⁰ In recent years, social protection initiatives have played an important part in addressing poverty, especially among the poorest and most vulnerable groups.

10. Georgia has grappled with internal displacement for more than two decades. Following secessionist conflicts in the early nineties in the Tskhinvali Region-South Ossetia and the Abkhazian Autonomous Republic, and again in August 2008, and given that IDP status is transferred from either parent to their children, in 2014 a total of 246,974¹¹ men, women, and children were registered as internally displaced persons (IDPs).¹² IDPs represent about 6% of Georgia's population, giving it one of the world's highest incidences of internal displacement relative to its overall population. Demographic figures indicate that 55 percent of IDPs are women, 9 percent are children under age of 18, and 13 percent are persons over 65 years old.¹³

⁷ The World Bank. 2014. Georgia: Country Partnership Strategy 2014-2017.

http://www-wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/2014/04/17/000371432_20140417112902/Rendered/PDF/852510CASOP144080Box385177B000UO090.pdf

⁸ Poverty and extreme poverty are measured using absolute poverty lines anchored on the national relative poverty and extreme poverty lines. An absolute poverty line is used to facilitate comparisons of poverty performance over time in Georgia. The 2012 values were GEL 91.2 per adult equivalent per month and GEL 52.9 per adult equivalent per month (extreme or food poverty line).

⁹ World Bank Data Indicators. Available at <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/>

¹⁰ Ibid

¹¹ Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Accommodation and Refugees of Georgia. <http://mra.gov.ge/eng/static/3181>; accessed on January 5, 2016 (statistics are regularly updated by the Ministry)

¹² This figure represents the current total number of registered displaced people from the conflicts in the early 1990s and in August 2008. The total number of internally displaced people has however fluctuated over time. In the early 1990s, over 300,000 people were displaced. The August 2008 conflict displaced an estimated 192,000 people. A majority of IDPs from August 2008 have returned, with recent figures indicating that 20,272 remain displaced. The IDPs from the early nineties therefore constitute the largest share of the currently displaced 259,247 people. Some IDPs displaced from Abkhazia returned in the mid-nineties, but many were re-expelled in 1999, though some remained in the lower and upper Gali districts of Abkhazia.

¹³ According to figures from the Integrated Household Survey (2011-2013)

- 11. IDPs in Georgia are often described as being part of two different “case loads”.** IDPs from the first wave in the early 1990s are commonly referred to as the “old case load” IDPs (OCL IDPs).¹⁴ These IDPs, originating both from the Abkhazian Autonomous Republic and the Tskhinvali Region-South Ossetia, have been displaced for up to twenty years. Included among the OCL IDPs are those who have returned to the Lower and Upper Gali districts of the Abkhazian AR, where the *de facto* Abkhaz authorities have allowed Georgians to return. The rate of return is however constrained due to demographic concerns among Abkhaz *de facto* authorities, who worry that further concessions for return would cause instability.¹⁵ Those who have returned to Gali retain their IDP status but are subject to precarious situations such as intimidation and threats resulting from ethnic tensions in the region.¹⁶ OCL IDPs were placed in collective centers, such as state-owned hotels, unused public buildings, etc., where many of them remain to this date.
- 12. A second wave of displacement occurred in August 2008 when a separatist conflict broke out in the Tskhinvali Region - South Ossetia.** An estimated 192,000 people were forced to flee in the wake of ethnic violence and armed conflict between Georgia and Russia¹⁷. IDPs from this second wave are referred to as “new case load” IDPs (NCL IDPs). Most of the NCL IDPs were able to return home in the weeks following a ceasefire agreed upon on August 12, 2008, but 20,272 people remained displaced.
- 13. IDPs are largely clustered in areas adjacent to the conflict zones, and in or around major cities.** IDPs displaced from the Abkhazian Autonomous Republic have mainly settled in the adjacent regions of Samegrelo and Imereti, and in major urban areas such as Tbilisi and Batumi. IDPs from the Tskhinvali Region - South Ossetia are largely located in the adjacent region of Shida Kartli. According to official statistics, as many as 44 percent of IDPs are living in Tbilisi, and approximately 26.4 percent are living in Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti, the region bordering the Abkhazian Autonomous Republic.¹⁸ As many as 75 percent of IDPs live in urban areas, compared to 49 percent of the overall population.¹⁹

¹⁴ These are the IDPs that were displaced following the secessionist conflict in Tskhinvali Region - South Ossetia and the Abkhazian Autonomous Republic in the early nineties. Following Georgia’s 1991 declaration of independence, there were calls for secession from both regions, with calls for secession escalating to armed conflicts. Both regions subsequently declared independence in 1992 and have remained under the control of *de facto* authorities. The majority of IDPs were ethnic Georgians from the Abkhazian Autonomous Republic, and around 60,000 Ossetians and ethnic Georgians were displaced from the Tskhinvali Region - South Ossetia. Sporadic violence continued at intervals thereafter before culminating in the August 2008 conflict.

¹⁵ UNHCR (2009). Protection of IDPs in Georgia: A Gap Analysis. Geneva: UNHCR. <http://www.unhcr.org/4ad827f59.pdf>.

¹⁶ Ibid

¹⁷ United Nations News Centre (2008). Revised UN Estimates Show 192,000 Uprooted during Georgia Conflict. <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=28032#.VYMxco53kvw>

¹⁸ Integrated Household Survey (IHS) (2011-2013).

¹⁹ Ibid

Map 1. Distribution of IDP population, 2011²⁰



14. **The Government of Georgia has taken demonstrable steps towards improving the socioeconomic conditions of IDPs.** One such step has been the provision of universal status-based welfare assistance that includes, among other benefits, the provision of a monthly cash allowance to IDPs.²¹ This is in addition to a one-off cash assistance for newly displaced persons. As of 2013, IDP families living in extreme poverty are also eligible for a one-time cash allowance²². To reduce the risk of eviction for vulnerable IDP households, they are also eligible for a one-time rental assistance.

15. **IDP families living below the poverty line are eligible to apply for the Targeted Social Assistance (TSA) program, launched by the Government in 2006 to alleviate poverty among extremely vulnerable segments of the population.** IDPs who claim TSA are required to give up their IDP allowance. Thus, the current system of social assistance to IDPs is a mix of status-based and targeted social assistance, in which IDPs can choose either type of assistance but not both.

²⁰ Source: MRA (2011) cited in Rolfes. 2015. *Improving Access to Agricultural Land for Forcefully Displaced Persons: Lessons from Georgia*. World bank presentation, November 9, 2015

²¹ The World Bank. (2013). Supporting the livelihoods of Internally Displaced Persons in Georgia. http://imagebank.worldbank.org/servlet/WDSContentServer?IW3P/IB/2013/07/03/000333037_20130703101637/Rendered/PDF/791740WP0Georg0Box0377356B00PUBLIC0.pdf

²² MRA. <http://mra.gov.ge/eng/static/3193>, last accessed on January 7, 2016

16. **Since 2007, the Government’s policy on IDPs has focused on their long-term integration rather than temporary solutions.** This was most clearly expressed in the Government’s commitment to seek durable housing solutions. The State Strategy for Internally Displaced Persons in 2007, and subsequent action plans in 2009²³ and 2012²⁴, marked a focus on integrating IDPs in host communities by providing options for home ownership. Previous government policies had focused on temporary accommodation in collective centers. With the onset of the 2007 Strategy, new housing was constructed and some collective centers were rehabilitated for durable accommodation. Privatization of collective centers was also initiated with some residents receiving formal ownership of their living units.²⁵
17. **Other efforts to improve the socioeconomic conditions of IDPs have also been promoted by international development partners and small-scale NGO programs.** Such programs include²⁶: (i) The provision of land, agricultural inputs, and livestock for IDPs to pursue agricultural production; (ii) Vocational training to improve skills; (iii) Provision of grants and loans to increase access to financial assets; and (iv) Community mobilization for community-driven solutions to livelihood needs.

²³ Action Plan for the Implementation of the State Strategy on IDPs during 2009-2012.

http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2009_2014/documents/dsca/dv/dsca_20110315_14/dsca_20110315_14en.pdf

²⁴ Ibid

²⁵ IDPs living in privatized collective centers are classified as privately accommodated

²⁶The World Bank. (2013). Supporting the livelihoods of Internally Displaced Persons in Georgia.

http://imagebank.worldbank.org/servlet/WDSContentServer/IB/2013/07/03/000333037_20130703101637/Rendered/PDF/791740WP0Georg0Box0377356B00PUBLIC0.pdf

Methodology

18. **This analysis aims to inform policy decisions on potential changes to IDP assistance.** To this end, the report takes stock of existing vulnerabilities and protection needs of IDPs, compares IDP needs and vulnerabilities to the overall population, and highlights specific risks and possible mitigation measures to be considered, should the Government decide to pursue a transition from status to needs-based IDP assistance.
19. **The research was informed by:** *(i) desk review:* an assessment of Georgia’s laws, policies, and institutions for IDP assistance compared to international good practice; *(ii) quantitative data analysis:* to compare the situation of IDPs and non-IDPs in Georgia by key socio-economic indicators; and *(iii) qualitative research and analysis:* to assess additional and distinct vulnerabilities faced by IDPs and/or IDP sub-groups that may increase if this benefit is removed, as well as to examine attitudes of both IDP and non-IDP population to the status benefit and its potential removal.
20. **These three sources of data are described in more detail below:**

(i) Desk Review:

This component included a review of prior research conducted on IDP needs and livelihoods, as well as a comprehensive review of Georgian legislation and policy documents concerning the protection and integration of IDPs. The desk review also included an assessment of institutional capacity and gaps in policy coordination.

The purpose of the desk review was to assess the extent to which there is an enabling environment for IDPs to be fully integrated in their communities, including accessing services and markets, and having equal economic opportunities as the rest of the population. Also, the review aimed to point out any gaps either in legislation, institutional cooperation, or specific sector policies that may create or perpetuate barriers for IDP integration. A strong policy framework for IDP integration is an important prerequisite to ensure that distinct needs of IDPs will continue to be addressed if the Government pursues alignment of IDP assistance with that of the rest of the population.

(ii) Quantitative data analysis:

The quantitative analysis was based on household survey data from three sources:

- Integrated Household Survey (2011-2013). National Statistics Office of Georgia, GEOSTAT.
- Intentions Survey on Durable Solutions among IDPs in Georgia: Voices Of Internally Displaced Persons In Georgia (2014). UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

- Economic and Social Vulnerability in Georgia Household Survey (2011). United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and National Statistics Office of Georgia.

The purpose of the quantitative analysis was to compare socio-economic data on IDPs versus non-IDPs and assess the extent to which IDPs have been able to integrate, access services, local markets, income and livelihood opportunities, and overall partake in local development. Importantly, this data was also used to identify any areas of persisting vulnerabilities among IDPs, or within particular groups of IDPs, which need to be addressed and prioritized if the Government pursues any changes to IDP assistance.

(iii) Qualitative research and analysis:

The qualitative research included primary data collection in May and June 2015. Twenty-four focus group discussions, 10 key informant interviews, and 5 ethnographic case studies were conducted²⁷. Focus group discussions were held with IDPs and non-IDPs in urban and rural areas in Tbilisi and three regions: Kakheti, Samegrelo, and Shida Kartli. Key informant interviews were held with policy makers, public institution representatives at national and local levels, non-governmental organizations, IDP leaders, and international development partners. A more detailed description of the qualitative sample is included in Annex III.

The purpose of the qualitative assessment was to validate and complement quantitative data on IDPs' socio-economic integration. Specifically, qualitative data has been used to explore in more detail barriers to employment, education, and income generating activities. It has also allowed the study to examine IDPs' own assessment of their priority needs and persisting social and economic challenges. An important contribution of the qualitative data has been to examine attitudes of IDPs as well as non-IDPs to the overall significance of the IDP status benefit. The IDP benefit carries important symbolic and political value beyond providing social and economic support. In this context, any changes to IDP assistance have to be grounded in a good understanding of public opinion with regard to this policy and accompanied by appropriate public awareness and communications effort.

21. This report summarizes key findings and policy recommendations from this research. More detailed background information from the policy and institutional review, quantitative and qualitative analyses is included in Annexes I – III respectively.

²⁷ Details on the qualitative sample are included in Annex III.

Key Findings

Key Finding 1: Georgia has put in place a comprehensive policy framework to address IDP issues but challenges in policy implementation and institutional coordination persist in delivering services to IDPs.

22. Overall, Georgia’s policy framework supporting IDPs compares relatively well to those of other countries, and is based on the UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement.²⁸ Georgia is party to almost all major human rights and humanitarian law international treaties, as well as the Rome Statute. The legal reform process in line with these commitments is advanced and the Government has enacted IDP specific laws and policies. Over 200 legislative acts with provisions concerning IDPs have been adopted since 1992, demonstrating active policy concern with internally displaced persons.²⁹ The government is actively seeking opportunities for further improvement.

23. The Georgian Law on Internally Displaced Persons – Persecuted from the Occupied Territories of Georgia (the *Law on IDPs*)³⁰ sets out the rights of IDPs and responsibilities of the Government of Georgia towards IDPs. First adopted in 1996, it was later amended in 2001, 2005, 2006, and most recently in 2014. Under the *Law on IDPs*, internally displaced persons are entitled to a monthly allowance and adequate housing. As all Georgian citizens, they are also entitled to free primary and secondary education, medical coverage under existing state programs, and assistance in finding temporary employment in accordance with their profession and qualifications. The law also protects IDPs from arbitrary evictions.³¹

24. On March 1, 2014, several key amendments were made to the Law on Internally Displaced Persons:³²

- Increase in IDP monthly allowance to GEL 45.³³
- Suspension of IDP allowance if the taxable income of an IDP amounts to 1,250 GEL or more.
- Equalization of housing allowance for IDPs and abolishing the differentiation between IDPs living in ‘compact’ and ‘private’ accommodation.
- Guaranteeing integration of IDPs into other parts of the country before returning to their places of permanent residence.

²⁸ The Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement. <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/IDPersons/Pages/Standards.aspx>

²⁹ UNHCR (2009). Protection of IDPs in Georgia: A Gap Analysis. Geneva: UNHCR. <http://www.unhcr.org/4ad827f59.pdf>.

³⁰ Law of Georgia on Internally Displaced Persons – Persecuted from the Occupied Territories of Georgia. <http://mra.gov.ge/res/docs/201406171444442634.pdf>.

³¹ Ibid

³² <http://mra.gov.ge/eng/static/3421>

³³ Prior to legislative changes in 2014, IDPs who lived in collective centers received 22 GEL and those who lived in private accommodation received 28 GEL per month.

- Full protection of IDPs from eviction in premises under their legal ownership.
- Abolishing suspension of IDP allowance for IDPs who leave the country for more than two months, for business trips, study or medical treatment provided that they informed the Ministry prior to their travel.
- Simplification of registration for IDP status.
- Restitution of IDP property in the occupied territory and right to inheritance recognized.
- Abolishing the exemption from the land taxes on agricultural land plots temporarily allocated to IDPs.

25. **In 2007 the government endorsed the State Strategy for Internally Displaced Persons-Persecuted,³⁴ and subsequent action plan in 2009³⁵ that was adapted and updated again in 2012 and 2013.³⁶** This Strategy signaled an important shift in Government policy from temporary assistance to a focus on providing longer term opportunities for integration. In addition to creating conditions for safe and dignified return, the current Action Plan on IDPs sets three main goals for the state: (i) to support durable housing solutions; (ii) to improve livelihoods and socio-economic integration; and (iii) to raise the awareness of IDPs about available services.

26. **The subsequent Action Plans for the Implementation of the State Strategy on IDPs (2009-2012 and 2012-2014) envisages the resolution of IDP housing problems.** Quality of housing and living conditions, as well as lack of secure housing tenure have been two of the primary challenges for IDP integration. In this context, reducing IDPs' dependency on the State and accommodating their longer-term needs has triggered more efforts on providing housing solutions. The issue of housing is particularly prominent for old case load IDPs, many of whom still reside in collective centers.

27. **While the IDP policy framework is strong, policy implementation has been challenging.** On the one hand, limited resources have prevented provision of faster and more adequate housing support. On the other hand, inter-agency coordination and institutional capacity to provide services for IDPs at the *local level* needs to be strengthened to correspond to the commitments made in national legislation and the national Government's Strategy on IDPs. The MRA bears responsibility for IDP policy and its implementation. However, at the local level the success of IDP policy implementation also relies strongly on coordination among other service agencies, including education, health, employment and social services.

³⁴ State Strategy on Internally Displaced Persons-Persecuted (2007). [http://chca.org.ge/itst/ FILES/Legislation/3%20Eng.pdf](http://chca.org.ge/itst/FILES/Legislation/3%20Eng.pdf)

³⁵ Action Plan for the Implementation of the State Strategy on IDPs during 2009-2012. http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2009_2014/documents/dsca/dv/dsca_20110315_14/dsca_20110315_14en.pdf

³⁶ Ibid

Internal displacement in a global perspective

Forced displacement is an increasingly significant global development challenge. At the end of 2008, some 26 million people around the world were displaced within the borders of their home country. In 2008 alone, some 4.6 million persons were displaced due to conflict, violence or human rights violations, and more than 35 million persons were displaced by natural disasters.

The Brookings-Bern project report on *Addressing Internal Displacement: A Framework for National Responsibility* identified 12 key steps that governments should take to address needs of IDPs. One of the key steps is the adoption of IDP-specific laws and policies and incorporating the rights of IDPs into domestic laws in accordance with the UN Guiding Principles. Georgia is one of fourteen countries that have adopted IDP-specific laws or policies. Georgia has made progress on all twelve steps while still grappling with the challenge to maintain consistent data on the socio-economic profile of IDPs in order to monitor impacts of assistance programs.

Many IDPs across the world face situations of protracted displacement, defined as displacement of longer than five years. These situations often perpetuate a cycle of vulnerability and long-term dependence on state aid, urging governments to consider durable solutions. Because IDPs tend to concentrate in urban areas, durable solutions have often meant integrating IDPs into urban planning for infrastructure and service delivery, as well as into systems of local governance. This has been the case in contexts like Afghanistan with the majority of displaced persons concentrating in Kabul, and Sudan, where IDPs from South Sudan have concentrated in Khartoum. Georgia also follows this trend, with Tbilisi housing almost half (about 44 percent) of the IDP population. Good practices in durable solutions also show that assistance to IDPs should serve to promote development in the broader communities in which IDPs reside. Livelihood programs targeted to IDPs should be made available to non-IDPs in the same community. Such programs should try to make use of specific skills that IDPs bring. For example, returnees in Eritrea have brought an influx of human resources and social capital to the communities in which they have settled, and the assistance programs that were originally targeted at returnees, have helped spur wider community development.

Source: Christensen and Harild (2009)

28. The MRA serves as the main central authority on IDP-related issues. It coordinates the government's response on internal displacement, and provides services to IDPs. These include certifying the identity and status of displaced persons, distributing monthly IDP allowances, and maintaining IDP information databases. It is responsible for coordinating the services of all other government agencies relating to IDPs. The MRA is headquartered in Tbilisi and has four regional branches. In these locations, IDPs can seek assistance on issues such as monthly benefits, housing needs, emergency aid, and assistance in finding employment.³⁷

29. The MRA's Steering Committee is the decision-making body tasked with implementing the State Strategy for Internally Displaced Persons-Persecuted,³⁸ and subsequent action plans. It includes representatives of line ministries, donors, international and local non-governmental organizations.³⁹ The Steering Committee appoints Expert Groups that address specific time-bound tasks in the Action Plans. Conceived as small groups of invited experts in specialized fields, the Expert Groups

³⁷ UNHCR (2009). Protection of IDPs in Georgia: A Gap Analysis. Geneva: UNHCR. <http://www.unhcr.org/4ad827f59.pdf>

³⁸ State Strategy on Internally Displaced Persons-Persecuted (2007). [http://chca.org.ge/itst/ FILES/Legislation/3%20Eng.pdf](http://chca.org.ge/itst/FILES/Legislation/3%20Eng.pdf)

³⁹ MRA, MoJ, MoLHSA, MoA, MRDI, MoF, MoESD, MDF, Government of Abkhazian Autonomous Republic, EU, UNHCR, WB, UNCT, SDC, KFW, EUMM, PDO, GYLA, DRC, TA, BPRM.

participate in tasks such as the selection of criteria for new housing standards, evaluation of rehabilitation standards, and the development of outreach strategies on IDP benefits.⁴⁰

- 30. Limited resources and capacity, and poor communication, appear to be the greatest challenges in the implementation of IDP policies by the MRA.** Despite efforts by the MRA to decentralize and establish local focal points, the capacity to reach out and provide timely services to IDPs is still constrained. In focus group discussions, IDPs note that their social network is the primary source of information on available support programs, and lack of information is a serious constraint in taking advantage of available assistance.

“We get information from each other, as it is difficult to get information directly from the MRA. You can’t get information by phone, so you have to go to the office and wait in a long queue, or simply trust the information that others have obtained.”⁴¹

- 31. Raising the awareness of IDPs about the wide range of services available to them, as well as strengthening feedback and communication mechanisms with IDPs, is currently one of MRA’s priorities.** The MRA Hotline serves over 40,000 IDPs each year. Most common questions and concerns relate to living spaces, communal problems in collective centers, compensation and cash assistance, status and registration, and programs implemented by other governmental or non-governmental organizations.

- 32. Implementation of housing assistance coordinated by MRA has been challenging.** One of the key concerns for IDPs who have received or are awaiting a housing subsidy is the size of the subsidy, which is often not considered sufficient to buy a house⁴². Purchasing a house in the Georgian context is considered important for security of tenure, due to lack of a well-developed market for rent and as collateral for access to finance. The amount is especially low for urban housing, where most livelihood opportunities for a landless IDP household would be. IDP respondents in focus group discussions noted that the subsidy can only be used when supplemented with a mortgage or a loan. The process of receiving the subsidy is long and complex, which presents a coordination problem when house searching. IDPs need to negotiate purchase of a house with a seller but cannot rely on the timeframe in which they will receive the subsidy.

“We applied, for assistance to buy an apartment, but it is not possible to buy an apartment for 20 000 GEL. The only thing that can be bought for such a price is a cattle shed.”⁴³

“You should make an agreement between yourself and the person from whom you buy an apartment and then the government will pay directly to this person”⁴⁴

⁴⁰ Transparency International Georgia (2010). Concept Note: The Role of TI Georgia on the MRA Steering Committee for IDP Issues.

http://www.transparency.ge/sites/default/files/post_attachments/Concept_TI_Georgias_role_on_MRA_Steering_Committee_ENG.pdf

⁴¹FGD Samegrelo - IDPs having IDP allowance, living in private settlement, Rural

⁴² The size of the housing subsidy is determined by the number of family members.

⁴³ FGD Samgrelo- - IDPs having Social assistance living in compact settlements; Urban

33. Poor coordination across various ministries and other authorities over IDP issues has also constrained policy implementation. There are many agencies and ministries involved in dealing with IDP issues, and the division of tasks across the agencies is not always clear to the beneficiaries. As a result, IDPs may have limited access to information and the benefits that are due to them. Despite efforts to decentralize services to the local level, resource and capacity constraints at this level challenge policy implementation. In addition, MRA branches and SSA offices in the districts often work in isolation and without close coordination with other government institutions. This may result in central decision-making in Tbilisi without a clear picture of local IDP needs.

34. Various Government institutions, in addition to the MRA, have direct responsibilities in addressing the needs of IDPs:

- The **Ministry of Labor, Health, and Social Affairs (MoLHSA)** regulates and coordinates the operation of the social assistance system including the TSA, monitors the efficiency of social assistance, and develops methodologies for assessing household socioeconomic needs.⁴⁵ IDPs who receive social transfers, pensions, or employment assistance receive these benefits from the MoLHSA. Qualitative research indicates that IDPs perceive themselves to be less informed of all social services provided, possibly because they communicate mostly with the MRA, and have less interaction with programs administered by this Ministry.
- The **Ministry of Education and Science (MoES)** has sought to accommodate IDP needs by providing targeted services such as free school bus ride services and free textbooks, as well as improving staffing and resources for underserved schools among IDP populations.
- The **Ministry of Agriculture (MoA)** does not have staff specifically charged with IDP issues. The MoA Agricultural Development Project targets all farmers in Georgia, including IDPs. However, IDP demand for assistance to support agriculture exceeds supply. For example, agro vouchers are generally perceived as a good type of support but the vouchers are occasionally distributed too late.⁴⁶ The share of income from agricultural activity varies from 10% to 70% among the focus group participants. However, it is considered an unstable source of income by the majority of participating IDPs and further efforts by the line ministry may help to stabilize this key source of income and employment for IDPs. Lack of land ownership is another constraint for IDPs who wish to develop income from agriculture. Ideas to support agricultural activities among IDPs have included programs to facilitate a land lease market. An MoA program providing agricultural tools to IDPs was also considered effective.

⁴⁴ FGD Tbilisi – Urban IDP living in collective center.

⁴⁵ Georgian Social Assistance Law, Article 16

⁴⁶ FGD with IDPs living in a rural compact settlement and with access to/receiving social allowance in Gori- Shida Kartli Region.

- The **Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure (MoRDI)** works in close coordination with regional governments and municipalities in the local integration of IDPs, and in coordinating the regional implementation of the Action Plan.
- The **Municipal Development Fund (MDF)** is coordinated by the Supervisory Board and the Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure (MoRDI). Through its Infrastructure Rehabilitation Project the Fund has reconstructed some of the municipalities affected by the 2008 conflict. Furthermore, the fund has been working on rehabilitation and reconstruction of houses for IDPs. In cooperation with MRA the Fund presently acquires houses for IDPs in West Georgia. The Fund has already completed rehabilitation and reconstruction housing projects for IDPs in several other parts of Georgia: “Tskaltubo (400 apartments), Kutaisi (65 apartments), Poti (104 apartments) and Zugdidi (320 apartments).

35. In sum, while Georgia has a comprehensive legal and policy framework for IDP support, further efforts are needed to ensure that IDPs have equal information and opportunity to access all available services. These efforts can be directed at better outreach and awareness raising among IDPs on all services available to them beyond IDP assistance. This should entail stronger coordination between MRA and various line Ministries regarding communication on the respective service. In addition, strengthening capacity of local level service institutions is needed to be able to integrate IDPs adequately in existing service programs.

36. Coordination and clear division of stakeholder roles and responsibilities will be essential in supporting further adjustments to IDP assistance programs. While a large number of governmental and non-governmental stakeholders have a direct impact on the situation of IDPs, with the exception of the MRA, their responsibilities for IDP support are not always clearly defined. This prevents adequate policy planning, budgeting and coordination of potential support to IDPs, particularly in mainstream programming where special attention to IDP needs is merited. It also constrains the collection of holistic baseline on IDPs as the myriad different service providers collect their data independently.

37. Sharing of accountability for addressing IDP needs is an important step to ensure opportunities for long term integration, should they be desired. In this regard, specific policy and program responsibilities need to be built into national and local government programs, for example in the areas of land, employment, small business development, housing, and social protection, among others. Annex I provides a more detailed map of stakeholders and key challenges in stakeholder coordination.

Key Finding 2: There are no significant differences in poverty levels of IDPs and non-IDPs; however, differences persist in unemployment and income security for IDPs.

38. A recent World Bank study (2013)⁴⁷ examined whether there are specific vulnerabilities common to IDPs. The study identified seven areas in which IDP populations in Georgia continue to face relative disadvantages and require more support: (i) a higher risk for long-term poverty; (ii) high variability in sources of income; (iii) a high risk of unemployment; (iv) isolation and exclusion from broader social networks; (v) sub-par housing, especially for IDPs living in collective centers; (vi) mental health problems that include depression, alcoholism, domestic violence, and listlessness and (vii) poorer access to education.

Income and Poverty

39. **IDP poverty levels are similar to those of the local population but the make-up of income is different for IDP and non-IDP populations.** Table 1 below shows that location is a stronger factor for poverty than displacement i.e. IDPs in Tbilisi are less likely to be poor than non-IDPs in rural areas. However, for every regional category – Tbilisi, other urban, or rural – IDPs have slightly higher likelihood to be poor. The same is confirmed when looking at median incomes of IDPs and non-IDPs (Table 2). More details on poverty comparisons between IDPs and non-IDPs in three different surveys (Geostat, UNDP, UNHCR) are discussed in Annex II.⁴⁸

Table 1: Poverty Rates among IDPs and non-IDPs

	Poverty Non IDP	Poverty IDP
All	40.97	45.31
Tbilisi	25.9	39.35
Rest Urban	36.77	43.21
Rural	50.37	58.22

Source: Integrated Household Survey, 2011-2013

⁴⁷ World Bank. (2013). *Supporting the Livelihoods of Internally Displaced Persons in Georgia*

⁴⁸ IHS 2011-2013 reports a larger difference in poverty rates (41 and 45% for non-IDP and IDP respectively using a poverty line of USD 2.5/day) however the IDP sample in this survey is smaller (4,028 IDPs; 3.4% of the sample). UNDP survey (2011) which included a larger relative IDP sample (1,867 IDPs; 12.1% of the sample) show much lower and not statistically significant difference in poverty rates (46% for non-IDPs and 45% for IDPs).

Table 2: Median Income of IDPs and non-IDPs, in GEL/month per household⁴⁹

	Median Income level non IDP	Median Income level IDP
All	489.000	456.600
Tbilisi	585.000	525.333
Rest Urban	466.667	390.667
Rural	463.358	436.775

Source: Integrated Household Survey, 2011-2013

40. **Sources of income indicate a higher dependence of IDPs on social transfers such as pensions, scholarships, and social assistance, and on remittances.** The share of income from hired employment is similar for both IDPs and non-IDPs. Qualitative research confirms that unemployment is considered a key challenge for both IDP and non-IDP groups. It is also worth noting that IDPs have significantly lower shares of income from agricultural production and somewhat lower incomes from self-employment due to lack of access to land and collateral for credit. IDPs also tend to be more reliant on remittances. The difference in these sources of income is significant, as it points to IDP households relying much more on state aid and the aid of relatives working abroad, and therefore having less control over the amount they make.

Table 3: Sources of Income in % for IDPs and non-IDPs

Sources of Income	All	Non IDP	IDP
From hired employment	26.52	26.56	25.59
From self-employment	7.47	7.54	5.79
From selling agricultural production	6.11	6.28	1.92
Property income (leasing, interest on a deposit etc.)	0.59	0.61	0.18
Pensions, scholarships, assistances	26.60	26.20	36.85
Remittances from abroad	13.52	13.31	18.85
Money received as a gift	15.99	16.31	7.78

Source: Integrated Household Survey, 2011-2013

41. **Monthly social allowances received by IDPs are generally higher than those for non-IDPs, which is likely to be due to the existence of the IDP benefit.** There is greater convergence between allowances received by IDPs and non-IDPs in rural areas where most of poverty is concentrated; and a bigger discrepancy in urban areas, where IDPs receive almost double the amount of assistance compared to non-IDPs (Table 4). This raises the question whether the IDP benefit is truly responding to need, particularly in urban areas.

⁴⁹ UNHCR (2015) reports similar results for average monthly income of IDP households (GEL 453)

Table 4: Median Monthly Allowance received from Pensions, Scholarships and Assurances for IDPs and non-IDPs in GEL

	Non IDP	IDP
All	100	138
Tbilisi	70	140
Rest Urban	87	132
Rural	110	126

Source: Integrated Household Survey, 2011-2013

Note: Households are asked for the amount in GEL received from pensions, scholarships, insurance and assistance for the past month, two months and three months previous to the survey, for each member of the household. Mean monthly values are calculated per household. Using this information, we report the median value across households.

Employment

42. **IDPs are more acutely affected by unemployment than non-IDPs.** They have significantly higher ratios of unemployed, discouraged and inactive heads of households (see Table 5). As many as 15.6% of household heads among IDPs are unemployed compared to 6.3% among non-IDPs. The difference is higher when looking only at the labor force, where 25.3% of active IDPs are unemployed while 9% of active non-IDPs are unemployed.

Table 5: Work Status among IDPs and non-IDPs

	IHS 2011-2013			UNDP 2011		
	All	IDP	Non-IDP	All	IDP	Non-IDP
HH head work status (15+)						
Employee	22.83	25.75	22.72	22.48	22.52	22.48
Self-employed	39.96	20.20	40.68	38.66	16.1	39.89
Unemployed	6.66	15.63	6.33	6.51	15.29	6.03
Discouraged	1.81	6.46	1.64	1.53	4.78	1.35
Inactive	28.54	31.76	28.43	30.63	41.06	30.06
Unknown	0.19	0.20	0.19	0.2	0.25	0.19
HH head work status (active, 15+)						
Employee	32.87	41.82	32.59	33.23	41.78	32.86
Self-employed	57.54	32.80	58.33	57.15	29.86	58.33
Unemployed	9.58	25.38	9.08	9.62	28.36	8.81

43. **IDPs are also significantly more likely to be unemployed long-term.** This especially pronounced among the poor. The percentage of poor IDPs who have been unemployed for more than a year is double that of poor non-IDPs. Moreover, poor IDPs are three times as likely to have never worked

before. This raises important questions on IDPs' dependency on the status benefit. However, it also signals higher levels of discouragement, and being less integrated in job and social networks.

Table 6: Unemployment Rates among IDPs and non-IDPs

	Non-IDP			IDP	
	Non poor	Poor		Non poor	Poor
All unemployed	11.05	13.74	All unemployed	18.89	33.48
Female	8.58	10.83	Female	14.41	26.32
Male	13.81	16.96	Male	24.71	42.31
Less than a year looking for a job			Less than a year looking for a job		
All	3.98	5.36	All	5.78	7.11
Female	2.1	2.58	Female	2.35	4.41
Male	6.09	8.43	Male	10.23	10.45
A year or more looking for a job			A year or more looking for a job		
All	7.13	8.39	All	14.2	24.32
Female	5.8	6.61	Female	13.14	19.51
Male	8.62	10.36	Male	15.58	30.26
Never worked before			Never worked before		
All	3.32	4.6	All	4.6	13.37
Female	3.18	4.54	Female	4.46	13.74
Male	3.47	4.68	Male	4.78	12.91

Source: Integrated Household Survey, 2011-2013

44. **While almost half of the non-IDP population works in the agricultural sector (47.8%), only 22% of IDPs work in agriculture.**⁵⁰ IDPs have limited access to land, which prevents their profitable engagement in agriculture. NCL IDPs who were primarily farmers in the Tskhinvali Region - South Ossetia have found it especially difficult to engage in profitable agriculture following their displacement in 2008. They largely live in compact settlements with little to no access to land. Another factor explaining the difference in agricultural participation rate between IDPs and non-IDPs is the concentration of IDPs in urban areas. A much higher proportion of the IDP population (75%) lives in urban areas compared to the overall population (49%)⁵¹.

*“What can they do, they don't have the land, so what can be the source of their income, all inhabitants of the village own the land, and have some income, at least 500 Gel per season”*⁵²

45. **Without privatized housing or land to use as collateral, many IDPs are unable to access credit to start and expand businesses.**⁵³ IDPs are subject to the same commercial loan conditions as non-IDPs, in that they must provide collateral and financial guarantees. While some IDPs have received privatized accommodation that can be used as collateral, many have not gone through the privatization process. For those who are able to borrow, high-interest rates can make repayments

⁵⁰ Integrated Household Survey (2011-2013)

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Non-IDP in rural area, Zugdidi

⁵³ World Bank. 2013.

prohibitively expensive. Chronic unemployment in the IDP population also compounds the problem, and further prohibits IDPs from accessing credit.

46. **The disruptive nature of displacement is such that those who are affected lose education and skill-building opportunities that are required in the job market.**⁵⁴ Skills that may have served IDPs well in their home region may not be relevant or applicable in their new environments.⁵⁵ The passage of time without education, apprenticeships, work experience and training renders IDPs uncompetitive in the contemporary job market.⁵⁶ Given these vulnerabilities, IDPs may find it difficult to make a success out of livelihood opportunities that are more easily accessible to the wider population.
47. **Weak community and family connections further increase the socioeconomic vulnerability of IDPs, and make it difficult to secure employment.** As more recent arrivals in host communities, IDPs are at risk of exclusion from broader social networks and the opportunities they present. Such networks can take generations to build.⁵⁷ Residence in physically segregated collective centers only compounds the problem. Even within IDP communities that live in the same collective centers or settlements, social networks can be weak.⁵⁸ Residents may originate from diverse areas and may not have had sufficient time to develop networks.
48. **Focus group discussions indicate greater difficulties for IDPs in finding employment due to lack of well-established social networks, especially in the early years after displacement.** Even where old caseload IDPs indicate that they are well integrated in the community, they recognize that their chances of employment are lowered by persistent socio-economic difficulties – housing conditions, poverty and in some cases lack of good quality education, of community and extended family support.

“It is harder for IDPs to find a job, because they don’t have local relatives, who could help.”⁵⁹

“Relatives and acquaintances are needed for any kind of job”

49. **The proportion of individuals that belong to vulnerable groups is higher among IDPs than among non IDPs which has further implication on employment rates** (see Table 7). While 4.74% of the non

⁵⁴ The World Bank. (2013). Supporting the livelihoods of Internally Displaced Persons in Georgia. http://imagebank.worldbank.org/servlet/WDSContentServer/IW3P/IB/2013/07/03/000333037_20130703101637/Rendered/PDF/791740WP0Georg0Box0377356B00PUBLIC0.pdf

⁵⁵ Ibid

⁵⁶ Ibid

⁵⁷ The World Bank. (2013). Supporting the livelihoods of Internally Displaced Persons in Georgia. http://imagebank.worldbank.org/servlet/WDSContentServer/IW3P/IB/2013/07/03/000333037_20130703101637/Rendered/PDF/791740WP0Georg0Box0377356B00PUBLIC0.pdf

⁵⁸ Ibid

⁵⁹ Zugdidi-Samegrelo Focus Group Interview, May 2015

IPD population is disabled, individuals with disabilities represent 6.29% of the IDP population. IDPs also represent a higher proportion of female/single headed households and youth than non IDPs.

Table 7: Vulnerable population (in %), among IDPs and non IDPs

Vulnerable groups	All	IDP	Non-IDP
Person with disability	4.80	6.29	4.74
Female/Single headed households	3.33	5.13	3.26
Youth 15-24 yo	18.05	21.83	17.90
Widow women	3.66	3.37	3.67

Source: Integrated Household Survey, 2011-2013

Housing

50. **Qualitative and quantitative research indicates that poor housing conditions are the main source of vulnerability for IDPs.**⁶⁰ Focus group interviews with IDPs consistently revealed housing to be their most pressing need. While the government has undertaken demonstrable steps in recent years to improve the living conditions of IDPs, much remains to be done in providing durable housing solutions. This is especially the case for those living in collective centers, often described as dilapidated and overcrowded. Housing approximately 38% of IDPs, collective centers have been the primary accommodation for many over the past two decades. The government has undertaken rehabilitation of some collective centers, and 16.7% of IDPs now live in a rehabilitated center. However, as many as 21.5% are still living in non-rehabilitated centers in dire conditions (see Table 8).⁶¹

“The living spaces we started living in were absolutely not suitable for living. These were hotels, schools, and other public buildings. Some people still live in such buildings today.”⁶²

“The conditions are very poor. There are shared toilets, and we even had to repair one shared toilet ourselves. We do not have enough electricity, and we are sharing one wire of electricity from the building in front. We do not have gas, we use wooden stoves.”⁶³

“Pipes leak from all sides; we wash down the neighbors when we use water. And we are obliged to repair, so we take out loans, but the credit is not available to everyone.”⁶⁴

⁶⁰ Government of Georgia, Ministry of Refugees and Accommodation (2010). IDP Housing Strategy and Working Plan. http://transparency.ge/sites/default/files/post_attachments/2010%20-%20MRA_Housing_Strategy_and_Work_Plan_ENG_0.pdf

⁶¹ UNHCR (2015)

⁶² Rural IDP, Kakheti-Telavi Focus Group Discussion, May 2015

⁶³ Urban IDP, Tbilisi, Focus Group Discussion, May 2015

⁶⁴ Urban IDP, Telavi, Focus Group Discussion, May 2015

“We only had naked walls, we didn’t have water, gas. They allotted living spaces for us in the building where the internal army was situated, but no one wants to go there, it is too far away and there is no road actually.”⁶⁵

Table 8: IDP Types of Dwelling (% of IDPs)

Types of dwelling for IDPs	
Collective Center (non-rehabilitated)	21.5
Collective Center (rehabilitated)	16.7
Cottage Settlement	11.4
New Buildings	10.5
Private Housing	39.3
of which:	
• Owned	19.9
• Rented	4.4
• With relatives	9.7
• Squatting	2.8
• Other	2.5

Source: UNHCR (2015)

51. Following the adoption of the 2009 Action Plan, many IDPs were resettled away from the capital, moving them out of collective centers that the government intended to remodel for different uses.⁶⁶ One such example is the August 2010 eviction of IDPs who occupied government buildings in Tbilisi, resettling them in areas far away from the capital.⁶⁷ Evictees were effectively cut off from their social networks, as well as sources of income, healthcare, and education. In response, some IDPs re-emigrated back in search for employment and sustainable livelihoods.⁶⁸ This policy of resettlement has since been reversed by the government. Since March 2014 the amended Law on IDPs includes full protection from forced evictions in premises under IDPs’ legal ownership. Still, challenges remain for IDPs who continue to reside in public collective centers.

52. Successfully rolling out housing assistance for all IDPs in accordance with the Government’s Action Plan, would be an essential step in any reform on IDP assistance. Discussions with IDPs indicate that better housing conditions, along with livelihoods and jobs, are top priorities as far as Government’s assistance is concerned. Setting up a strong monitoring and feedback mechanism to track success of the housing assistance policy is equally important.

Health

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ The World Bank. (2013). Supporting the livelihoods of Internally Displaced Persons in Georgia. http://imagebank.worldbank.org/servlet/WDSContentServer?IW3P/IB/2013/07/03/000333037_20130703101637/Rendered/PDF/791740WPOGeorg0Box0377356B00PUBLIC0.pdf

⁶⁷ Ibid

⁶⁸ Ibid

53. Displacement is known to exacerbate illness and to create new forms of infirmity. As recent arrivals to the local communities, coupled with residence in physically segregated collective centers, IDPs are at risk of mental health problems resulting from displacement, isolation, and exclusion from broader social networks. Psychosocial impacts of displacement include residual feelings of loss, depression, alcoholism, domestic violence, and listlessness.⁶⁹ This is particularly so among the long-term displaced.⁷⁰ This is also reflected on their own perceptions of their health status, as seen in Table 9. On average, IDPs believe their health to be worse than the perception of non-IDPs on their own health status.

Table 9: Self-perception of health status

	All	IDP	Non-IDP
Health status (15+)			
Very good	5.83	5.73	5.84
Good	38.48	31.17	38.87
Nor good nor bad	31.44	35.47	31.22
Bad	18.74	20.51	18.64
Very bad	5.44	7.13	5.35
Don't know	0.08	0.00	0.09

Source: UNDP (2011)

54. With the introduction of universal health insurance in 2009, IDPs, like other Georgian citizens, can sign up for health insurance that is 70% co-financed by the state.⁷¹ While the insurance fully covers accident, out-patient treatment, primary treatment, and 50% of emergency inpatient treatment, it does not cover medicine purchases.⁷² Eligible IDPs can in addition enroll in the health insurance state program for populations below the poverty line. However, poor and vulnerable IDPs that do not meet the poverty criteria are at risk of exclusion from state medical benefits.

Key Finding 3: Some sub-groups of IDPs face distinct vulnerabilities that need to be addressed as part of any reform program to IDP assistance.

55. The IDP population in Georgia is not homogenous; challenges among IDPs vary across: (i) old caseload vs. new caseload IDPs; (ii) IDPs in privatized vs. non-privatized accommodation; (iii) area of

⁶⁹ The World Bank. (2013). Supporting the livelihoods of Internally Displaced Persons in Georgia. http://imagebank.worldbank.org/servlet/WDSContentServer?IW3P/IB/2013/07/03/000333037_20130703101637/Rendered/PDF/791740WP0Georg0Box0377356B00PUBLIC0.pdf

⁷⁰ Ibid

⁷¹ Government of Georgia, Decree No. 33 on "Approval of targeted state program to support covering population with the voluntary health insurance". Issued 26 February, 2009.

⁷² UNHCR (2009). Protection of IDPs in Georgia: A Gap Analysis. Geneva: UNHCR. <http://www.unhcr.org/4ad827f59.pdf>.

residence (region, urban vs. rural); (iv) employment status; (v) gender; (vi) activity sectors, and a host of other factors.

Differences per period of displacement

- 56. Upon their displacement, old case-load IDPs were primarily settled in collective centers, while new case-load IDPs were settled in newly constructed homes as part of the government's response to the August 2008 conflict.** Collective centers include administrative buildings, abandoned schools, kindergartens, and hospitals. The approximately 42% of IDPs who live in collective centers have been the worst off in terms of housing, experiencing conditions that have been described as unsanitary and dilapidated.⁷³ In addition to collective centers, many OCL IDPs found shelter with relatives and friends. Limited state-provided housing at the time meant that many displaced persons had to make alternative arrangements for their housing needs. In contrast, the majority of newly displaced people after the August 2008 conflict were resettled in newly constructed houses and refurbished apartments within a few months of their displacement.⁷⁴ The MRA announced in its 2010 housing strategy that most NCL IDPs had received housing support.⁷⁵
- 57. While the quick housing response to the 2008 conflict has been recognized as a major achievement, OCL IDPs have been critical of what they perceive as preferential treatment of NCL IDPs.** Our qualitative research found that many OCL IDPs are critical of the differences in housing quality between both groups of IDPs, and of the rate of response by the government to their housing needs.

*"They have houses, heating systems, gas, water, and small plots of land as sources of income. What about us? We had nothing and we have nothing. We live in the same conditions as we lived before."*⁷⁶

*"People displaced from Samachablo were much better supported with money, living spaces, as well as with furniture. As for me, they did nothing for me."*⁷⁷

*"I still pay the bank loan and I am in terrible financial difficulties. Paying USD 200 each month is terrible. And they gave everything to Samachablo IDPs, even including TVs. As for us we didn't even have blankets and chairs when we left."*⁷⁸

⁷³ The Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health and the Institute for Policy Studies. 2012. *Aging in Displacement: Assessing Health Status of Displaced Older Adults in the Republic of Georgia*.

⁷⁴ Less than a year after the August 2008 conflict, the government completed the construction of over 3,963 individual cottage homes, and rehabilitated 1,600 apartments for use by newly displaced persons. The largest settlement, constructed in Tserovani which is 23 kilometers from Tbilisi, consisted of over 2,000 cottages.⁷⁴

⁷⁵ Government of Georgia, Ministry of Refugees and Accommodation (2010). IDP Housing Strategy and Working Plan. http://transparency.ge/sites/default/files/post_attachments/2010%20-%20MRA_Housing_Strategy_and_Work_Plan_ENG_0.pdf

⁷⁶ Ethnographic Case study 2: Interview with woman from Tskhinvali Region (displaced in 1990s)

⁷⁷ Urban IDP from the Abkhazian AR, Telavi, FGD May 2015

"I think current Tskhivali IDPs received their living spaces very quickly. Many of us have no space to live even till today. We have no home and no one knows when we will have it."

- 58. The rate of housing privatization has differed between NCL and OCL IDPs.** Privatization for the cottages began in 2012, and many NCL IDPs own newly constructed and rehabilitated homes. Privatization of the collective centers has also been initiated with residents receiving formal ownership of their living units.⁷⁹ IDPs living in collective centers where privatization has started are registered as private accommodation IDPs. As many as 19.6% of IDPs are currently registered as owning their own properties. However, much remains to be done in standardizing quality of housing across IDPs, and in providing privatized housing to all eligible IDPs.
- 59. While old caseload and new caseload IDPs suffer from similar health-related concerns, the state of their health depends on when they were displaced, and where they are living.** Populations living in state-owned collective centers have been found to be in poorer physical and mental health than populations living in private accommodations.⁸⁰ Differences in access to healthcare are also observed between the two groups. Upon initial displacement, NCL IDPs were automatically enrolled in free health insurance for the poor when they registered for IDP status. On the other hand, OCL IDPs did not have universal insurance from the beginning. Access to health is even more constrained within the occupied territories, where IDP returnees face additional threats and discrimination in accessing health services.⁸¹

Regional and demographic differences

- 60. IDPs living in Tbilisi have integrated better to markets and improved their living conditions, while this is not the case for IDPs in rural areas.** Poverty is more prevalent in rural areas among IDPs as reflected in Table 1 above. It is important to note that poor IDP households in Tbilisi are better off than even poor non-IDP households in rural areas. To further explore dissimilarities in income and consumption levels across area of residence, we examined the median of the average monthly income (in GEL) reported by each household. Table 2 above shows clearly that income in Tbilisi is higher than in other urban or rural areas for both IDPs and non-IDPs.
- 61. Unemployment rates are higher for IDP men, compared to women, especially for men in urban areas (see Table 10).** The unemployment rates for these groups are all 22% and upwards, with the highest unemployment rate at 33.6% among urban male IDPs. This is the highest unemployment rate of all subsets of the population. Long-term unemployment is also significantly high for the IDP male subset of the population, at 23.1%.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ IDPs living in privatized collective centers are classified as privately accommodated

⁸⁰ The Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health and the Institute of Policy Studies. (2012). *Aging in Displacement: Assessing Health Status of Displaced Older Adults in the Republic of Georgia*. http://www.jhsph.edu/research/centers-and-institutes/center-for-refugee-and-disaster-response/publications_tools/GEORGIA%20PRM%20OLDER%20ADULT%20STUDY%2001May2012.pdf

⁸¹ UNHCR (2009). Protection of IDPs in Georgia: A Gap Analysis. Geneva: UNHCR. <http://www.unhcr.org/4ad827f59.pdf>.

62. Overall, female labor force participation is substantially lower than that of males; however, among the economically active population, unemployment rates are higher for men. IDP females have a labor force participation of 56.1%, compared to 82.39% among males (see Table 10). Many IDP women are self-employed, which is largely how subsistence farmers are classified. These women work in family farms or in family-owned businesses for little to no remuneration. Still, among those who are economically active, unemployment rates are higher for men than women. This is often explained with women’s willingness to take on lower-paid jobs or jobs below their qualification.

“Women are better employed than men. Those who have vineyards and strawberries hire women seasonally. They give us 45 laries per member monthly, how can we live on that money if we don’t work ourselves? What should those do who are not able to work? Those who are pensioners?”

Table 10: Work Status among IDPs and non-IDPs (Disaggregated by Gender and Urban/Rural)

	NON IDP				IDP			
	Labor Force Participation	Employment-to-Population Ratio	Unemployment Rate	Long-term Unemployment	Labor Force Participation	Employment-to-Population Ratio	Unemployment Rate	Long-term Unemployment
Total (20-64)	78.62	66.51	12.11	8.42	67.73	42.5	25.23	19.99
Youth (15-24)	40.44	26.78	13.66	11.05	34.53	12.27	22.26	18.57
Female (20-64)	68.64	59.18	9.47	7.68	56.19	36.67	19.52	17.54
Male (20-64)	89.74	74.68	15.06	9.25	82.39	49.9	32.49	23.1
Urban (20-64)	72.13	53.43	18.71	13.29	67.08	39.46	27.61	21.87
Youth (15-24)	34.7	18.04	16.67	13.88	34.94	9.65	25.29	20.79
Female (20-64)	60.68	45.88	14.8	12.13	54.01	31.33	22.68	20.41
Male (20-64)	86.08	62.62	23.46	14.71	82.93	49.33	33.6	23.64
Rural (20-64)	84.72	78.8	5.92	3.85	69.77	51.87	17.89	14.18
Youth (15-24)	45.72	34.84	10.88	8.44	33.3	20.33	12.97	11.77
Female (20-64)	76.75	72.72	4.04	3.15	62.41	51.87	10.55	9.36
Male (20-64)	92.89	85.05	7.84	4.56	80.54	51.88	28.65	21.25

Source: 2011-2013 IHS.

63. A recent World Bank study⁸² on IDP livelihoods noted the presence of extremely vulnerable IDPs (EVIDPs) who are classified as living in extreme poverty or extreme vulnerability. These IDPs spend their days meeting their many challenges including growing/searching for food, looking for low-paid temporary jobs, repairing low-quality shelter, caring for children, and travelling to obtain government subsidies.⁸³ They hardly have any time to engage in profitable work, or to take simple risks in developing new livelihoods. In addition, they are often unable to benefit from livelihood support.⁸⁴ When faced with a financial shock, such as a medical emergency, they often opt to sell or consume any livelihood assistance that they have received (such as selling off equipment or

⁸² The World Bank. (2013). Supporting the livelihoods of Internally Displaced Persons in Georgia. http://imagebank.worldbank.org/servlet/WDSContentServer/IW3P/IB/2013/07/03/000333037_20130703101637/Rendered/PDF/791740WP0Georg0Box0377356B00PUBLIC0.pdf

⁸³ The World Bank. (2013). Supporting the livelihoods of Internally Displaced Persons in Georgia. http://imagebank.worldbank.org/servlet/WDSContentServer/IW3P/IB/2013/07/03/000333037_20130703101637/Rendered/PDF/791740WP0Georg0Box0377356B00PUBLIC0.pdf

⁸⁴ Ibid

slaughtering livestock). Many EVIDPs consist of female single-headed households, widows, IDPs with disabilities, and youth.⁸⁵

64. Despite free access to education, extremely vulnerable IDPs are likely to face additional constraints. Interviews with officials from the UN and its NGO partners revealed that extremely vulnerable IDPs often find it difficult to afford all the required school supplies. Any additional “tuition fees” that may be required to support the schools are sometimes beyond the reach of extremely vulnerable IDPs. Crowded living conditions may be a source of psychosocial distress and pose a barrier to IDP children succeeding in their studies. In addition, the large expenses associated with moving to large urban areas for higher education may pose a significant challenge to poor rural IDP families.

65. IDPs in returnee districts such as Gali, Ochamchire and Tkvarcheli are subject to intimidation, threats, and significant challenges to their livelihoods.⁸⁶ There are high levels of poverty among IDPs in these districts, and active barriers prevent IDPs from improving their livelihoods. For example, although a banking sector exists in the Abkhazian Autonomous Republic, it is not readily available to people of Georgian ethnicity, as an Abkhaz ID indicating Abkhaz “citizenship” is required to open a bank account.⁸⁷ Financial institutions in other parts of Georgia are unable to lend to clients in these districts because of a lack of Georgian jurisdiction in the AAR.⁸⁸ Another stark challenge among IDPs in returnee districts is in the education sector, where the use of Abkhazian and Russian languages for instruction in many schools effectively excludes ethnic Georgians from fully participating in the education system.⁸⁹ This not only presents learning difficulties for returnee children, but is likely to affect their access to higher education or employment.⁹⁰ Schools in these districts also tend to be in very poor condition, with very poor access as transportation is scarce.

Key Finding 4: The IDP benefit offers income security that may be lost with alternative forms of social assistance

66. Qualitative research suggests that one of the greatest perceived value of the IDP allowance is that it represents a regular and stable source of income. The actual amount of the monthly allowance⁹¹ is small (45 GEL per person), yet deemed an important contribution to household income. This is especially the case for poor and vulnerable IDPs working in the informal economy without stable

⁸⁵ Ibid

⁸⁶ Ibid

⁸⁷ UNHCR (2010). Universal Periodic Review for Georgia.

http://lib.ohchr.org/HRBodies/UPR/Documents/Session10/GE/UNHCR_UNHighCommissionerforRefugees-eng.pdf

⁸⁸ The World Bank. (2013). Supporting the livelihoods of Internally Displaced Persons in Georgia.

http://imagebank.worldbank.org/servlet/WDSContentServer?IW3P/IB/2013/07/03/000333037_20130703101637/Rendered/PDF/791740WP0Georg0Box0377356B00PUBLIC0.pdf

⁸⁹ UNHCR (2009). Protection of IDPs in Georgia: A Gap Analysis. Geneva: UNHCR. <http://www.unhcr.org/4ad827f59.pdf>.

⁹⁰ Ibid

⁹¹ 45 GEL, Georgian Law on IDPs, available at <http://mra.gov.ge/res/docs/201406171444442634.pdf>.

incomes. As such, the stability of the social transfer has been an important buffer against poverty for many. Focus group discussions confirm that one of the most valued aspects of the benefit is being a secure and reliable source of income.

- 67. Without good baseline data and an effective monitoring system in place, it is likely that attempts to target the IDP allowance would increase vulnerability among some IDPs.** Initially, data on IDPs in Georgia was scarce and did not allow for sophisticated/refined targeting. Despite greater access to data on IDPs, challenges continue to exist in collecting information from what is sometimes a hidden population, particularly those living in private accommodation, and/or in remote locations. Proper targeting would require comprehensive data, and is a complex and arduous process. It also would require regular updates and consistent monitoring to ensure that spillover to the non-poor is minimized and that the poor are effectively targeted.
- 68. Successful targeting of social assistance to poor IDPs would require a substantial administrative cost and capacity building at the local level to inform and integrate IDPs in the targeted program.** With high reliance on remittances and informal employment, identifying precisely who is poor and avoiding leakage by reaching only poor IDPs might be difficult. This is especially the case in rural areas, where accurate information on incomes is lacking. In addition, implementation would likely be challenging for local level institutions that have limited resources and capacity to manage the process. Whereas the Government has revised the targeting methodology to include local authorities in the identification of poor households, their success rates vary and there are no objective parameters of success in this regard.

Key Finding 5: The IDP benefit carries a strong political and symbolic value as recognition of IDP status and the Government’s commitment to territorial reintegration.

- 69. IDP status has a strong symbolic value for displaced people in Georgia, and many wish to retain this status.** On the one hand, the symbolic value of this status is linked to an emotional attachment to areas of displacement. It provides an assurance to displaced people that the country has not forgotten the occupied territories. On the other hand, IDP status provides an important psychological guarantee that the plight of IDPs remains relevant to the state. Many Georgians in the non-IDP population also believe that recognition of IDP status is important in showing the Government’s commitment to reintegrating occupied territories.

“It is a hope for us, especially for those who never lived in the occupied territories. They are part of our history, and we all want to go back. So this status should be maintained.”⁹²

“It has political meaning. If all are deprived of the status we should never pretend to return to Abkhazia some day.”⁹³

⁹² IDP (receiving targeted social assistance), Tbilisi, FGD May 2015

“Somehow we still feel ourselves being Abkhazians. Abkhazia is my homeland and whatever palaces I have here I still miss Abkhazia. If there is no status I will become an ordinary citizen and lose Abkhazia.”⁹⁴

“We have this status and we should keep this status, till we go back to our homes.”⁹⁵

“If I won’t be able to go back to my home, my children will. This status is a reminder.”⁹⁶

“They miss their home, and want to go back. If they lose the status, they will lose hope.”⁹⁷

70. Among displaced persons, there is a strong association between the IDP status and the IDP benefit. The benefits reinforce the idea of having an “IDP Status” and even wealthier IDPs have a sense of entitlement to the benefit. It is viewed as a form of assurance of continued engagement by the state in resolving their plight, and reclaiming lost territories. The benefit serves as a tangible expression and recognition of this status by the Government. Therefore, attempts at changing or removing current benefits might be perceived as equivalent to removing “status.”

“Even more important than the money, is the moral significance. People lost everything and had to start from nothing. The amount is so little, I think it should not be removed, as this is an obligation of the government. All people who have this status should receive the benefits throughout their lives.”⁹⁸

“I personally, no matter how much I earn, will not give it up. I once left my home and lost too much there.”⁹⁹

“Those in financially disadvantaged positions should be given more, but not at the expense of others. If the ministry of IDPs does anything they shouldn’t do it at the expense of others. I have a salary of 2000 lari and so what? If I have status I should also be given allowance.”¹⁰⁰

71. In 2014 the Government cancelled the IDP allowance for households with an income above 1,250 GEL/month. There are mixed attitudes towards this policy change. On the one hand, it is well accepted by some IDPs and non-IDPs that there is merit in differentiating assistance by need. On the other hand, this threshold is viewed as problematic because it does not take into account broader vulnerabilities that are associated with being an IDP.

⁹³ Ibid

⁹⁴ Ibid

⁹⁵ Rural IDP, Zugdidi, FGD May 2015

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ Non-IDP, Tbilisi FGD May 2015

⁹⁸ IDP (receiving targeted social assistance), Tbilisi, FGD May 2015

⁹⁹ IDP (receiving IDP benefit), Tbilisi FGD May 2015

¹⁰⁰ IDP (receiving IDP benefit), Tbilisi FGD May 2015

“Being an IDP shouldn’t be the only thing that matters. If a socially vulnerable person gets a job and is able to support himself, then there is no problem if he loses his aid. You may still retain your status as an IDP, for the state to know where you are from. No one knows what the future holds and if we will return to Abkhazia.”¹⁰¹

“There are some people who live in Abkhazia for example, who are registered as IDPs here, and come to this side only to get the allowance and then go back. Of course this should be changed. Some people have the latest Mercedes model and receive 45 GEL allowance and some have no money for bread, and receive 45 GEL. I think no one will be against it if needs were to be assessed in giving assistance. Of course they (rich IDPs) should keep the status, but 45 GEL means nothing to them, while for someone else it is really important.”¹⁰²

“If you study the expenditures for many with an income above 1250 GEL/month, you would see that their expenditures are much higher than 1250 GEL, because of spending on things such as healthcare, rent and education. You would see that the allowance has to be maintained.”¹⁰³

- 72. It is evident that Georgian IDPs as a whole have a strong emotional attachment to government subsidies and benefits, and that some among this population also have a strong financial reliance on the benefits.** The risk of long-term economic and psychological dependency on the state benefit should be explored further. In re-designing the IDP benefit programs authorities should also examine any potential disincentives to work and set appropriate levels of aid.

Key Finding 6: IDPs have incomplete and contradictory information on their rights and on the benefits they can expect to receive. This lack of information reduces trust in the government and its institutions.

- 73. Focus group interviews with IDPs revealed that many lack basic information about their rights, the benefits that they are entitled to, and the appropriate avenues for addressing their needs.** Many have little awareness about eligibility and the services provided by the universal health insurance scheme. A large number of IDPs also complained about limited information on the availability of employment opportunities. In addition, many IDPs are poorly informed about housing guidelines, renovation and privatization procedures, and the overall plans by the Government in addressing their housing needs. A lack of access to credible and accurate information and limited awareness of rights is especially acute in rural and remote locations. This problem is compounded by lack of clarity on the responsibilities of various institutions with regard to IDP entitlements and services.

101 FGD Samegrelo-Urban, IDPs having no IDP allowance, living in private housing (higher income 1250 GEL+)

¹⁰³ IDI interview

74. Durable housing is a prominent concern among IDPs, and yet many expressed frustration at a lack of information and consultation about the government’s housing plans, as well as conflicting perceptions about the plans. Among IDPs living in collective centers, there appeared to be a lack of information with regard to rehabilitation of the centers, and the privatization process. Conflicting information about durable housing was also evident. Among IDP respondents from Telavi, some thought that the government is currently building houses for IDPs, after which it will distribute a one-time benefit and eliminate the regular IDP benefit. Others expected that the Government will provide funding to IDPs to purchase a private home, and require that IDPs negotiate directly with potential sellers. The conflicting information even among residents from the same area reveals an information gap between IDPs and relevant institutions.

“I have heard that the government is building apartments for IDPs, that all IDPs will own property, and that the government will issue a one-time 500 GEL cash assistance for every family member. After this the IDP status and the monthly allowance will be cancelled”¹⁰⁴

“I have heard that you should make a direct agreement with the person that you are buying an apartment from, and that the government will reimburse this person.”¹⁰⁵

75. Minimal consultation with IDPs was of particular concern in past resettlement policies under the Action Plans, which have since been reversed by the government. Under these policies, IDPs were to be resettled away from the capital, and out of accommodations that the government intended to remodel for different uses. The August 2010 eviction of IDPs who occupied government buildings in Tbilisi are described as involving inadequate consultations on the location of new settlements, or the set-up of the new facilities.¹⁰⁶ Displaced people from urban areas, especially those from the Abkhazian AR, were strongly resistant to the idea of being relocated from the capital because of limited employment opportunities elsewhere, and many soon re-emigrated back to the capital in search for employment.

76. Our qualitative research revealed discontent among IDPs who find the TSA program as currently implemented to be overly complicated, and with high risk of excluding needy households. The program has attempted to address these concerns by, for example, eliminating obsolete parameters centered around asset ownership as primary welfare measures. However, equally important is the need to undertake clear communication with beneficiaries, providing guidance in the application process and ensuring transparency at all stages.

77. Inadequate information and consultation with IDPs not only affects the effectiveness of IDP programs, but also deepens their sense of isolation, and reinforces their dependence on the

¹⁰⁴ Rural IDP, Zugdidi, FGD May 2015

¹⁰⁵ Urban IDP, Tbilisi, FGD May 2015

¹⁰⁶ Amnesty International (2010). In the Waiting Room: Internally Displaced People in Georgia. <http://www.refworld.org/pdfid/4c5fc1952.pdf>

state.¹⁰⁷ IDPs might be reluctant to comply with state programs that they do not fully understand. In addition, it might be difficult for them to make long-term livelihood decisions without adequate knowledge of their options, resources, and procedures required in securing their benefits. Finally, without full knowledge of their rights and benefits, IDPs are likely to find it difficult to fully integrate with their host communities and with the broader Georgian society.

Conclusions and Recommendations

- 78. Over twenty years have passed since the first wave of internal displacement in Georgia, and over seven years since the second big wave of IDPs. Reintegration of the country remains a high priority for the Government, but so does ensuring the well-being of all Georgian citizens including those who are currently displaced.** Global research on forced displacement shows that providing durable solutions for IDPs is both a necessary target, and a long-term process. From a development perspective, “displacement only ends when (former) IDPs or refugees no longer have needs that are specifically linked to their having been displaced.”¹⁰⁸ The Government of Georgia has gone a long way to establish a legal framework for IDP assistance and integration that is consistent with best international practices. In recent years the policy supports provision of all opportunities and support to IDPs to be meaningfully integrated in social and economic life wherever their current place of residence is.
- 79. Maintaining the IDP status benefit has raised questions of equity and efficient use of financial resources.** There is wide heterogeneity among IDPs with some having successfully integrated and having incomes at or above the average Georgian household. Yet others continue to face difficulties and are strongly reliant on the benefit for income security.
- 80. Removal of the IDP benefit would require a strong system of targeting and support for vulnerable IDPs to be able to access other available forms of social protection, such as targeted social assistance,** as well as other social services, e.g., for disability, housing benefits, health insurance, livelihood and employment programs. Support to IDPs at the national level has been coordinated by a dedicated entity, the MRA. Enhancing awareness among IDPs of other available channels for support and their access to them would require a significant effort of inter-agency cooperation, and capacity-building at the local level. Discussions with IDPs themselves give reason to believe that poor IDPs would face additional obstacles in registering for and accessing social programs outside the IDP benefit system. The capacity of the social service agency would need to be strengthened to

¹⁰⁷ Ibid

¹⁰⁸ Christensen, A. and Harild, N. 2009. *Forced Displacement – The Development Challenge*. World Bank, Washington DC.

absorb a wave of additional applicants. At the same time, awareness raising, legal and administrative help would need to be directed to IDP communities to ensure that they can indeed access alternative sources of support.

- 81. Integrating vulnerable IDPs into other state social assistance programs would also require close monitoring and integration of data on IDPs into social assistance registries.** This effort would entail collecting more detailed household level data on IDPs. In addition, it would require harmonization of databases across IDP benefit and social assistance registries. Some new case load IDPs have already been given the option to register into other social assistance programs. However, many old case load IDPs have never had contact with the social assistance network beyond the IDP benefit and their integration would require targeted outreach, human and financial resources. The administrative cost of this effort needs to be examined further.
- 82. Because IDPs are more reliant on state assistance and remittances and not on employment or self-employment, removing or limiting the IDP benefit could have a greater than expected negative impact on IDP lives.** Distinct obstacles facing IDPs are often not directly related to cash income but rather to sources of income, assets, and living conditions. Even if average incomes and poverty levels of IDPs are similar to those of non-IDPs at the national level, a closer examination of income sources reveals a higher dependence of IDPs on state assistance and remittances. Due to lack of land ownership in their places of residence, rural IDPs are more likely to work as seasonal lower paid workers in the agricultural sector. Lack of formal housing ownership also prevents IDPs from taking credit or starting a small business. Unemployment is a key need identified by both IDPs and non-IDPs; yet IDPs have less flexibility to start their own businesses as evidenced by their lower rates of self-employment. In this regard, the security that the IDP benefit provides, albeit with a small sum, should not be underestimated. And efforts to remove it should be mitigated with targeted programs to support livelihoods, access to land and finance, and comprehensive support for IDP entrepreneurs and job seekers.
- 83. Overall, any reforms concerning adjustments to the assistance of IDP households should have the ultimate goal of reducing their economic dependence on the state.** Reducing dependence on state benefits is important from the perspective of economic integration, but also from the perspective of social inclusion and empowerment. As long as IDP incomes and housing are strongly tied to IDP status, IDPs may also experience lower motivation and confidence to make independent choices in terms of place of living, income-generating activities, etc. This issue is especially pronounced for old case load IDPs and economically inactive IDPs who may face greater obstacles to integration.
- 84. Addressing housing conditions is essential to prevent negative impacts of removing or targeting benefits for a large number of IDPs.** Currently, the quality and tenure of housing are some of the most prominent and persisting differences between IDPs and non-IDPs. An effort to reform IDP assistance policies should be accompanied or preceded by scaling up efforts to implement the stages of housing support committed under the Government's latest Action Plan for IDPs. Specifically, this includes providing financial support and housing alternatives to IDPs living in

collective centers; monitoring housing transition, and ensuring its sustainability, i.e., that IDPs are able to maintain and provide for all related costs of private housing such as connection to basic utilities, necessary renovations, etc.

85. The political and social significance of the IDP benefit is an important aspect, and possible roadblock, to reforming IDP assistance. The rationale for such reform should be communicated appropriately in a way that does not compromise the Government's commitment to reintegration. A communication strategy needs to include steps taken to mitigate negative economic consequences, particularly on income security of IDPs, but also concrete and tangible measures to prove that the Government would continue recognizing IDPs' status even without the same monetary support to all IDPs.

86. Based on the findings of this study, a comprehensive way forward towards reforming the IDP benefit, would involve the following steps:

- a. **Address data gaps:** Collect household level data on vulnerability that would allow the government to understand household-by-household vulnerability. In particular, collect information on type of housing, employment status of different household members, education levels and skills, and health conditions. Ensure that information on IDPs can be easily accessed and used by other social service agencies. While a large volume of research has already been produced, it is still necessary to obtain a more precise profile of IDPs, basic and measurable baseline data on socio-economic indicators for IDPs, and data on levels of coverage by different public services. At the moment this information is still not consolidated to enable monitoring of a more comprehensive IDP livelihood strategy. The newly established policy and analytical unit within MRA is coordinating efforts of the Government and all development partners to address data and evidence gaps.
- b. **Adopt a phased approach to removing the IDP benefit:** The government has already taken a first step in phasing out IDP assistance by restricting it to households with income of less than 1,250 GEL/month. The Government could communicate a longer-term program of phasing out the IDP benefit, e.g., removing the benefit for persons who are employed or have been employed for a certain period of time, as an additional stage. Phasing out of the benefit should be accompanied by clear communication on what steps are taken to support IDP economic integration such as through housing support and alternative livelihood programs.
- c. **Scale up housing transition support to IDPs with stronger encouragement of IDP participation and spatial desegregation:** Housing is one of the key expectations that IDPs have with regard to the responsibility of the state towards them. Hence, a successful completion of the housing support that has been committed under the Government's Action Plan is essential for the success of IDP benefit reform. Transitional housing support should receive adequate resources and incorporate a strong monitoring component.

Benchmarks for completing housing transitions could be linked to phases in the IDP assistance reform. It is important that housing support does not encourage further segregation and that IDP households are encouraged to make choices on their place of living.

- d. **Facilitate access of IDPs to a wider variety of state services:** IDPs' knowledge and ability to access services outside those targeted by IDP status varies widely. Qualitative data suggests that new caseload IDPs may be better informed about state support available beyond the IDP benefit, while many old case load IDPs have no such information. The levels of information also vary by location with rural IDPs being less informed. In order to facilitate successful transition of assistance to poor IDPs, the capacity of local level service agencies should be strengthened, as should the capacity of IDPs to access these institutions. The former may involve additional human and financial resources to local branches of social service agencies serving the larger population of IDPs, and support with an outreach campaign. The latter may involve free legal and administrative assistance to IDPs, e.g., outsourced to local authorities or NGOs, to help them access alternative services. The reliability and quality of information for IDPs to access all available support programs should be ensured.
- e. **Provide livelihoods support for IDPs based on their distinct needs:** With the support of NGOs, donors, or existing state programs, the Government should create or expand additional opportunities for livelihood support for IDPs. This is important given that one of the greatest values of the IDP benefit is providing monthly income security. Some priority areas to be explored for livelihood support include skilled job opportunities for men and women; access to land for IDPs with demonstrated agricultural skills; and access to credit for small business financing, among others.
- f. **Developing a strategy to de-link status from benefit:** As noted above, it is important that phasing out of the benefit be accompanied by a strong communications campaign. This campaign should demonstrate concrete measures to preserve and recognize IDP status irrespective of the monetary benefit. For example, it should highlight that changes to IDP assistance are aimed at providing comprehensive and long-term social and economic opportunities, and at using resources in a pro-poor manner. A participatory approach could be launched to help the Government identify such measures.
- g. **Conducting more detailed fiscal and cost-benefit analysis of alternatives to the IDP benefit program:** Last but not least, the decision to phase out the IDP benefit should be supported by a rigorous fiscal analysis of the cost of the program versus alternatives, including the administrative cost of integrating poor and vulnerable IDPs into the targeted social assistance program, and the cost of all mitigation measures listed above.

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Annex I: Policy and Institutional Review

The Constitution of Georgia¹⁰⁹ stipulates that Georgian legislation is to be aligned with universally recognized principles and rules of international law. Unless it contradicts the Constitution, an international treaty takes precedence over domestic laws. Consequently, Georgia is party to almost all major international treaties of human rights, humanitarian law, and the Rome Statute. It is further a member state of the Council of Europe and it has recognized the jurisdiction of the European Court of Human Rights.

In practice, however, only the Constitutional court has been directly applying international norms and standards in its decision-making processes. For the local courts, there are many opportunities to increase direct application of the treaties, as noted in the combined fourth and fifth periodic reports of Georgia by the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women.

Legislation in Georgia defines, creates and regulates rights, freedoms and obligations of internally displaced persons in two ways: 1) laws that specifically target IDPs; and 2) laws that apply to all citizens, including IDPs. For both groups, the caveat in implementation is that Georgia does not have effective control over the Abkhazian AR and the Tshkhinvali region - South Ossetia. Therefore, while Georgia is committed to ensure the implementation of domestic laws throughout its territory, full implementation of legislation in these two territories remains a challenge. Full implementation is further hampered by lack of resources and poor visibility of newly adopted legal acts and policies.

This legal and policy review provides an analytic summary of key IDP-specific policies followed by a summary of policies in the following sectors: housing, land, education, employment, and human rights.

1. IDP-specific laws and policies

The Law of Georgia on Internally Displaced Persons – Persecuted from the Occupied Territories of Georgia, The State Strategy on Internally Displaced Persons (and its Action Plans). This is the main legal act that regulates rights and obligations of IDPs. It was adopted in 1996, and amended in 2001, 2005, 2006, and most recently in 2014. The Law aims at protecting citizens, ensuring emergency assistance in case of forceful displacement and protecting the rights of IDPs during the entire period of displacement. Article 2 of the Law¹¹⁰ regulates IDP legal status, grounds and rules for granting, terminating, cancelling and restoring of IDP status, legal, economic and social guarantees to IDPs and the related rights and obligations. The law, both, sets out guarantees for restitution of property left on the place of permanent residence and IDPs integration in other parts of the country.

The law designates the Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Accommodation and Refugees of Georgia as the responsible department to decide applications, the suspension and loss of IDP status, as well as other obligations with regard to IDPs.

¹⁰⁹ http://www.parliament.ge/files/68_1944_951190_CONSTIT_27_12.06.pdf

¹¹⁰ Available at <http://mra.gov.ge/res/docs/201406171444442634.pdf>

The most recent changes of the Law on IDPs that came into force on March 1, 2014 include the following:¹¹¹

- Increase in IDP monthly allowance to GEL 45.
- Suspension of IDP allowance if a taxable income of an IDP amounts to 1,250 GEL and more.
- Equalization of housing allowance for IDPs and abolishing the differentiation between IDPs living in 'compact' and 'private' accommodation.
- Guaranteeing integration of IDPs into other parts of the country before returning to their places of permanent residence.
- Full protection of IDPs from eviction in premises under their legal ownership.
- Abolishing suspension of IDP allowance for IDPs who leave the country for more than two months, for business trips, study or medical treatment provided that they informed the Ministry prior to their travel.
- Simplification of registration for IDP status.
- Respect for family unity right based on clear definition of the term 'family'.
- Restitution of IDP property in the occupied territory and right to inheritance recognized.
- Abolishing the exemption from the land taxes on agricultural land plots temporarily allocated to IDPs.

The State Strategy for Internally Displaced Persons¹¹² (and its Action Plans) was adopted in 2007. There were two action plans resulting from the strategy, one for 2009 – 2012 and a subsequent one for 2012 – 2014. These were the framing Government policy documents in meeting the needs of the internally displaced persons.

The State Strategy on IDPs sets two main goals for the state:

1. To create conditions for the dignified and safe return of IDPs
2. To support decent living conditions for the displaced population and their participation in society

The Strategy for Livelihood Access to Internally Displaced Persons – Persecuted Persons and its Action Plan. The Strategy prioritizes opportunities that fulfill not only potential of IDPs for social and economic growth, but also their local host communities. The related Action Plan is in compliance with other strategies and action plans, such as Governmental Program of Georgia *For Strong, Democratic and United Georgia*, State Strategy for Internally Displaced Persons - Persecuted and the Action Plan for its implementation for 2015-2016 and National Action Plan for 2012-2015 for implementation of UN Security Council Resolutions NN1325, 1820, 1888, 1889 and 1960 on *Women, Peace and Security*.¹¹³ A further strength of the Action Plan is the integration of gender equality and non-discrimination

¹¹¹ <http://mra.gov.ge/eng/static/3421>

¹¹² Government of Georgia (2007): *Decree no. 47. On approving the State Strategy for Internally Displaced Persons - Persecuted*. Ref: http://mra.gov.ge/index.php?lang_id=ENG#index/1/ENG

¹¹³ Resolution of the Government of Georgia N128 On Adoption of the Action Plan for implementation of the Strategy of 2015-2016 for Livelihood Access to Internally Displaced Persons – Persecuted, 4th February 2015 Tbilisi

principles. It also envisages IDPs involvement in the processes of planning, monitoring and evaluation of activities affecting lives of IDPs.

2. General laws and strategies impacting IDPs in key sectors: housing, property and land; education; employment; health; and human rights and prohibition of discrimination

Housing, Property and Land

The Law of Georgia on Forcibly Displaced Persons – Persecuted (Articles 12, 13,14, and 15) defines rights and obligations of IDPs and their descendants with regard to housing and property. IDPs are entitled to adequate housing in Georgia until they can return to places of permanent residence or until durable housing solutions are in place.

According to the latest Action Plan (2012- 2014), durable housing plans for IDPs are implemented in three groups: 1) IDPs living in collective centers, who are in need of durable housing and for whom the government provided their current accommodation; 2) IDPs in collective centers who were not provided accommodation by the government because it was run down, not habitable and rehabilitation of those buildings would be too expensive. In the same groups are IDPs who have been living in private accommodation, but are still in need of a durable housing solution; and 3) IDPs who for some reason have refused offers from the government. The aim for this group is to examine other possibilities for durable housing solutions.

In 2013, the MRA made substantive changes in their approach towards durable housing solutions. It now targets both the IDPs in private accommodation and those in collective centers. This has effectively prevented further discrimination of IDPs residing in private accommodation, but still in need of a durable housing solution.

The Standard Operational Procedures (SOP) for Eviction of IDPs and Provision of Durable Housing stipulate rules and regulation with regard to resettlement procedure. The SOP was developed in collaboration with international and national actors including UNHCR, the EU and Ombudsman’s Office of Georgia.

Whereas Georgian legislation regarding ownership and use of both agricultural and nonagricultural land is comprehensive, it does not foresee any specific rights for IDPs. **The Law of Georgia on Occupied Territories**, Articles 3-6, regulate the legal regime of the occupied territories, including restricting free movement, economic activities, and forbidding any transaction of real property within the occupied territories. The law further stipulates criminal responsibility for violation of the law. Thus, it prevents IDPs from freely disposing of their land, including for sustainable income-generating opportunities and livelihood measures.

Selection and allocation of land plots is not properly regulated by law. As a result, it is often left at the discretion of local authorities and there are significant differences in interpretation and implementation of the law.

The Tax Code of Georgia sets forth the general principles of formation and operation of the tax system of Georgia. The Code determines the type of taxes as well as conditions for appealing wrongful implementation of the tax system.¹¹⁴ IDPs are exempt from taxes for the property received from the State and from income on the initial sale of that property.¹¹⁵ Tax exemption is also foreseen for owners whose property is used as a dwelling for IDPs or has been registered as a unit of organized accommodation for IDPs.¹¹⁶

Main policy flaws that affect IDPs:

- Land policies are not favorable to IDP population.
- There are no mechanisms in place for IDPs to recover or get compensation for their houses and land in places of origin. What is more, IDPs are not even allowed to make use of their land in the occupied territories.
- No land tax exemption for temporary use by IDPs after adoption of Amendments to the Law on IDPs from 2014.

Ways forward:

- Strengthen existing policy framework, primarily through policies regulating livelihood solutions;
- Exempt IDPs from administrative fees and other related costs for disputes with regard to living space/housing, and land;
- Properly assist IDPs and establish protection mechanisms for IDPs engaging in the land rental market.
- Adjust the Tax law to incorporate tax exemption for temporary land use by IDPs.

Employment

The Labor Code of Georgia is in accordance with the highest international standards. For IDPs, a concern remains that the law does not stipulate protection from discrimination based on internal displacement. According to the Law of Georgia on Internally Displaced Persons – Persecuted, the MRA, together with other executive and relevant local authorities, shall help IDPs find jobs according to their professional qualifications, ensure their constitutional right to education, and allow their autonomy for decisions on pension-related issues. In reality, however, there is an insufficient job creation to respond to general unemployment levels and IDPs are facing greater difficulties in accessing jobs.

Key employment policy flaws that affect IDPs:

- The Labor Code does not stipulate protection from discrimination based on internal displacement
- Available employment measures do not sufficiently and adequately respond to the needs of the unemployed, including IDPs

¹¹⁴ Article 1, the Tax Code of Georgia

¹¹⁵ Article 82(1)(m)

¹¹⁶ Article 207

Ways forward:

- Stronger links between education and employment policy
- Better information on operation of gray economy that involves a good portion of the unemployed IDPs, better operating environment for small businesses and better protection of labor rights

Social assistance, education and health

IDPs in Georgia are entitled to social assistance equally with other citizens upon fulfilling the legally prescribed requirements. Additionally, assistance only reserved to IDPs is stipulated in the Law on IDPs, including the right to receive an allowance of 45 GEL and social and other types of assistance in accordance with the rules and conditions established by the Georgian legislation¹¹⁷. One of the reasons for suspension of IDP allowance is taxable income of 1,250 GEL or above¹¹⁸.

In January 2015, Georgia introduced changes in its social assistance program aiming to better address the needs of vulnerable families. The new methodology for assessment of the social – economic condition of socially vulnerable families (households) focuses on income or any income-generating property. Household appliances are no longer a factor affecting the score, nor is the scoring determined by the subjective views of the social workers.

The Law on Public Health of Georgia and The National Healthcare Strategy 2011-2015 intend to support and improve population’s health and healthy lifestyle, the quality of life, safe environment, reproductive health, and to prevent of communicable and non-communicable diseases.

“According to the data of April, 2014 all citizens of Georgia are provided with the basic healthcare, among them, approximately 3.4 million people are included in the Universal Health Care Program, 560 thousand people are beneficiaries of State Health Insurance Program, about 546 thousand people have a private or corporate insurance.”¹¹⁹

Medical expenses of IDPs and their IDP families registered in the database of socially vulnerable families are covered either by state funded healthcare programs or through particular insurance programs¹²⁰.

The Law of Georgia on General Education regulates the field of general education and guarantees equal access to general education for everyone, right to education in an educational institution as near as possible to the place of residence get general education as near as the place of residence, and education in pupil’s native language. “Everyone has an equal right to get full general education in order to fully

¹¹⁷ Article 12 of the Law of Georgia on Forcibly Displaced Persons – Persecuted

¹¹⁸ Article 11 (2)(d)

¹¹⁹ insert

¹²⁰ Article 16

develop their personality and obtain the knowledge and skills that are necessary for equal opportunities of achieving success in private and public life. Receiving primary and basic education is mandatory.¹²¹”

The Law of Georgia on Social Protection of Persons with Disabilities aims to ensure equal enjoyment of rights, favorable conditions and equal participation in the economic and political activities for the people with disabilities.

Key social assistance, education and health policy flaws that affect IDPs:

- The new scoring system doesn't take into account specific vulnerabilities connected to internal displacement.
- “...the number of risks covered by the system of social security is inadequate; the minimum of old age benefits is inadequate; the minimum level of maternity benefit is inadequate and that it has not been established that measures are taken to encourage individuals and voluntary organizations to participate in the establishment and running of social welfare.¹²²”

Ways forward:

- TSA eligibility criteria and the offered services must respond to specific (and changing) needs of the IDP population if the transition to TSA is to succeed fully. This means that its design needs to be flexible to ensure that the requisite changes can be made after regular reviews of service effectiveness.
- The IDP status is granted universally to all registered and eligible individuals. The status is tied to various benefits, including a monthly allowance for the registered IDPs and one-off cash assistance for the newly displaced population. Transfer to TSA ought to take into account some of the needs covered from the IDP allowance.

Human Rights and Prohibition of Discrimination

Civil, political, social, economic, and cultural human rights are regulated by international and national legislation. IDPs should enjoy all rights guaranteed in the Constitution of Georgia and major international human rights conventions. Additionally, they are entitled to special rights as long as they have status of an internally displaced person, or as long as their needs are tied to the fact of displacement.

The National Human Rights Strategy and Action Plan for 2014 – 2020¹²³ aims to promote and protect human rights of all citizens of Georgia, including IDPs. The Strategy sets long-term goals of the government and aims to ensure human rights protection and promotion in everyday life through multi-sector cooperation and consistent government policies.¹²⁴ Article 16 of the Strategy clarifies objectives and tasks with regard to Internally Displaced Persons. It elaborates that improvements are needed in the living conditions, social provisions, and inclusion of IDPs living near borders of occupied territories.

¹²¹ Article 9 of the Law on General Education

¹²² The report (2014) on the situation of Georgia with respect to the application of the Revised Social Charter

¹²³ <http://www.coe.int/t/commissioner/source/NAP/Georgia-National-Action-Plan-on-Human-Rights.pdf>

¹²⁴ <http://yourhumanrights.ge/documents/national-human-rights-strategy-of-georgia/>

In section 15, the Strategy outlines its aims to strengthen the legal and social rights of IDPs through policy formation, provide legal and social protection of displaced persons as a result of natural or human-made disasters, and to realize the rights of repatriates forcefully exiled by the former USSR from the former Soviet Socialist Republic of Georgia in the 1940s.

The Action Plan that backs the Strategy provides more detailed description of actions and measures to be taken, and sets timeframe and assessment indicators. The Action Plan Interagency Coordination Council for Human Rights headed by the Prime Minister of Georgia is responsible for the implementation of the Action Plan.

The Law of Georgia on Gender Equality¹²⁵ ensures that there is no discrimination in any sphere of public life against women and that all rights, freedoms and opportunities provided for in the Constitution of Georgia are equally accessible to both men and women. The Law is of special importance for internally displaced women who are often victims of multiple incidents of discrimination and social exclusion in political, economic, social, and cultural life. According to the Law, local self-government units shall develop the budget, programs, and plans in ways that preclude any type of gender inequality (Article 13).

The Election Code of Georgia¹²⁶ regulates and establishes the rights and procedures with regard to elections, plebiscites, and referenda. The Code defines the procedure for the establishment of the Electoral Administration of Georgia and the procedure for resolution of disputes (Article 1).¹²⁷ The Code stipulates that a unified list of voters shall be, at least in part, created from the data communicated by the MAR and/or its territorial agencies. The amended code abolished the norms that had prevented IDPs from voting and participating fully on all levels in public and political affairs.

The Law on Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination¹²⁸ is yet another important law for IDPs in Georgia. The newly adopted Law expands protection in Georgian anti-discrimination legislation. It includes protected groups that are not included, for example, in the article 7 of the Law on IDPs that has closed list of protected grounds. The Law on elimination of all Forms of Discrimination includes ‘sexual orientation’ and ‘gender identity and expression’ as protected grounds. This law is not limited to protection for IDPs and instead covers all citizens against discrimination. The Office of the Public Defender holds responsibility for the implementation of this law.

The Labor Code of Georgia does not stipulate protection from discrimination based on internal displacement. Additionally, the prohibition of discrimination and related protections are not unified and differ between the constitution and the various laws.

¹²⁵ https://matsne.gov.ge/index.php?option=com_ldmssearch&view=docView&id=91624&lang=en

¹²⁶ https://matsne.gov.ge/index.php?option=com_ldmssearch&view=docView&id=1557168&lang=en

¹²⁷ https://matsne.gov.ge/index.php?option=com_ldmssearch&view=docView&id=1557168&lang=en

¹²⁸ <http://www.equalrightstrust.org/ertdocumentbank/Georgian%20Anti-D%20Law%20final%20version.pdf>

The National Action Plan 2014-2016 for the Equal Opportunities for the People with Disabilities aims inclusion of persons with disabilities in decision-making processes. In this way the government of Georgia aims to include voices of persons with disabilities in strategies, action plans and other programs that have impact on this part of the population.

“This Action Plan is extremely important for IDPs since the percentage of people with disabilities is also considerably higher among IDPs than among non IDPs. According to the HIS for 2011 to 2013 the percentage of people with disabilities among IDPs was 8.56% and among non IDPs 6.8%. According to the information reported in the UNDP 2011 Survey, this difference is even higher, since the percentage of people with disabilities among IDPs is 19.7% and among non IDPs is 6.96%.”¹²⁹

List of Relevant International Instruments to which Georgia is a Party:¹³⁰	Date of Ratification
1. International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966)	3 May 1994
2. International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966)	3 May 1994
3. Optional Protocol (1966)	3 May 1994
4. Second Optional Protocol aimed at the abolition of the Death Penalty	22 Mar 1999
5. Convention on the Rights of the Child (1990)	2 Jun 1994
6. Optional Protocol on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict (2000)	
7. Optional Protocol on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child prostitution and Child Pornography (2000)	3 Aug 2010
	28 Jun 2005
8. Geneva Conventions (1949)	
9. Convention relating to the Status of Refugees (1951)	9 Aug 1999
10. Protocol to the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees (1967)	9 Aug 1999
11. Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination against Women (1979)	26 Oct 1994
12. Optional Protocol (1999)	1 Aug 2002
13. Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons (1954)	2011
14. Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness (1961)	1 July 2014
15. Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities	13 Mar 2014
16. Convention on the Prevention and the Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (1948)	11 Oct 1993
17. International Convention on the Suppression and the Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid (1973)	13 Mar 2014

¹²⁹ http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/socialcharter/Reporting/StateReports/Georgia6_en.pdf

¹³⁰ http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/TreatyBodyExternal/Treaty.aspx?CountryID=65&Lang=EN

18. Convention on the non-applicability of Statutory Limitations to War Crimes and Crimes against Humanity (1968)	31 Mar 1995
19. International Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination (1965)	2 Jun 1999
20. Convention against torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment (1984)	26 Oct 1994
21. Optional Protocol (1992)	
22. The 1950 European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (ECHR). Also ratified Protocols No. 1, 4, 6, 7, 12, 13, and 14 to the ECHR and has recognized the jurisdiction of the European Court of Human Rights.	1999
23. Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse. (2010)	23 Sep 2014 Entry into force 1 Jan 2015
24. European Convention for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment	20 Jun 2000
25. Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities	22 Dec 2005
26. European Social Charter (accepted 63 of the revised charter's 98 paragraphs!!!)	22 Aug 2005
27. Statute of the International Criminal Court	5 Sep 2003

Non-Binding Documents

1. United Nations Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement
2. Recommendation Rec (2006) 6 of the Committee of Ministers to member states on internally displaced persons, Council of Europe

Stakeholder Mapping

This section presents a mapping of the key stakeholders in the IDP benefit reform process and their formal and informal roles and influence in policy decisions concerning IDP assistance and, more broadly, representation of IDP interests.

IDP Communities

IDPs are most directly concerned with and affected by this intervention as their monthly allowances depend on it. Local interlocutors claim that the worth of these allowances transcends their financial value and that they constitute a psychosocial guarantee for traumatized people, as well as their sustained connections with their home regions. IDPs are likely to be concerned about both – loss of financial support and loss of social recognition and solidarity with plight. IDPs constitute roughly 6% of the Georgian population and they have significant political leverage. Typically, IDPs are very active in elections.

IDP Organizations

The Georgian IDP community is not strongly organized. However, there are a number of recognized non-governmental organizations advocating for IDP interests: Mama Saxlisis, the Abkhaz Government-in-Exile, European Democrats of Georgia, and various smaller CSOs.

Mama Saxlisis (meaning “community representatives” in Georgian) is a grassroots organization. Each IDP settlement usually has its own Mama Saxlisi. They are either elected by the IDPs living in the settlement or appointed by the MRA. Their primary role is to act as a link of communication between the IDPs and the Ministry, more specifically the local MRA department. The Mama Saxlisis are considered to be IDP spokespersons/mouthpieces, but their loyalty can also sometimes be questioned by the IDPs. The Mama Saxlisis appointed by the MRA receive small salaries for their services, creating confusion among the IDPs as to whether their leaders are representing their interests or are official representatives of the Government. Some interlocutors have claimed that as long as the Mama Saxlisis continued to receive salaries from the MRA, the IDPs could not expect fair representation of their interests, but continued bias in favor of Government interests.

The Abkhaz Government in-Exile is another organization advocating IDP interests. They championed IDP rights immediately after their displacement. However, the Shevardnadze administration downsized the Government-in-Exile substantially in 1999, cutting both their funding and number of employees. The role of the Government-in-Exile consequently has gradually diminished as an interlocutor with policy makers on IDP issues. “We should be the spokesperson, but we are not. In reality we are a puppet government that only hands out small-scale things, such as TVs. It is only for show, we are not making any decisions” (*Government-in-Exile representative*). The Government-in-Exile is more inclined to oppose changes to IDP assistance perceiving these as diminishing political will to pursue IDPs’ return in occupied territories.

The IDP Party European Democrats of Georgia – In 2006, Paata Davitaia, the former Minister of Justice in the Abkhaz Government-in-Exile and an IDP from the Abkhazia AR, formed a political party focusing exclusively on the rights of Georgian IDPs. He began in 2005 by establishing an NGO called “Chven Tviton” (We, Ourselves). In 2006, the NGO reregistered as a political party calling itself the European Democrats of Georgia. The party ran in two elections and won one seat in Parliament. Even though the NGO transformed into a political party, the Charter remained the same, focusing primarily on the rights of IDPs. “Sixty percent of our members are IDPs, and our main priority is to facilitate and promote IDP related issues. We are trying to direct [the Government’s] focus to the fact that 90 percent of all IDPs are unemployed. We also focus on the lack of IDP access to healthcare and on their right to return to Abkhazia.” (Davitaia, March 9th, 2012)

Smaller informal IDP CSOs constitute other channels of mobilization. Such groups mostly organize on an ad hoc basis to protest a certain government decision, or attract media attention on a particular issue.

Government

The Prime Minister’s Cabinet – The Prime Minister’s Cabinet is the most influential political actor regarding discussions on displacement and assistance to IDPs. The Prime Minister’s Cabinet has four staff members charged with overseeing this coordination. However, it has no dedicated budget for coordination with the MRA, which presents a significant constraint in carrying out its mandate.

The Ministry of Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Accommodation and Refugees (MRA) is the main Government authority with explicitly designated responsibility for IDP-related issues. The MRA is open and receptive to a constructive dialogue on how to improve support for IDPs. Stakeholders note that, whereas at times they would like the Ministry to be stronger than it is, it is also clear that the MRA is the “champion promoting IDP issues in the Government”.

MRA Steering Committee (SC) - At the policy and technical, level discussions take place in the inter-agency Steering Committee which, in turn, supports the MRA in pursuing the agenda. The Steering Committee is an MRA-led decision making body tasked with the coordination and strategic alignment of joint efforts by the Government of Georgia and international organizations in operationalizing and implementing the IDP State Strategy and its Action Plan. The SC fulfills a triple role: decision-making, technical advisory and communication role. The SC comprises 37 representatives of line ministries, donors, international and local non-governmental organizations, which work in thematic expert groups¹³¹. The SC-appointed Technical Expert Groups (TEGs) provide technical assistance and address specific time-bound tasks in the Action Plans. (e.g elaboration of standards, legal issues etc.). Each Expert Group comprises representatives of the MRA, other relevant GoG agencies and a minimum of three and a maximum of five organizations with expertise relevant to the assigned task. Greater engagement of development partners in the work of the Steering Committee and its temporary working groups is an effective way to provide coordinated inputs in the policy debate on displacement. Two new development organizations (Sida and KfW) have recently been added to the list of permanent members of the Steering Committee, which indicates increased international attention to – and engagement with - the issue.

Other line Ministries - the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA), the Ministry of Education and Science (MoES), Ministry of Labor, Health and Social Affairs (MoLHSA) are also involved in assisting IDPs as part of their mainstream services to the Georgian population. The distribution of responsibilities among the various levels and branches of Government addressing internal displacement is unclear and therefore cooperation between them on focusing attention to IDP needs has so far been suboptimal.

The Social Service Agency is an important player in the process of transition to needs-based assistance. Representatives of the Agency have expressed negative views of the transition since there is no clear path for its implementation. Furthermore, they have just completed the reform of the social welfare system in cooperation with UNICEF and a new reform or additional influx of beneficiaries is likely to further strain the capacity of the agency.

Local governments receive two-thirds of their revenues in the form of grants from the national budget. Given that local governments are not responsible for social services, such as basic education and healthcare, which are significant in budgetary terms, the current level of transfer dependence of the subnational governments (SNGs) in Georgia stands out in comparison to other decentralized countries. It also makes it difficult to hold SNGs accountable for revenue performance. Even though local governments are primarily responsible for the provision of housing, utility and communal services, due to the high spatial concentration of IDPs in selected regions, their housing needs have remained a central Government responsibility taking up a majority of the MRA’s budget. This, however, has implications on the extent to which IDPs can expect attention or seek accountability from their local authorities if the primary authority responsible for their needs remains concentrated in a central Government institution.

¹³¹ MRA, MoJ, MoLHSA, MoA, MRDI, MoF, MoESD, MDF, Government AR of Abkhazia, EU, UNHCR, WB, UNCT, SDC, KfW, EUMM, PDO, GYLA, DRC, TA, BPRM.

Host Communities/ Non-IDP Population

Potential for conflict between IDPs and non-IDPs due to transition from status-based to needs-based assistance has not been anticipated. On the whole host communities have welcomed IDPs, and are sympathetic to them having special status. Some non-IDPs would consider IDPs economically privileged due to their benefit; while others believe that this benefit should be maintained. Reactions from the non-IDP population on this topic mostly concern the social and political implications that may occur to 'IDP status' and whether such policies will have a consequence on the Government's commitment towards occupied territories.

Georgian NGO Community

There is a considerable number of national NGOs working with IDPs. Most of them are based in Western Georgia, where most of the IDPs are living, and in Tbilisi, the country's capital. Some areas with IDP populations, particularly the breakaway regions and rural areas, are underserved by NGOs. NGO capacity varies considerably and coordination could be improved to limit duplication of efforts and ensure that IDPs have access to the same information about their rights and aid.

NGOs have advocated for piloting the new social system to help develop capacities to reach out to and identify different vulnerable groups effectively. They are further concerned that vulnerability criteria have not been publicly discussed and that they are not widely accessible and transparent. NGOs further fear that IDPs will not apply for livelihood projects lest they lose their social assistance. They are, therefore, suggesting that provision be made that social assistance is not automatically cancelled as soon as a person is awarded a grant or finds a job. The rationale is that only time can tell whether that step towards self-reliance has been successful and that a period of approximately 6 months is required in order to monitor the adjustment and performance before revoking social assistance.

Caucasian Refugee and IDP NGO Network (CRINGO) - In 2001, the Danish Refugee Council (DRC) established the Caucasian Refugee and IDP NGO Network (CRINGO), a network of NGOs in the Caucasus. CRINGO coordinated civil society input to the Georgian National IDP Strategy and IDP Action Plan.

A number of national NGOs have also developed credible advocacy initiatives to raise awareness about IDPs. Legal aid NGOs, such as the Georgian Young Lawyers' Association (GYLA) and Norwegian Refugee Council's ICLA partners, have successfully defended IDP rights, including in court. Not all NGOs are, however, neutral, given the politicization of the IDP issue. Numerous NGOs could benefit from capacity building to strengthen their research, reporting and advocacy efforts. Local NGOs implement a range of programs, including legal aid, income-generation projects, medical assistance, psycho-social rehabilitation, extra-curricular education for IDP children, promoting human rights awareness and vocational training, confidence-building, community mobilization and firewood distribution. However, the non-government sector is still generally weak institutionally, financially and quantitatively. It is almost fully dependent on external financing, while local sources of financing are practically non-existent.

Media

Media have not played a major role in IDP policy. There is no sustained and analytical interest by media in the situation of IDPs, or any adjustments to IDP assistance. Media has mostly reported on ad hoc IDP

cases, such as a women's strike during evictions, criminal activities of IDPs, etc. Two media organizations, however, Studio Re and GOFGroup have made films about IDPs.

International community

The **European Union (EU)** is the main donor in Georgia and it funds IDP protection and assistance in Georgia, as well as in the Abkhazian AR. It also finances the **UNHCR** Strengthening Protection Capacity Project for the Southern Caucasus (SPCP-SC). Donor funding for IDP programs is also provided by the United States, Japan, Switzerland, Sweden and Norway. The European Union is the strongest supporter of the shift from status- to needs-based assistance to IDPs in Georgia.

International NGOs with IDP programs include the **Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC)**, the **Danish Refugee Council (DRC)** and **World Vision International (WVI)**. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) implemented one of the largest humanitarian and protection programs in Western Georgia and the breakaway regions. In 2007, they started to scale back programs in Western Georgia, handing over their food distribution program to the Government of Georgia.

In Tskhinvali Region - South Ossetia, the **OSCE** implemented an economic rehabilitation program, which commenced in 2006 with funding from the European Commission. The program aimed to improve infrastructure and therefore benefited IDPs and returnees prior to the conflict in August 2008.

The **Norwegian company (STATOIL)** funded the NRC and the UNHCR in strengthening the capacity of the Government of Georgia to respond to IDP needs.

Most, if not all, international agencies are supportive of the shift from status-based to needs-based assistance to IDPs in Georgia. However, there is also fear that given the existing welfare system, this shift may be detrimental to many IDPs.

Annex II: Quantitative Analysis¹³²

From 2011 to 2013, the Integrated Household Survey (IHS) collected information on 4,028 Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), who represented 3.44% of the total sample. From this combined sample for the three years, we are able to generate descriptive statistics that allow us to compare IDPs with the rest of the population.

On top of this information, we use the Intentions Survey on Durable Solutions among IDPs in Georgia from UNHCR and ISSA. This survey conducted between October and December 2014 is exclusively for IDPs. With 2,001 respondents it is representative of the IDP population. In addition, we include the information from UNDP survey for 2011, which includes an oversampling of IDPs, persons with disabilities and mountain regions. This survey contains information for 2011 on 1,867 IDPs, who represent 12.11% of the total sample. We combine these three data sets for the descriptive statistics elaborated for this report.

How are IDPs identified in the surveys?

In the case of the Integrated Household Survey, identification of IDPs is at the individual level. For each individual in the household, a question is asked on whether each person has a special status of IDP. In each household, there can be IDP and non IDP members. Most tables in this report are produced at the individual level (in which case, we can identify if the individual is an IDP or not), but there are few cases in which the information is reported at the household level. In these cases, the IDP categorization is determined based on the head of household.

The Intentions Survey from UNHCR is administered exclusively to IDP members, who are 16 years old or older. There can be more than one IDP at each household, although these cases are rare.

Finally, the UNDP data set contains an oversample of IDP members, who are also identified at the individual level. Again, a question to each member is applied on whether they hold a special status of IDP members.

What makes IDPs different from the rest of the population?

1. Most of the population in Georgia is dispersed between the regions of: Tbilisi, Kvemo Kartli, Adjara, Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti and Imereti, Racha-Lechkhumi, Kvemo Svaneti. IDPs, however, are not equally dispersed. 44% of the Internally Displaced population is concentrated in Tbilisi, while 26.4% of them live in Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti.
2. In fact, while 51% of the population lives in rural areas, only 24.7% of IDPs live in rural areas and 75% in urban areas. From those 75%, 44% are only in Tbilisi.

¹³² Sources: Integrated Household Survey (IHS, by Geostat 2011-2013), Intentions Survey (UNHCR, 2015) and UNDP (2011)

	IHS 2011-2013			UNHCR 2014 ¹³³	UNDP 2011		
	All	IDP	non-IDP	IDP	All	IDP	non-IDP
Region							
Kakheti	9	0.2	9.4	0.6	9.1	0.1	9.6
Tbilisi	25.8	44.1	25.1	37.9	26.1	44.4	25.1
Shida Kartli	6.9	9.3	6.9	6.4	6.8	6.9	6.8
Kvemo Kartli	10	6	10.2	4.8	10.1	7.3	10.3
Samtskhe-Javakheti	4.8	0.3	4.9	0.9	4.4		4.7
Adjara	9.4	0.7	9.7	2.5	9.8	0	10.2
Guria	3.4	0.5	3.5	0.2	3.2	0.2	3.4
Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti	10.1	26.4	9.5	32.6	10	24.6	9.2
Imereti; Racha-Lechkhumi; Kvemo Svaneti	18.3	8.5	18.8	9.9	18.3	12.4	18.6
Mtskheta-Mtianeti	2.2	4.3	2.1	4.3	2.3	3.7	2.2
Area of residence							
Tbilisi	25.8	44.1	25.1	37.9	26.1	44.4	25.1
Rest Urban	23.2	31.2	23		23.1	38.4	22.3
Rural	50.9	24.7	52		50.9	17.3	52.6

- IDPs are also relatively younger than the rest of the population. The proportion of IDPs between 16 and 24 years old is higher (20.3%) than among non-IDPs (16.7); the same holds for the group of IDPs and non-IDPs between 25 and 39 years old, 27% versus 24.8%, respectively. Correspondingly, the proportion of IDPs 65 years old or older is significantly less (20.3%) than the proportion of non-IDPs who are 65 years old or more (25.3%).
- The proportion of females relative to males does not vary greatly across IDPs and non IDPs. IDPs have just slightly higher proportions of females relative to males, compared to non IDPs, but these differences of means are not statistically significant.

	IHS 2011-2013			UNHCR 2014	UNDP 2011		
	All	IDP	Non-IDP	IDP	All	IDP	Non-IDP
Age							
16-17	3.6	3.9	3.6	1.6	3.4	2.3	3.5
18-24	13.3	16.5	13.1	7.4	13.1	13.3	13.1
25-39	25	27	24.9	27.7	24.7	26.1	24.7
40-59	33.1	32.3	33.1	40.6	33.2	35.6	33.1
60+	25.1	20.3	25.3	22.8	25.6	22.9	25.7
Gender							
Male	46	45.1	46	37.4	45.3	44.9	45
Female	54	54.9	54	62.6	54.7	55.1	55

¹³³ Based on data provided by MRA at the time of data collection for the UNHCR Intentions Survey (October 2014)

5. The percentage of people with disabilities is also higher among IDPs than among non IDPs. According to the IHS for 2011 to 2013 the percentage of people with disabilities among IDPs was 8.56% and among non IDPs 6.8%. According to the information reported in the UNDP 2011 Survey, this difference is similar. The percentage of people with disabilities among IDPs is 9.41% and among non IDPs is 4.03%.

HH head person with disability	IHS 2011-2013			UNDP 2011		
	All	IDP	Non-IDP	All	IDP	Non-IDP
No disability	93.13	91.44	93.19	95.7	90.59	95.97
Person with disability	6.87	8.56	6.81	4.3	9.41	4.03

6. Household sizes among IDPs are slightly bigger than household sizes among non-IDPs, but these are not significant differences. The proportion of houses with 4 or more people is 48.12% among IDPs and 45.6% among non-IDPs. Correspondingly, households with 2 members or less are 32.3% of all IDP households, while they represent 35.8% of all non-IDP households.

Household size	IHS 2011 - 2013			UNHCR 2014	UNDP 2011		
	All	IDP	Non-IDP	IDP	All	IDP	Non-IDP
1	15.3	13.9	15.3	10.9	15.5	11.8	15.7
2	20.4	18.4	20.5	16.6	18.5	18.2	18.5
3	18.6	19.6	18.5	18.6	16.4	20.7	16.1
4	18.6	19.4	18.5	25.4	19.5	24.9	19.2
5	13.5	17	13.4	15.3	13.8	14.8	13.7
6+	13.6	11.7	13.7	13.3	16.4	9.6	16.8

7. Bigger sizes of IDP households can also be explained by looking at the number of children between 0 and 14 years old per household. The proportion of households with no children is significantly higher for non-IDP households (56% among IDPs and 62% among non IDPs). But the proportion of households with one or more kids in the house younger than 14 years old is 43.5% for IDP households and 38% for non-IDP households.

	IHS 2011-2013			UNDP 2011		
	All	IDP	Non-IDP	All	IDP	Non-IDP
Number of children 0-14						
0	61.75	56.48	61.95	61.16	61.74	61.13
1	20.79	24.51	20.66	19.42	19.45	19.41
2	13.83	15.33	13.77	14.83	14.82	14.84
3	2.98	2.95	2.98	3.71	3.29	3.73
4+	0.65	0.74	0.65	0.88	0.69	0.89

Education

8. IDPs are relatively more educated than non-IDP members. While 47.6% of the head of households among non-IDPs has tertiary education as the highest level of education achieved, the proportion of head of household among IDPs that has tertiary education as their highest degree achieved increases to 50.8%. This disparity is mainly by the disproportion of head of households with Masters Degrees or equivalent as their highest degree achieved. 26.1% of non-IDPs have Masters Degrees, while the proportion of IDPs with Masters Degrees increases to 33.4%. Although overall, we see a higher proportion of non-IDPs with secondary education as their highest degree, levels of completion of upper secondary education are slightly higher among IDPs (39.9% compared to 37.2%).

Education level	IHS 2011-2013			UNDP 2011		
	All	IDP	Non-IDP	All	IDP	Non-IDP
Primary or less	3.95	1.53	4.05	4.35	1.87	4.47
Secondary	48.27	47.69	48.30	48.81	44.22	49.05
Tertiary	47.78	50.78	47.66	46.84	53.91	46.48

Note: All members older than 16 years old included

Health and Subjective Perceptions

9. According to the IHS (2011-2013), 89% of non IDPs report to have health insurance, while 91.4% of IDPs report to health insurance.
10. According to UNDP (2011) Survey though, most people report to have good health status, nor good nor bad or bad, but very few consider that their health status is very good.

	UNDP 2011		
	All	IDP	Non-IDP
Health status (15+)			
Very good	5.83	5.73	5.84
Good	38.48	31.17	38.87
Nor good nor bad	31.44	35.47	31.22
Bad	18.74	20.51	18.64
Very bad	5.44	7.13	5.35
Don't know	0.08	0.00	0.09

Source: UNDP (2011)

11. To the questions of subjective wellbeing from UNHCR Survey, not many IDPs report to have adequate living conditions or housing (only 15%). A big percentage though feels secure. As seen objectively, very few people (less than 9%) consider having a good livelihood and income. And a slightly higher percentage considers that they get access to medical service and jury service. More than half of IDPs consider themselves locally integrated, and about a third (33.3%) consider themselves partially integrated; 8.3% report that they do not consider themselves integrated in their local places of residence.

	IDP (% who answer 'Yes')
Subjective wellbeing. Do you have the following?	
Adequate living conditions	14.7
Housing	15.4
Security	73.8
Livelihood/Income (including allowances)	8.3
Adequate job	7
Access to medical services	16.7
Access to justice services	29.3
Access to documentation	83.6
Do you consider yourself locally integrated	57.3

Source: UNHCR (2015)

Dwelling and living conditions

12. Although for the rest of the population the material of their dwelling's floor is mainly wood, most of the IDPs (39.8%) have floors of parquet, and the proportion that has wood floors is half the proportion of the rest of the population. A non-negligible percentage of the population (14.9%) has laminated floors.

13. Again most of the rest of the population has their dwelling's walls made of brick, block and stone (66.3%), and some others made of concrete slabs (22.97%); while the proportion of IDPs with walls made of brick, block and stone is only 44.6% and the proportion with concrete slabs walls is almost double the one of non IDPs, 42.9%.
14. The majority of non IDPs has their ceilings made of tin and schist or tile (36.1% and 38.9%, respectively); while the majority of IDPs (41.9%) have their ceilings made of concrete.
15. 94% of the rest of the population owns their houses, while only 43.4% of IDPs own their houses. Instead, 50.2% use the houses they live in without payment. And considering only the information on the UNDP survey for 2011, the proportion of IDPs that use a property without payment is as high as 70.4% and only 27.3% own their houses.

	IHS 2011-2013			UNDP 2011		
	All	IDP	Non-IDP	All	IDP	Non-IDP
HH Dwelling characteristics						
Floor						
Wood	61.99	34.10	63.05	62.64	29.06	64.45
Parquet	26.82	39.77	26.33	26.13	38.49	25.47
Laminate	2.78	14.87	2.32	2.44	15.69	1.73
Other	8.41	11.26	8.30	8.79	16.76	8.35
Walls						
Brick, block, stone	64.54	44.59	65.30	64.56	39.2	65.93
Concrete slabs	23.70	42.93	22.97	23.59	49.36	22.2
Other	11.76	12.48	11.73	11.85	11.44	11.87
Ceiling						
Tin	36.10	29.04	36.37	34.95	23.96	35.55
Schist/tile	38.93	17.25	39.75	39.03	18.6	40.13
Concrete	21.92	41.92	21.16	22.32	47.85	20.95
Other	3.05	11.79	2.72	3.70	9.59	3.37
Type of dwelling						
Belongs to the household	92.24	43.43	94.09	91.07	27.25	94.5
Rented	2.28	4.60	2.19	1.64	1.23	1.66
Mortgaged	0.58	1.39	0.55	0.49	0.48	0.49
Used without payment	4.85	50.21	3.13	6.74	70.41	3.32
Doesn't know	0.05	0.37	0.04	0.06	0.63	0.03

16. According to the UNHCR survey, 38.2% of IDPs live in a collective center. 21.5% of them live in a non-rehabilitated collective center, while 16.7% live in a rehabilitated collective center. Only 19.9% own their housing. Also, non-negligible proportions of IDPs live in cottage settlements or live with relatives.

Types of Dwelling of IDPs

Collective Center (non-rehabilitated)	21.5
Collective Center (rehabilitated)	16.7
Cottage Settlement	11.4
New Buildings	10.5
Private Housing	39.3
of which:	
• Owned	19.9
• Rented	4.4
• With relatives	9.7
• Squatting	2.8
• Other	2.5

Source: UNHCR (2015)

Income and Poverty

17. Poverty rates in our sample reach 44.75% for 2011, 42.55% for 2012 and 36.05 for 2013. So for the 2011 to 2013 period, the overall poverty rate is 41.11% (based on consumption and using a poverty line of \$2.5). The percentage of poor households among IDP families is higher than among non IDP families. Poverty for non IDP households reaches 40.97%, while for IDP households it reaches 45.3%, and this difference is statistically significant.
18. By looking at the details of poverty rates by area of residence, we see that in rural areas, both for IDPs and non IDPs, more than 50% of households live in a situation of poverty. For Tbilisi, the percentage of households living in poverty is higher for IDPs, but not as high as poverty in rural areas for both groups. This constitutes a first indicator that most likely IDPs living in Tbilisi could have integrated better to markets and improved their living conditions, while regardless of their condition, people in rural areas are still facing market imperfections and hardships.

	Poverty Non IDP	Poverty IDP
All	40.97	45.31
Tbilisi	25.9	39.35
Rest Urban	36.77	43.21
Rural	50.37	58.22

Source: Integrated Household Survey, 2011-2013

19. We can also explore these poverty rates using the UNDP Survey for 2011, which again is expected to be slightly different than IHS given the oversample of IDPs for a given quarter. Using the UNDP Survey, we find that poverty reaches 45.8% overall and extreme poverty 16.9%. Non IDPs have a poverty rate of 45.9%, while for IDPs it is 44.7%. But in this sample, this difference is

not statistically significant. Interestingly, although poverty rates in the different regions are higher for IDPs, overall poverty for IDPs is lower than for non IDPs. This is a consequence of the fact that 75% of IDPs live in urban areas, where poverty rates are lower.

20. We also see that, again, lower poverty rates are in Tbilisi, where poverty for IDPs is almost 5 percent points higher than for non IDPs. The rest of urban areas are 2.3 percent points apart, where non IDPs have 46% of poverty and IDPs 48.4%; and rural areas only 1.05 percent point apart, 51.8% for non IDPs and 52.9% for IDPs. None of these differences is statistically significant.

	Poverty Non IDP	Poverty IDP
All	45.877	44.65
Tbilisi	33.22	38.15
Rest Urban	46.06	48.36
Rural	51.84	52.89

Source: UNDP, 2011

21. To further explore these dissimilarities of income and consumption levels across area of residence, we look at the median of the average monthly income (in GEL) reported by each household. We see that clearly income in Tbilisi is higher than in the rest of urban and rural areas. Moreover, differences in income between IDP and non IDP households are not significant.

	Median Income level non IDP	Median Income level IDP
All	489.000	456.600
Tbilisi	585.000	525.333
Rest Urban	466.667	390.667
Rural	463.358	436.775

Source: Integrated Household Survey, 2011-2013

But what are the sources of this income?

22. From total household income, we see that, on average, a fourth comes from hired employment, and this is the case for IDP and non IDP households. Self-employment income represents 7.5% of total income on average for non IDP households and 5.8% on average for IDP households. This is the case given the lower participation on self-employment activities for IDP households. Agricultural production also represents a higher proportion for non IDP households. But again, given that 75% of IDP households live in urban areas, this gap is understandable. Income from properties also is clearly higher for non IDPs, given that, as seen, the majority of IDPs do not own a house. However, income from pensions, scholarships and assistantships represents on average 10 percent points more for IDP households than for non IDP households. The same

holds for remittances, which represent 5 percent points more of total income for IDP households than for non IDP households. Money received as a gift is also significantly higher for non IDPs.

Sources of Income	All	Non IDP	IDP
From hired employment	26.52	26.56	25.59
From self-employment	7.47	7.54	5.79
From selling agricultural production	6.11	6.28	1.92
Property income (leasing, interest on a deposit etc.)	0.59	0.61	0.18
Pensions, scholarships, assistances	26.60	26.20	36.85
Remittances from abroad	13.52	13.31	18.85
Money received as a gift	15.99	16.31	7.78

Source: Integrated Household Survey, 2011-2013

23. Although as seen, poverty is considerably less in Tbilisi and income averages are higher on the capital, money in the form of pensions, scholarships and assistances is higher for IDPs and especially for IDPs living in Tbilisi.

	Median monthly avg on pensions, scholarships and assistances - NON IDP	Median monthly avg on pensions, scholarships and assistances - IDP
All	100	138
Tbilisi	70	140
Rest Urban	87	132
Rural	110	126

Source: Integrated Household Survey, 2011-2013

So, how does the condition of being an IDP affect the probability of living in poverty?

24. We report below the marginal effects of a logit model on poverty, explained by the condition of IDP and other covariates. A simple first glance tells us that being an IDP, increases the probability of being poor by 0.05. If we however, include other covariates the probability of being poor for an IDP increases to 0.07. This is, the previous effect was underestimating the effect of being an IDP given other omitted variables. We see that the covariates have the predicted signs as well. Being a female decreases the probability of being poor, living outside of the capital also increases the probability of being poor, having tertiary education compared to either primary or secondary school decreases the probability of being poor and being employee

also decreases the probability of being poor, relative to self-employed, unemployed, inactive, etc.

VARIABLES	Poverty	Poverty
IDP	0.05*** (0.000968)	0.07*** (0.0009)
Female		-0.006*** (0.0004)
Rest Urban		0.123*** (0.0004)
Rural		0.237*** (0.001)
Secondary		0.041*** (0.002)
Tertiary		-0.100*** (0.001)
Disabled		0.005*** (0.001)
Self-employed		0.080*** (0.001)
Unemployed		0.213*** (0.001)
Observations	67,681	64,086

Source: Integrated Household Survey, 2011-2013

How would poverty rates change if we suppress social transfers¹³⁴?

25. As another way of checking differences in poverty levels and social transfers, we perform a simulation. We recalculate poverty levels using consumption minus the income perceived in the form of pensions, scholarships and assistances. Two important issues are worth mentioning for this methodology: (i) previous poverty rates were calculated using consumption levels and we're now subtracting income levels. So, we're assuming that none of the income received in the form of social transfers was saved; (ii) by just subtracting this income, we're assuming the individual would have behaved exactly in the same way in the absence of social assistance. People might have behaved differently not knowing that they would receive social assistance. Despite these

¹³⁴ This simulation refers to a broad category of 'social transfers' that includes all types of state cash assistance (pensions, scholarships, and other forms of social assistance) as per Integrated Household Survey. With the data available it was not possible to perform the same simulation for poverty impacts of removing the IDP benefit for IDP households; however, such exercise is recommended for future analysis.

two assumptions, we find that poverty rates for both IDPs and non IDPs would change considerably in the absence of social transfers. Poverty levels for non IDPs would reach 54.2% and for IDPs, 65 %. This difference will also be statistically significant. Again, higher rates would be observed in urban and rural areas outside Tbilisi, where poverty levels would be as high as 75% for IDPs and 65% for non IDPs.

Simulation: Poverty rates considering consumption with no social assistance

	Poverty Non IDP	Poverty IDP
All	54.16	65.03
Tbilisi	37.63	58.66
Rest Urban	48.15	65.94
Rural	65.09	75.13

Source: Integrated Household Survey, 2011-2013

Employment

26. Status of employment varies considerably among IDP and non-IDP households. The proportion of households where the head of household is an employee is significantly higher among IDP households (25.7%) than among non-IDP households (22.7%). This gap is even greater for the labor force, where 41.8% of IDP head of households who belong to the labor force are employees, while only 32.6% of the non-IDP labor force are employees. We see though the opposite situation for self-employment. While 40.79% of non-IDP head of households are self-employed, only 20.2% of IDP head of households are self-employed. Again, for the labor force this disparity is sharpened as only 32.8% of IDP labor force is self-employed, while 58.3% of non-IDP labor force is self-employed.
27. If we consider all head of households, IDPs have significantly higher ratios of unemployed, discouraged and inactive than non-IDP households. The proportion of unemployed IDP head of households is alarmingly more than 9 percent points higher than non IDP head of households if we consider everyone. This situation is even worse when looking only at the economically active population. Among the labor force, 25.3% of IDPs are unemployed and 9 % of non-IDPs are unemployed.

	IHS 2011-2013			UNDP 2011		
	All	IDP	Non-IDP	All	IDP	Non-IDP
HH head work status (15+)						
Employee	22.83	25.75	22.72	21.18	19.63	21.26
Self-employed	39.96	20.20	40.68	34.22	12.03	35.39
Unemployed	6.66	15.63	6.33	9.69	19.33	9.18
Discouraged	1.81	6.46	1.64	1.62	4.41	1.47
Inactive	28.54	31.76	28.43	33.05	44.42	32.45
Unknown	0.19	0.20	0.19	0.25	0.18	0.25
HH head work status (active, 15+)						
Employee	32.87	41.82	32.59	32.54	38.50	32.30
Self-employed	57.54	32.80	58.33	52.57	23.60	53.76
Unemployed	9.58	25.38	9.08	14.89	37.90	13.94

Are these characteristics of IDPs homogeneous across regions, gender, age, area of residence and other characteristics?

28. Although we see a substantial gap on total labor force participation across IDPs and non-IDPs, we also see that for females, labor force participation is critical for both IDPs and non IDPs. Certainly, labor force participation for non-IDP males is 7 percent points higher than for IDPs. However, for both IDP and non-IDP females, labor force participation is substantially lower. Non-IDP females have a labor force participation of 68.6%, while IDP females have a labor force participation of 56.1%.
29. The disparities are even accentuated when comparing employment rates. Female employment rates are way below their male counterparts. However, in regards to employment rates, IDP males also have a huge gap with non-IDP males. While non-IDP males have an employment rate of 74.6%, only 50% of IDP-males are employed, and only 36.7% of female IDPs are employed.
30. Consequently unemployment rates are also significantly higher for IDP youth and females, but particularly high for IDP males, where 32.5% of this subset of the population is unemployed. Long term unemployment rates are also significantly higher for subsets of the IDP population, where 23.1% of males are unemployed, 17.5% of females and 18.6% of youth; compared to 9.25% of non-IDP males, 7.7% of non-IDP females and 11% of non-IDP youth.
31. These gaps are also present across area of residence. Overall, for both IDP and non-IDP groups, labor participation and employment rates are higher in rural areas. Although certainly, lower for IDPs. While 53.4% of non-IDPs are employed in urban areas, only 39.5% of IDPs are employed in urban areas. Similarly, while the employment rate for non-IDPs in rural areas is 78.8%, for IDPs in rural areas it decreases to 51.8%.

32. These employment rates are however particularly low for females and youth in urban areas, both for IDPs and non-IDPs. While 62.6% of non-IDP males and 49.3% of IDP males are employed in urban areas, only 45.9% of non-IDP females and 31.3% of IDP females are employed in urban areas; and only 18.04% of non-IDP youth and 9.7% of IDP youth in urban areas.
33. Unemployment rates are also higher in urban areas than in rural areas, overall. But they are also particularly critical for youth, females and male IDPs in urban areas, and for male IDPs in rural areas. The unemployment rates for these groups are higher than 22%, and even higher than 33% for urban male IDPs, the highest unemployment rate of all subsets of the population. For the non-IDP group, the highest unemployment rate is also for males in urban areas, where it reaches 23.5% of this group.
34. Long term unemployment follows similar patterns in the sense that the most critical groups are also urban IDPs, where overall unemployment rates reach 21.9%, while in urban non-IDPs it reaches 13.29%. In rural areas, 21.25% of male IDPs are also long-term unemployed.

	NON IDP				IDP			
	Labor Force Participation	Employment-to-Population Ratio	Unemployment Rate	Long-term Unemployment	Labor Force Participation	Employment-to-Population Ratio	Unemployment Rate	Long-term Unemployment
Total (20-64)	78.62	66.51	12.11	8.42	67.73	42.5	25.23	19.99
Youth (15-24)	40.44	26.78	13.66	11.05	34.53	12.27	22.26	18.57
Female (20-64)	68.64	59.18	9.47	7.68	56.19	36.67	19.52	17.54
Male (20-64)	89.74	74.68	15.06	9.25	82.39	49.9	32.49	23.1
Urban (20-64)	72.13	53.43	18.71	13.29	67.08	39.46	27.61	21.87
Youth (15-24)	34.7	18.04	16.67	13.88	34.94	9.65	25.29	20.79
Female (20-64)	60.68	45.88	14.8	12.13	54.01	31.33	22.68	20.41
Male (20-64)	86.08	62.62	23.46	14.71	82.93	49.33	33.6	23.64
Rural (20-64)	84.72	78.8	5.92	3.85	69.77	51.87	17.89	14.18
Youth (15-24)	45.72	34.84	10.88	8.44	33.3	20.33	12.97	11.77
Female (20-64)	76.75	72.72	4.04	3.15	62.41	51.87	10.55	9.36
Male (20-64)	92.89	85.05	7.84	4.56	80.54	51.88	28.65	21.25

Source: 2011-2013 IHS.

What are the demographic characteristics of employed and unemployed IDPs?

35. If we consider aside the economically active population of Georgia, we'll see that it is slightly unbalanced across genders: 54% are male, while 46% are female. This composition is not different for the IDP population, since the IDP labor force is comprised of almost the same proportion of women: 46.4%.
36. The unemployed population, on the other hand, is mostly comprised of men (58.6%), and again this situation is not significantly different for IDP, since the unemployed IDP just have a slightly higher proportion of women. The long-term unemployed face a more balanced distribution of gender, since they comprised by just a little higher proportion of men than women, both for IDP and non-IDP.

37. In regards to area of residence, we see that the higher proportion of the economically active population lives in rural areas. However, the composition of the labor force is the opposite for IDPs, for which 74.8% of the labor force lives in urban areas. The composition of the unemployed is more similar across IDPs and non-IDPs, but still unemployed IDPs have a slightly higher proportion of people living in urban areas (82.7% of the unemployed IDP live in urban areas, while 74.8% of the unemployed non-IDP live in urban areas). The long-term unemployed population has a similar composition across area of residence for IDPs and non-IDPs.
38. The labor force is primarily comprised of people from 25 to 54 years old, where the biggest group is the population between 45 to 54 years old. The biggest group however for IDPs is people from 35 to 44 years old. This is, IDP labor force is comprised of a slightly younger population than the rest. The situation is the opposite for the unemployed population. While the biggest cohort of the unemployed among non-IDPs is the group between 25 to 34 years old, the biggest cohort for IDPs is the group between 35 to 44 years old. This is, most unemployed are young, while the unemployed IDPs are relatively older. The same holds for the long-term unemployed population.
39. The labor force is comprised mainly by people with tertiary or secondary school as the highest levels of education achieved. This composition is homogeneous across IDPs and non IDPs. Most of the unemployed population, however, has tertiary education as their highest degree achieved. Both, the unemployed and the long term unemployed IDPs have also, primarily, tertiary education as their highest degree achieved, but a big group has also secondary education as their highest level of education.
40. Regarding the relationship with the head of household, 31.7% of the labor force is actually the head of household; while for IDPs head of households represent 34.6%, probably given the higher proportion of women as head of household among IDPs. Among the unemployed and long term unemployed, most of them are not either head of households or spouses.
41. The share of members between 0 and 14 years old represents 14.9% of the labor force, 13.9% of the unemployed and 13.4% of the long-term unemployed. These ratios are relatively similar for both IDP and non IDPs. Also, the share of adults between 65 and more represent between 8 and 10% of the labor force or unemployed population, and there are not significant differences between the IDP and non IDPs.
42. The percent of the labor force, unemployed and long-term unemployed who receive remittances or social assistance is higher for IDPs than for non IDPs. While 21.9 % of the rest of the labor force receives remittances or social assistance, 23.8% of IDPs receive these transfers. Also, while 25.3% of the rest of the unemployed receive transfers, 27% of the unemployed IDPs receive transfers.
43. We see a pretty mixed geographic distribution of the labor force and the unemployed across IDPs and non IDPs. While most of the labor force is pretty dispersed across locations, primarily between Tbilisi, Imereti, Racha-Lechkhumi, Kvemo Svaneti, Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti, Adjara;

43.2% of the IDP labor force is concentrated in Tbilisi and more than a fourth in Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti. Again, most of the unemployed are located in Tbilisi (44.8%), and even more IDPs unemployed (52% of unemployed IDPs). The rest of unemployed are again disperse across locations, while the majority of the remaining unemployed IDPs are located in Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti. And the distribution is pretty similar for the long-term unemployed.

	Labor Force Participation			Unemployed			Long-Term Unemployed		
	All (1)	IDP (2)	Non-IDP (3)	All (4)	IDP (5)	Non-IDP (6)	All (7)	IDP (8)	Non-IDP (9)
Female (Base)	46.0	46.4	46.0	41.4	43.3	41.2	48.2	49.1	48.1
Male	54.0	53.6	54.0	58.6	56.7	58.8	51.8	50.9	51.9
Urban (Base)	45.5	74.8	44.4	75.4	82.7	74.8	77.0	82.6	76.4
Rural	54.5	25.2	55.6	24.6	17.4	25.2	23.0	17.4	23.6
20-24 (Base)	9.6	11.2	9.5	20.2	19.1	20.3	23.0	19.5	23.4
25-34	22.1	24.2	22.1	31.0	27.9	31.3	30.9	28.0	31.2
35-44	23.3	26.7	23.1	22.0	24.4	21.8	20.3	26.3	19.7
45-54	25.8	24.7	25.8	17.8	20.1	17.6	17.6	19.7	17.4
55-64	19.3	13.2	19.5	9.0	8.5	9.0	8.2	6.6	8.4
Primary or less (Base)	1.3	-	1.3	0.5	-	0.5	0.6	-	0.6
General Secondary	42.1	39.7	42.2	36.5	38.6	36.3	34.4	38.7	34.0
Tertiary	56.6	60.3	56.5	63.1	61.4	63.2	65.0	61.3	65.4
Head (Base)	31.7	34.6	31.6	24.9	25.3	23.8	20.0	20.1	19.9
Spouse	20.5	20.9	20.5	17.4	19.2	11.5	13.5	20.5	12.8
Son/daughter/ other family member	47.8	44.5	47.9	57.7	55.5	64.7	66.6	59.4	67.3
Share 0-14 yo	14.9	15.9	14.9	13.9	13.8	13.9	13.4	13.5	13.4
Share 65+	8.5	8.1	8.5	8.2	8.5	8.1	8.7	9.4	8.6
Household receives pension/social assistance.	21.9	23.8	21.9	25.4	27.0	25.3	27.3	29.6	27.1
Household receives remittances	6.0	5.6	6.0	7.5	3.9	7.8	6.9	4.0	7.2
Kakheti (Base)	9.1	0.2	9.4	4.4	-	4.8	4.0	-	4.4
Tbilisi	24.3	43.2	23.6	44.8	52.0	44.1	49.9	56.0	49.3
Shida Kartli	7.1	7.7	7.1	4.5	4.9	4.5	3.9	3.0	4.0
Kvemo Kartli	9.8	6.3	9.9	6.2	5.1	6.2	5.7	4.6	5.8
Samtskhe-Javakheti	4.8	0.2	5.0	1.9	-	2.0	1.4	-	1.5
Adjara	10.1	0.9	10.4	11.3	0.5	12.2	10.3	-	11.3
Guria	3.7	0.5	3.8	1.3	-	1.4	1.2	-	1.3
Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti	10.6	27.9	10.0	11.6	31.1	9.9	12.1	31.9	10.2
Imereti, Racha-Lechkhumi, Kvemo Svaneti	18.4	9.2	18.8	12.1	5.1	12.7	9.9	3.3	10.6
Mtskheta-Mtianeti	2.1	4.0	2.0	2.0	1.3	2.1	1.7	1.3	1.7
N	51,043.0	1,440.0	49,603.0	44,236.0	952.0	43,284.0	6,807.0	488.0	6,319.0

Source: 2011-2013 IHS.

Do poor and non-poor IDPs have the same levels of unemployment as the rest of the population?

44. Non poor IDPs have higher unemployment rates than even poor non IDPs. While unemployment for non-poor, non IDPs is 11.05% and for poor non IDPs is 13.8%; unemployment for non-poor IDPs is 18.9%, and for poor IDPs is as high as 33.5%. The most critical unemployment rates are for men.
45. However, when looking at temporary unemployment rates (looking for a job for less than one year), we see that unemployment rates for IDPs and non IDPs are not quite different. Again, male IDPs have the highest temporal unemployment rates.

46. But if we examine long term unemployment rates, we see that the disparities between IDPs and non IDPs are huge. Non poor IDPs double long term unemployment rates of non-poor non IDPs; and poor IDPs have almost three times higher unemployment rates than poor non IDPs.

47. Poor IDPs have a percentage of people who have never worked before three times higher than poor non IDPs.

	Non-IDP			IDP	
	Seeking Permanent Work - Non Poor	Seeking Full-time Work - Poor		Seeking Permanent Work - Non Poor	Seeking Full-time Work - Poor
All unemployed	11.05	13.74	All unemployed	18.89	33.48
Female	8.58	10.83	Female	14.41	26.32
Male	13.81	16.96	Male	24.71	42.31
Less than a year looking for a job			Less than a year looking for a job		
All	3.98	5.36	All	5.78	7.11
Female	2.1	2.58	Female	2.35	4.41
Male	6.09	8.43	Male	10.23	10.45
A year or more looking for a job			A year or more looking for a job		
All	7.13	8.39	All	14.2	24.32
Female	5.8	6.61	Female	13.14	19.51
Male	8.62	10.36	Male	15.58	30.26
Never worked before			Never worked before		
All	3.32	4.6	All	4.6	13.37
Female	3.18	4.54	Female	4.46	13.74
Male	3.47	4.68	Male	4.78	12.91

Source: Integrated Household Survey, 2011-2013

Do IDPs work in the same activity sectors as the rest of the population?

48. Most of the employed people in Georgia, according to the IHS, work mostly in the education sector, public administration, retail trade and manufacturing. The IDPs are even more highly concentrated in the same areas, but, in addition, 8.6% works in hotel and restaurants, 6.8% in transport and communication and 7.2% in real estate, renting and business activities.

49. From the self-employed population, 81% works in agriculture, hunting and forestry or fishing, 9.4% in wholesale and retail trade, and very few in other activities. For the IDP self-employed, the percent of people working in agriculture, hunting and forestry or fishing decreases to 53% and the percentage of people in the wholesale and retail sector increases to 27.8%.

50. In summary, while most of the rest of the population works in the agricultural sector (47.8%), the percent of IDPs working in agriculture is significantly smaller (22%). Most likely given that, as seen, 74.8% of the IDP labor force is concentrated in urban areas. A fifth of the IDPs work in wholesale and retail trade, and non-negligible quantities (more than 5% of total IDPs) in: manufacturing, hotel and restaurants, transport and communications, construction, public administration and education. This is, most of the IDPs are concentrated in urban activities, as opposed to the rest of the population who are primarily working in agriculture.

51. This context enlightens some risks of using a Targeted Social Assistance based on assets ownership, since a significant proportion of the population working in the agricultural sector could be left out, when in fact they could still not meet poverty, nutritional or other criteria.

Activity sector	Non-IDP			IDP		
	Employed	Self-employed	Total	Employed	Self-employed	Total
Agriculture, hunting and forestry; Fishing	2.79	81.15	47.83	2.41	52.94	22.14
Mining and quarrying	2.23	0.03	0.96	-	-	-
Manufacturing	9.21	1.81	4.95	13.66	4.32	10.01
Production and distribution of electricity	3.42	0.04	1.47	1.67	-	1.02
Construction	6.17	1.55	3.51	8.15	2.47	5.93
Wholesale and retail trade; repairs	12.81	9.41	10.85	16.87	27.8	21.14
Hotels and restaurants	2.51	0.27	1.22	8.61	3.63	6.66
Transport and communication	6.74	3.07	4.62	6.85	7.79	7.22
Financial intermediation	3.39	0.1	1.5	1.08	-	0.66
Real estate, renting and business activity	3.23	0.55	1.69	7.15	-	4.36
Public administration	12.54	-	5.32	11.35	-	6.92
Education	18.74	0.37	8.16	9.21	0.26	5.72
Health and social work	7.41	0.28	3.3	6.05	0.61	3.93
Other community, social and personal services	6.45	0.78	3.26	4.86	0.09	2.99
Private households employing domestic service	2	0.6	1.2	2.08	0.09	1.3
Extra-territorial organizations	0.36	-	0.15	-	-	-

Activity sector	Employed	Self-employed	Total	Employed	Self-employed	Total
Agriculture, hunting and forestry; Fishing	2.47	97.53	100.00	6.62	93.38	100.00
Mining and quarrying	98.36	1.64	100.00	-	-	-
Manufacturing	78.99	21.01	100.00	83.17	16.83	100.00
Production and distribution of electricity	98.6	1.4	100.00	100	0	100.00
Construction	74.61	25.39	100.00	83.76	16.24	100.00
Wholesale and retail trade; repairs	50.12	49.88	100.00	48.64	51.36	100.00
Hotels and restaurants	87.37	12.63	100.00	78.74	21.26	100.00
Transport and communication	61.86	38.14	100.00	57.84	42.16	100.00
Financial intermediation	96.06	3.94	100.00	100	0	100.00
Real estate, renting and business activity	81.36	18.64	100.00	100.00	0.00	100.00
Public administration	100	0	100.00	100	0	100.00
Education	97.42	2.58	100.00	98.23	1.77	100.00
Health and social work	95.2	4.8	100.00	93.9	6.1	100.00
Other community, social and personal services	85.87	14.13	100.00	98.87	1.13	100.00
Private households employing domestic service	71.09	28.91	100.00	97.36	2.64	100.00
Extra-territorial organizations	100	0	100.00	-	-	-

Source: 2011-2013 IHS.

Appendix: Methodology and Estimation of Standard Errors

We have presented mostly sample means for different subpopulations, which are certainly subject to errors. These standard errors depend on the sample size and the variance of the indicators in the samples. The following table presents the standard deviation obtained from the sample means (also reported in the table) of the poverty averages, as well as their confidence intervals.

We see that the standard deviations are relatively high, given the high variance of poverty rates (and consumption levels) in the sample. But given that we do have a large sample size, the high variance is not as problematic. We hence observe that for all the subgroups on the table, confidence intervals do not overlap. Differences in poverty rates for Tbilisi, the rest of urban areas and rural areas are statistically significant.

SAMPLE MEANS AND STANDARD ERRORS

	Poverty Non IDP		Poverty IDP	
All	0.410		0.453	
Standard Deviation	0.492		0.498	
Lower bound, Upper bound	0.407	0.413	0.438	0.468
Tbilisi	0.259		0.393	
Standard Deviation	0.438		0.489	
Lower bound, Upper bound	0.253	0.265	0.368	0.419
Rest Urban	0.368		0.432	
Standard Deviation	0.482		0.496	
Lower bound, Upper bound	0.361	0.374	0.403	0.461
Rural	0.504		0.582	
Standard Deviation	0.500		0.493	
Lower bound, Upper bound	0.500	0.507	0.557	0.607

Source: Integrated Household Survey, 2011-2013

Annex III: Qualitative Research Sample and Key Findings

Sample

The qualitative Research consisted of three parts: Focus Group Discussions (FGD), in-depth interviews (IDIs), and ethnographic case studies with IDPs households.

24 Focus Group Discussions were conducted among IDPs and non IDPs with in 4 regions of Georgia: Tbilisi, Samegrelo, Shida Kartli, and Kaheti. Twelve focus groups were held in urban, and 12 in rural areas. Separate FGDs were convened with residents of collective centers, residents in private housing, and other types of accommodations e.g. tenants in privately-owned housing. Within the IDP sample, FGDs were conducted with IDPs who receive the IDP benefit, as well as with those who have chosen to receive TSA allowance (mostly new case load IDPs). Within the non-IDP sample, FGD were conducted with recipients and non-recipients of social assistance.

The locations of the Groups are shown on the Map below. Two of the regions in which focus groups were conducted - Samegrelo and Shida Kartli - are bordering conflict regions.



Ten in-depth interviews were conducted with Government and non-governmental representatives, as follows:

Interview 1- Respondent: Head of Charitable Foundation “Abkhazia”

Interview 2- Respondent Ministry of Labor, Health and Social Protection; Social Protection Department, Head of Pension and Social Assistance Unit

Interview 3-Respondent - South Ossetia Administration, Head of IDP department
Interview 4-Respondent- Minister of Healthcare and Social Assistance of the Abkhazian Government-in-exile
Interview 5-Respondent- Founder and General Director of TAS Foundation
Interview 6-Respondent: GYLA (young lawyers association) coordinator of IDP related projects
Interview 7-Respondent: Ministry of refugees, head of IDP department
Interview 8- Respondent: Head of Social Assistance; Healthcare and IDP assistance social Department of Samegrelo Municipality
Interview 9- Respondent: Head of IDP Woman’s association the Association is the First IDP association that was created and is working for protection IDP rights.
Interview 10-Respondent: Head of Social Program Foundation

Five ethnographic case studies were undertaken to gain in depth analysis of situation of how do IDPs live in their communities and how do they deal with their daily problems. The following households were selected:

- IDP Pensioner residing with family in compact dwelling;
- IDP family with child receiving status-based benefit residing in a private dwelling;
- IDP family with child receiving social assistance residing in a compact settlement;
- IDP with disability residing with her mother in a compact settlement;
- IDP pensioner residing alone in compact settlement in rural area;

The research was conducted in May-June 2015.

Key Findings:

1) Employment and Livelihoods

Constraints to employment, and specifically nepotism, is cited as a main economic problem for both IDP and non-IDPs. IDPs may face additional difficulties as they do not have as wide social/family network in their new place of living. But overall FG and IDI respondents do not emphasize major differences between IDPs and non-IDPs in finding employment. Difficulties with job-seeking are mostly age or gender-related with persons over 40, and men having a harder time to find a job. (Women are more likely to accept lower-paid jobs, or as some put it “women are more flexible, more stress-resistant”; also, there are not as many jobs currently in the construction sector where men have often found seasonal work)

In rural areas IDPs are at a disadvantage as they do not own land – they cannot use it to sell produce, for subsistence food production, or as collateral to take a bank loan. IDPs whose livelihoods have been or are currently agriculture-based are at a disadvantage. This gap is being addressed only partially through some donor projects – in vocational training, small business/entrepreneurship, etc.

2) Integration in communities. Differences between 1990s and 2008 IDPs

IDPs are well integrated in communities. No reported difficulties or bad attitude in getting along with locals. Some difficulties were present in the initial period of displacement. Some host communities were resentful of IDPs occupying social buildings such as schools or kindergartens, or of IDPs receiving assistance where local communities also include many poor residents.

Some note more problems in the acceptance of IDPs from Abkhazia for being allegedly wealthier and not in need of additional assistance.

Overall, IDP groups note that the economic situation in the country was more difficult in the 1990s therefore expectations from the state were not the same compared to 2008. But still they note some persistent differences that should be corrected, particularly in housing. IDPs from 1990s still inhabit non-rehabilitated collective centers and live in crowded conditions.

3) Housing and living conditions

Adequate housing is one of the most acute problems for IDPs and an area where inequalities in the treatment of IDPs are most evident. Some IDPs were given dwellings ('living space') by the Government which they now own. Some received state assistance, which they used to buy a dwelling (with or without taking additional credit). Others are awaiting such state grant and making arrangements with potential sellers. Wealthier IDPs have bought their own housing.

Differences in housing are related to the wave of displacement. IDPs from the 1990s were largely settled in compact settlements and public buildings where some have remained for 20-25 years. IDPs of 2008

Overall opinion that IDPs from Abkhazia were treated worse by the state in terms of housing (possibly related to the perception/stereotype that relatively more IDPs from Abkhazia could afford to buy their own housing).

Some examples were brought forth of groups who were settled in hotels but had different experiences afterwards: a group in Telavi shared that when an investor bought the hotel each IDP received USD 5,000. This was sufficient to buy a house in a village, with some choosing to take bank loan to purchase more space or to do renovation. This group was relatively satisfied with the settlement. Another group of respondents who were also settled in a hotel were subsequently 'kicked out' on the street, ultimately compensated with 10,000 lari which they found insufficient to purchase housing. Similarly, after moving into new housing, some IDPs received help from the state for renovations, while others had to use personal funds, take a loan, or just remain living without some basic amenities such as sanitation, leaking roofs, etc. A case was told of a Tbilisi IDP who "benefitted from state support and privatized two rooms in the kindergarten building".

Overall, the housing situation of IDPs, especially IDPs from the 1990s who remain in public housing is sub-standard. Living conditions are crowded. Not all have consistent water and sanitation, or have shared bathroom/toilet. Respondents complain from having no connection to gas, as well as inconsistent electricity supply. Moreover, not owning their home is a long-term liability – they cannot use it as collateral to take a loan, or would not want to invest personal resources to make any improvements.

Respondents have a sense that resolving the housing issue is an ongoing process. There are continuing messages from the Government on progress to be made in the near future. There is a perceived link between housing and the IDP benefit - and IDP status overall. For example, in Zugdidi many believe that

continuation of the IDP benefit is linked to solving the housing issue. Some have received information that the government “is building houses for IDPs”, that IDPs will then be given a one-time assistance of 500 lari and then the IDP benefit will be discontinued.

An issue of fairness is brought up by respondents who were displaced by natural disaster and are also living in a compact settlement but do not enjoy a special status.

4) Health

The health benefit of IDPs is important; however FG [nor IDI] respondents provide details on differences in health care between IDPs and non-IDPs; of IDPs having either special privileges or being disadvantaged by their health insurance. Both IDPs and non-IDPs mention that health insurance does not cover medications which is a significant burden on the budget. In one FG, IDPs say that they receive worse service: [because of their insurance, doctors do not get any \$ from serving IDPs]

5) Education

No major difficulties with education are mentioned. A few single cases noted of discriminating against IDPs from Abkhazia – one for kindergarten (the child was from Abkhazia hence not given a spot in a daycare); one for university student scholarship.

6) Political and symbolic importance of the IDP benefit

The IDP status has a strong symbolic significance. Eliminating the status in the mind of both IDPs and non-IDPs is equivalent to the state rejecting the territories; losing hope of reintegration of these territories. IDPs see the benefit not only as economic help, but also (even primarily) as an entitlement and moral compensation for having lost their homes and homeland, a token of the Government’s commitment to work towards reintegration of occupied territories.

Even social groups, who are convinced that aid to IDPs should be needs-based (e.g., socially vulnerable non-IDPs group in Telavi) believe that IDPs should not lose their “status”, that there should be a status distinction.

Very few respondents associate the ‘IDP status’ as something divisive, humiliating, or preventing their integration. A few IDP respondents (higher income ones) prefer to not have this status; believe that as Georgian citizens they don’t need a special status when living within their own country. The wide majority, however, see the status as an important reminder of the conflict and for keeping hope of returning to their homes.

7) Economic significance of the IDP benefit

Most respondents in principle agree that the benefit should be needs-based e.g. within the persons eligible for IDP benefit those with lower income should receive higher assistance, and those with higher income (over 1250 lari/month) do not need the financial assistance or can receive a nominal sum in recognition of their status.

Even though the IDP benefit is very small, it makes a difference to many families. Since the IDP benefit is administered per individual, for multi-person households it can be a significant portion of income. For

example, a five person household would receive 225 lari/month, which some mention is comparable to one monthly salary e.g. a shop assistant's salary might be 200 lari. One respondent's household of five lives on a 225/mo IDP benefit and a 500/mo salary of one of the parents; in their case the benefit is more than a third of the household's income. For comparison, a shop consultant may receive a salary of 200 lari/mo. In this case, collectively the IDP benefits can equal an additional salary. By respondents' accounts, the IDP benefit can comprise up to 30% or even 50% of the household's income [range tbc].

The IDP benefit is also more secure and there is less transaction cost in applying for it (in time, collecting documents, etc.)

8) Using the targeted social assistance for IDPs

The concerns expressed with regard to replacing the IDP benefit with targeted social assistance include:

- Fear that the benefit is not as stable as the IDP benefit. One might lose it if s/he finds a job; even if the job is seasonal or uncertain, or if the household receives a TV or fridge as gift from a relative. Re-applying for the benefit is complex and time-consuming and there is no guarantee that the household will receive it again after being discontinued.

An NGO respondent shares that a temporary employment program the NGO ran had difficulty recruiting some vulnerable households because they feared of losing the social assistance benefit if they took a seasonal job. They were not certain they will be able to reapply for the benefit.

- Concerns about “unfair distribution” of social assistance. Respondents would fear that accessing the benefit may be more subjective, and not as clear-cut as having IDP status.
- [Logistical concern about including IDPs into Min. of Labor and Social Assistance database. In 2008, all incoming IDPs were automatically registered as ‘socially vulnerable’ and were given a choice of receiving either social assistance or IDP benefit. Later on, this assistance was determined by the point system so IDPs no longer qualified automatically for social assistance. Still, this wave of IDPs was better informed about and had some interaction with TSA programs while ‘older’ IDPs have not had any point of contact with the social assistance institutions.]

9) Desired programs (most needed assistance)

Most FGs highlight the following types of support as priority:

- Employment – creating more jobs in industry, public institutions, support for entrepreneurs;
- Help with utility bills;
- Increasing the aid for socially vulnerable groups: single mothers, large families, persons with disability;
- Better healthcare coverage, including cost of medications.