



UNFPA EMERGENCY RESPONSE GEORGIA, OCTOBER, 2008

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

In response to the armed conflict in Georgia, UNFPA/Georgia has launched an active humanitarian assistance program following the armed conflict in Georgia. Since August 22nd 2008, UNFPA has deployed four RH Mobile Teams to different regions of Georgia providing IDP women with examination, testing, counseling as well as medicines and IEC materials on reproductive health. Support for health and dignity has been ensured through the provision of basic personal hygiene kits for families and youth. UNFPA CO has been actively collaborating with international organizations, local NGOs and governmental institutions in order to mobilize and make use of all resources available.

DONOR COORDINATION GROUP MEETING ON GENDER ISSUES

On October 24, 2008 the Gender Advisory Council at the Parliament of Georgia and the UNFPA implemented UN Joint Project (participating agencies: UNFPA, UNIFEM, UNDP, UNICEF and UN RC office) "UN Initiative in Support of Greater Gender Equality in Georgia" organized a meeting with the Donor Coordination Group working on gender issues in Georgia. The meeting, co-chaired by Ms. Kervalishvili, the vice-speaker of the parliament and Ms. Khomasuridze, UNFPA AR was held at the Parliament of Georgia and attended by the members of the Gender Advisory Council and the representatives of the Donor Organizations.



The main focus area of the discussion was the current situation in Georgia with regards to gender aspects of Humanitarian response, ongoing projects, findings and gaps; Current status and needs of the IDP women; possible areas for intervention and funding, as well as plans for future cooperation and collaboration.

The meeting was opened by the welcome speech of Mrs. Rusudan Kervalishvili, the Chair of the Gender Advisory Council at the Parliament of Georgia. Mrs. Kervalishvili highlighted the importance of coordination with the Donor Community as well as information sharing with other key players in the field to identify current needs of women, set priorities and a shared strategy for achieving efficient outcomes. Ms. Tamar Khomasuridze, UNFPA/Georgia AR presented main directions of the UN Joint Project, highlighted the importance of cooperating with the Gender Advisory Council and expressed hope for future joint initiatives and projects. Another topic of discussion was the presentation of the "Rapid Needs Assessment of Internally Displaced Women" conducted by the Institute for Policy Studies with UNIFEM support. The presentation discussed needs of women as well as recommendations for the future intervention and support to the attention of the Government, civil society and Donor community.

The participants agreed to have regular meetings and daily contacts for strengthening coordination in the field of Gender Equality. The UN Joint Project expressed readiness to serve as a coordinating mechanism for organizing regular meetings and fostering dialogue between the key players in the field. The next meeting with the Donor Community will be organized in December, 2008.

UNFPA COOPERATES WITH IDP WOMEN ON ASSEMBLING FAMILY KITS

Since August 22, 2008 UNFPA has been providing support for the health and dignity of displaced population through the provision of family hygiene kits.



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Based on the new UNFPA Initiative, from this time onward IDP women and youth will be involved in the process of assembling the kits. This will give them an opportunity to be directly involved in the humanitarian response. In addition, this initiative will also serve as a modest source of income for the IDPs, who have complained of cash shortage.

The space for the above mentioned activities has been provided by the Bagebi Student City. To-date, two teams of IDP women and young people are mobilized to assemble 6800 dignity kits for further distribution therein.

To-date, UNFPA has distributed up to **4641 family kits in 80 facilities across Georgia covering up to 18 564 IDPs in total**. In addition, UNFPA has started distributing Youth Kits in the IDP collective centres. Unlike family kits, UNFPA family kits are specifically for boys and girls and include additional items such as locks, combs and various informational materials on reproductive health, HIV etc. So far 1430 Youth kits have been distributed in 17 facilities in Tbilisi, Gori and Rustavi.

UNFPA ASSISTS PREGNANT IDP WOMEN

UNFPA/Georgia continues to provide RH services to displaced pregnant women: the Fund joined the initiative of the Bank of Georgia and Estonian Embassy – 20-day rehabilitation program for pregnant IDP women.

To date, there are 33 pregnant women accommodated in Tskneti Centre for recreation and relevant training purposes, accompanied by their 30 children. All of these women are due by the end of the year and four of them are due by the end of October, which implies they are in need of continuous and quality RH services and relevant care.

On October 29, 2008 UNFPA/Georgia team with Tbilisi reproductive health Mobile Team visited the Tskneti centre to talk to women on their health and social problems and to provide pregnant women with wide spectrum of RH services: examination, testing, ultrasound screening, counselling. Thereby UNFPA team distributed family kits (consisting of items of personal hygiene care) as well as IEC materials on pregnancy, delivery, infant care and RH issues, including brochures “New Life is Born”.



UNFPA TO CONDUCT SERIES OF TRAININGS ON SGBV

UNFPA/Georgia in collaboration with national experts and implementing partners completed the preparation of the curriculum on “Clinical Management of Rape Survivors.” Training program covers the gender aspects of SGBV work in emergencies and practical (medical) aspects of providing clinical management and treatment of rape survivors in post conflict settings. The materials for service providers include the guidelines and additional practical materials on best practices and strategies for clinical management of rape survivors.

Starting from November 1, 2008 UNFPA is implementing series of trainings. There are total of 5 trainings planned in Tbilisi, Rustavi, Gori and Kutaisi. The trainings are designed to raise the awareness and sensitivity of the healthcare service providers on GBV issues in the conflict situations and equip them with critical skills to deal with rape survivors in emergencies.



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Another training that UNFPA is organizing is training for the social workers in Shida Kartli Area under the grant of Norwegian Government for Flash Appeal. UNFPA will train approximately 20-25 social workers and recruit selected 4-5 candidates to work as part of the mobile health teams. The trained social workers will serve as a point of reference, providing referral and connecting women to other service providers in the field. In addition the social workers will systematically disseminate information to raise awareness of SGVB and contribute to the prevention of SGVB through education and empowerment of IDP women. The goal of the training is to prepare the social workers prior to the deployment in the field. The training should cover the practical aspects of SGVB interventions in Humanitarian settings, focusing on developing critical skills for the social to identify and assist persons who have suffered sexual and gender based violence as a result of the conflict.

UNFPA TO INSTITUTE NEW REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH MOBILE TEAM FOR THE CONFLICT REGION

The displaced as well as returnees remain affected by the humanitarian crisis and women and girls are particularly vulnerable. Destroyed infrastructure, lack of access to quality RH services and poverty led to increased risk of complications during pregnancy and delivery. Unless the specific sexual and reproductive health concerns particularly of women and girls are addressed, the crisis risks to lead to degeneration of women's health and increased maternal morbidity in the conflict region.

In order to address these issues, UNFPA is planning to institute new reproductive health mobile team which will operate specifically in Gori and areas adjacent to it. UNFPA/Georgia completed all necessary arrangements for the new mobile team – the vehicle is procured and the human resources, as well as mapping of the visits are already identified. New mobile team will start operating from the second part of November.

UNFPA SETS UP NATIONAL STEERING COMMITTEE TO COORDINATE “16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM AGAINST GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE”

On November 25—December 10, 2008 UNFPA implemented “Combating Gender-based Violence in the South Caucasus” project, GBV-SC is planning to join the global campaign of “16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence” with a large-scale public awareness raising campaign.



The 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence is an international campaign celebrated since 1991. It has been used as an organizing strategy by individuals and groups around the world to call for the elimination of all forms of violence against women by raising awareness about gender-based violence, strengthening efforts around women's rights and demonstrating the solidarity of women around the world. Over 2,000 organizations in approximately 154 countries have participated in the 16 Days Campaign since 1991. Campaign theme for the 2008 is Human Rights for Women – Human Rights for All.



Within the framework of the *16 days of activism*, GBV-SC Georgia team plans to conduct a series of activities in order to raise awareness about gender-based violence as a human right issue at the local, regional and national levels, strengthen local work around violence against women and demonstrate solidarity with women around the world.



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In order to coordinate national efforts of all contributors in Georgia and ensure the maximum visibility, GBV-SC initiated setting up a National Coordination Committee. National Coordination Committee is composed of representatives of key women's NGOs and coalitions. Members of the Committee have been identified, priorities are set and unified calendar of activities is being elaborated. Deputy Public Defender of Georgia is also a member of the National Coordination Committee. The first meeting of the Committee was held on October 7, 2008.

GBV-SC/GEO has already recruited a campaign assistant to facilitate the campaign related-work on daily basis.