

Inside this Issue:

1. National Action Plan on Domestic Violence is elaborated

2. Nation-wide Survey on Domestic Violence in Underway

3. IV Annual Gender Week is Held

4. GBV-SC Georgia Awards Winners of the Journalists Contest on Women's Rights

5. State Referral Mechanisms for the Victims of Domestic Violence are being Developed

6. GBV-S Georgia Participates in Drafting Amendment Package to the Law of Georgia on Domestic Violence

National Action Plan on Domestic Violence is Elaborated

National Action Plan on Elimination of Domestic Violence, Protection and Assistance of the Victims of Domestic Violence 2007-2008 adopted by the Government of Georgia expired at the end of 2008. The GBV-SC Team in Georgia, in conjunction with the Ministry of Health, Labor and Social Affairs, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Education and Science, international organizations and domestic NGOs working in the field of gender and domestic violence supported the development of the National Action Plan for Elimination of Domestic Violence and Support and Protection of its Victims 2009-2010 (NAP).

In order to strengthen the commitment of all parties involved towards the goals of the NAP and to build the momentum for its support amongst the state structures ultimately responsible for its implementation, the GBV-SC Georgia Team in cooperation with Georgian Young Lawyers Association (GYLA) organized a *Workshop on Elaboration of National Action Plan on Domestic Violence 2009-2010* in Bakuriani, Georgia on January 23-25 2009. Over 25 high-level actors, including members of the newly established Interagency Coordination Council on Domestic Violence, Vice-Speaker of the Parliament and the Chair of the Advisory Council on Gender Equality Issues under the Chair of the Parliament, as well as experts and practitioners gathered to finalize the development of the new NAP 2009-2010, while taking into consideration the main findings and recommendations of the Monitoring Report on the Implementation of the National Action Plan on the Elimination of Domestic Violence and Support and Protection of its Victims 2007-2008. The Monitoring Report on the Implementation of the National Action Plan 2007-2008 was prepared by two local and one international DV experts in late 2008 with support of United Nations Population Fund.



**1. National Action
Plan on Domestic
Violence is
elaborated**

**2. Nation-wide
Survey on Domestic
Violence in
Underway**

**3. IV Annual Gender
Week is Held**

**4. GBV-SC Georgia
Awards Winners of
the Journalists
Contest on Women's
Rights**

**5. State Referral
Mechanisms for the
Victims of Domestic
Violence are Being
Developed**

**6. GBV-S Georgia
Participates in
Drafting
Amendment
Package to the Law
of Georgia on
Domestic Violence**

NEWSLETTER



The Draft National Action Plan 2009-2010 was presented and discussed within the framework of the Interagency Coordination Committee and will be considered by the government for approval in the near future.

Nation-wide Survey on Domestic Violence is Underway



Nation-wide survey on domestic violence is underway. In early February 83 fieldworkers including 72 interviewers, 9 regional supervisors and 2 fieldwork coordinators were trained at ACT Research Tbilisi and Kutaisi regional offices. Nine day training covered both gender issues and survey fieldwork related components.

Up to date, over 2725 visits have been carried out and over 30% of the field work is completed covering Tbilisi, Samegrelo,

Guria, Achara, Ratcha, Svaneti, Imereti, Samtskhe-Javakheti, Shida Kartli, Mtskheta-TianeTi, Kvemo Kartli and Kakheti regions. The field work is expected to be finalized in May 2009. The survey results will be ready to be presented for the public scrutiny in the fall 2009.

On February 27, 2009 GBV-SC Georgia brought together representatives of government, NGOs and donor organizations to brief about the launch of the survey and share survey development highlights. Ms. Rusudan Kervalishvili, Vice Speaker of the Parliament of Georgia and a Chair of the Parliamentary Advisory Council on gender Equality, Ms. Tamar Khomasuridze, Assistant Representative of UNFPA in Georgia and Ms. Lali Papiashvili, judge of the Constitutional Court of Georgia and a Chair of the interagency coordination council on domestic violence chaired the panel of discussion at the presentation. *“Lack of statistics on domestic violence is one of the key impediments in addressing the problem effectively”,* - said Ms. Rusudan Kervalishvili, Vice-Speaker of the Parliament of Georgia and a Chair of the Parliamentary Advisory Council on gender equality – *“I hope that the survey results will help us in making informed decisions on combating domestic violence and establishing gender equality in Georgia”.*

**Inside this
Issue:**

**1. National Action
Plan on Domestic
Violence is
elaborated**

**2. Nation-wide
Survey on Domestic
Violence in
Underway**

**3. IV Annual Gender
Week is Held**

**4. GBV-SC Georgia
Awards Winners of
the Journalists
Contest on Women's
Rights**

**5. State Referral
Mechanisms for the
Victims of Domestic
Violence are Being
Developed**

**6. GBV-S Georgia
Participates in
Drafting
Amendment
Package to the Law
of Georgia on
Domestic Violence**

NEWSLETTER



The UNFPA survey on domestic violence is the first region-wide initiative of this kind and is being implemented simultaneously in three countries of South Caucasus – Azerbaijan, Armenia and Georgia. In Georgia the survey implementation started in August 2008 by ACT Research and Centre for Social Sciences with the quantitative and qualitative tools development and will be completed in the fall of 2009. The survey findings will be used as a baseline for formulating national policies and plans as well as for advocacy and public awareness-raising campaigns on gender-based and domestic violence in Georgia.



Annual IV Gender-Week Held



In celebration of the International Women's Day, March 8, UNDP project "Gender & Politics" and GBV-SC Georgia Team organized the Annual IV Gender Week.

2009 Gender Week brought together representatives of the United Nations, the Georgian government, civil society organizations and donor community. Gender week promotes the idea of gender equality through a plethora of activities and events, held in the month of March. Gender Week was supported by Gender Equality Council at the Georgian Parliament Chairperson, the Gender Equality Resource Centre in Gori, the JSI

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**1. National Action
Plan on Domestic
Violence is
elaborated**

**2. Nation-wide
Survey on Domestic
Violence in
Underway**

**3. IV Annual Gender
Week is Held**

**4. GBV-SC Georgia
Awards Winners of
the Journalists
Contest on
Women's Rights**

**5. State Referral
Mechanisms for the
Victims of Domestic
Violence are Being
Developed**

**6. GBV-S Georgia
Participates in
Drafting
Amendment
Package to the Law
of Georgia on
Domestic Violence**

NEWSLETTER



Research, Study Institute's "Healthy Women in Georgia" program and the Georgian Employers' Association.

Utilizing best practices from the previous gender week events, various activities were organized across Georgia:

- ✓ On March 5 the round table discussion on "Gender equality and Shida Kartli civil sector" was held in Gori.
- ✓ On March 6 the NGO expo for organizations working on gender issues was organized in the international culture center "Muse".
- ✓ On March 7 the Georgia Club of Female Runners organized Marathon rally at the Tortoise Lake.
- ✓ On March 9 the award ceremony for the winners of the Journalists Contests on Women's Rights.
- ✓ On March 11 the best gender-balanced business companies were awarded.

Gender week was actively covered by TV, radio and print media and generated a number of thematic publications and TV features. To stimulate this process, UNFPA organized a radio talk on domestic violence on one of the most popular radio channels – "Utsnobi" where recent developments in the State response against domestic violence including the creation of the inter-agency council on domestic violence and development of State referral mechanisms were discussed. In addition, a PSA on domestic violence and women's rights, produced within the framework of GBV-SC was aired on Georgian Public Broadcaster for a period of two weeks.

Today, let us stand in solidarity with women and girls who deserve to live in dignity, free of fear and shame. Let us champion zero tolerance of violence against women and girls in our homes, schools, places of work and worship, our communities and nations. It is time for men and women, and boys and girls to work together to end these shameful violations of human rights.

International Women's Day
8 March 2009
Message of UNEPA Executive Director, Thoraya
Ahmed Obaid

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Plan on Domestic
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Survey on Domestic
Violence in
Underway**

**3. IV Annual Gender
Week is Held**

**4. GBV-SC Georgia
Awards Winners of
the Journalists
Contest on Women's
Rights**

**5. State Referral
Mechanism for the
Victims of Domestic
Violence is Being
Developed**

**6. GBV-S Georgia
Participates in
Drafting
Amendment
Package to the Law
of Georgia on
Domestic Violence**

NEWSLETTER



GBV-SC Georgia Awards Winners of the Journalists Contest On Women's Rights



On March 9, 2009 UNFPA Georgia awarded the winners of a Journalists contest on Women's Rights at the *Hotel Vere Palace*, Tbilisi, Georgia.

In October 2008, GBV-SC Georgia announced a journalists contest for best original articles on the topics of women's rights, women's role in the family and society, domestic violence, and women in conflict. The purpose of the initiative was threefold: a) motivating journalists of

various calibres to engage in gender-related work, b) raising journalists' professional interest in women's rights and domestic violence, c) using the produced articles as a public awareness raising tool in public campaigns on gender.

Collected entries were grouped in two categories based on the age of the authors (under and over 25) and judged by competent jury. On March 9, winners of the journalist contest were officially announced. Winners – Ms. Anne Dabrundashvili, Ms. Khatuna Kapanadze, Ms. Nona Samkharadze and Ms. Eka Gulua were awarded with certificates and cash prizes. Mr. George Tsereteli, Vice Speaker of the Parliament of Georgia and Mr. Eric Fournier, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the French Republic and Ms. Tamar Khomasuridze, assistant representative of the UNFPA in Georgia took part in the award ceremony.

"I would like to extend my special compliments to UNFPA Georgia for its extensive work on raising awareness on gender issues in Georgia", - said Mr. Tsereteli in his welcoming speech, - "Initiatives of this kind are important in engaging journalists in covering gender related issues."



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Plan on Domestic
Violence is
elaborated**

**2. Nation-wide
Survey on Domestic
Violence in
Underway**

**3. IV Annual Gender
Week is Held**

**4. GBV-SC Georgia
Awards Winners of
the Journalists
Contest on Women's
Rights**

**5. State Referral
Mechanisms for the
Victims of Domestic
Violence are Being
Developed**

**6. GBV-S Georgia
Participates in
Drafting
Amendment
Package to the Law
of Georgia on
Domestic Violence**

NEWSLETTER



Winning articles are planned to be published in leading Georgian magazines and newspapers in 2009.

State Referral Mechanisms for the Victims of Domestic Violence are Being Developed

In December 2008, the Government of Georgia has taken significant steps in the direction of establishing the advisory and coordination body on GBV/DV to support improved implementation of the Law of Georgia on the Elimination of Domestic Violence and Support and Protection of its Victims (DV) and proclaiming its commitment to the elimination of DV. On December 26, 2008, a first Interagency Council on Domestic Violence has been established by a decree of the President of Georgia.

In line with the its commitment to support to capacity building of the Government of Georgia in addressing domestic violence, the GBV-SC Georgia Team developed a framework of cooperation with the Interagency Coordination Council. The prominent and undoubtedly most important task of the Coordination Council's work is the development of the State Referral Mechanisms for the victims of domestic violence, which the GBV-SC Georgia Team supports by provision of local technical expertise. The GBV-SC Georgia recruited a technical expert who, in close cooperation with the interagency council on DV, the parliament of Georgia, relevant ministries and non-governmental organizations, has drafted the first set of documents outlining the state referral mechanism for the victims of domestic violence, standards for the crises/intervention centers, the service provision standards for shelters, and designed a questionnaire(s) for the identification of victims of DV.

The technical expert completed the draft of the a/m documents, which will be harmonized with the proposed amendments to the law of Georgia on Domestic Violence.

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Plan on Domestic
Violence is
elaborated**

**2. Nation-wide
Survey on Domestic
Violence in
Underway**

**3. IV Annual Gender
Week is Held**

**4. GBV-SC Georgia
Awards Winners of
the Journalists
Contest on Women's
Rights**

**5. State Referral
Mechanisms for the
Victims of Domestic
Violence are Being
Developed**

**6. GBV-S Georgia
Participates in
Drafting
Amendment
Package to the Law
of Georgia on
Domestic Violence**

NEWSLETTER



GBV-SC Georgia Participates in Drafting the Amendments Package to the Law of Georgia on Domestic Violence

Law of Georgia on Elimination of Domestic Violence, Protection and Assistance of its Victims was adopted by the Parliament of Georgia in May 2006. Three years of practice has shown significant shortcomings in the legislative act. Inaccuracies in the procedural aspects of the law, incompleteness of the definitions, inefficiency of measures carried out in support of the victims of violence are some of the gaps identified which hindered effective implementation and enforcement of the law.



In order to address this issue and further improve the legal base for combating GBV/DV, the GBV-SC Georgia Team in association with ABA/Rule of Law Initiative has established the Expert Working Group responsible for the review of the existing Law on Domestic Violence and for the preparation of the package of amendments. Group is composed of representatives of judiciary, practicing lawyers, civil society activists and leading experts on DV. The Group meets on regular basis and is projected to produce the package of amendments by mid of April 2009. The draft package of amendments will be presented to a larger audience for discussion and is expected be reviewed by the parliament of Georgia at the Fall Parliamentary Session 2009.



Combating Gender-Based Violence in South Caucasus Project is a multi-pronged, 3-year initiative funded by the UNFPA and the Government of Norway. Project is contributing to the national response to domestic violence in the countries of Caucasus: Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia. The project is implemented in close cooperation with key government entities, NGOs, and academia.

The project is strengthening the democratic governance through supporting the respect for human rights, gender equality and women's participation. The project will also promote GBV-free environment by empowering women to participate and contribute to the sustainable development and democracy in the region.