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FORECAST Project

# FORECAST/CAUCASUS

Annual Report  
October 2009 - September 2010

and

Monthly Report for  
October 2010

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## I. General Statement

The USAID/Caucasus *Focus on Results: Enhancing Capacity Across Sectors in Transition* (FORECAST) activities supplement the implementation of USAID/Caucasus performance plans in Georgia and Azerbaijan. This is achieved through the development of individual skills and institutional strengthening of select public, private and Civil Society Institutions (CSO) that play a strategic role in the implementation of the Government of Georgia's and the Government of Azerbaijan's reform programs and USAID's strategic objectives. The period of the FORECAST/Caucasus Task Order is August 27, 2007 to May 5, 2011.

FORECAST reinforces and supplements other USAID technical assistance efforts across all USAID/Caucasus Technical Offices (TO) by addressing systemic problems and workforce development through short and long-term training. It addresses performance gaps within select/targeted organizations that have yet to overcome internal management, organization and skills barriers to effective and efficient implementation.

Under its Task Order FORECAST is mandated to provide a comprehensive package of HICD and non-HICD services and interventions, including, but not limited to, the following:

### *Services*

- Ongoing expert consultation services related to the Mission's overall HICD efforts across its portfolio;
- HICD Planning and coordination on the development of Annual Work Plans in which organizations are identified to receive HICD interventions and individuals selected for training, Mission HICD Plans and assistance to technical office teams to develop or revise individual HICD plans, as requested, and Partnering with Extended Technical Office Teams and Stakeholders;
- Procurement of Training and Non-Training Interventions and Logistics Providers;
- Intervention Implementation Services: participant recruitment and processing, pre-departure orientation, and participants tracking, reporting and monitoring;
- Program Monitoring, Evaluation and Follow-up;
- Participant Processing Services (US and Third-country).

### *Interventions*

- Performance Assessments (PAs);
  - Organizational Performance
  - Individual or Workgroup Performance
- Participant Training/Academic Education
- Technical Assistance (TA)
- Small Grants
- Local Capacity Building

## II. Program Activity

### *Azerbaijan*

No activities conducted during the reporting period.

### *Georgia*

#### **1. RESTORED ECONOMIC ACTIVITY AND GROWTH**

##### **INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS (ISET)**

Intervention III (*Workshop on USAID Rules and Regulations*)

In order to contribute to the growth and sustainability of ISET as a premiere economics institute of higher learning in the Caucasus, FORECAST conducted two technical assistance (TA) interventions. The aim of the first intervention was to identify and define ISET's market niche, suggest an appropriate business model, and a process of transition to that model. The second intervention aimed to strengthen ISET's finance department, including staff training and the development of its financial and general management systems and procedures to enable ISET to more readily accept funding from international sources in particular. As a result of the second intervention, ISET was advised to attend a USAID Financial Administration Training in order to improve their financial processes and procedures to meet international and US funding source requirements. Following this recommendation, FORECAST sent the ISET accountant and administrator to the *InsideNGO* off-the-shelf workshop on USAID rules and regulations in Amman, Jordan (November 16-18, 2009).

The training gave participants a good sense of the issues they confront when managing USAID and other USG funding. While emphasis was placed on USAID funding for grants and cooperative agreements, the workshop was worthwhile for organizations receiving funding from other agencies as well. The workshop presented an excellent opportunity to update the participants on what is currently happening with the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circulars affecting Private Voluntary Organizations (PVOs) and the Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs).

The training covered the following issues:

- Types of USAID Awards ;
- The Award Process (Pre-Award, Post-Award, Closeout);
- Sources of Legal Authority and Policy;
- Detailed Review of USAID's Administrative Rule (22CFR226);
- Standard Award Provisions for US Based and Non-US Based Organizations;
- Policies on Source, Origin and Nationality of USAID-Financed Goods and Services;
- What's Negotiable When You're Applying for USAID Assistance;
- Policies and Procedures for Sub-awarding Funds;
- Cost Allowability Under OMB Circular A-122;
- Audit Readiness and Survival.

Participants received an up-to-date course manual containing all of the primary government source documents (OMB Circulars and USAID regulations and internal policies) affecting grants and

cooperative agreements as well as several analytical summaries and technical assistance tools assisting in implementing the requirements for future reference.

For more information on this program, please see *Success Stories* below.

### **NATIONAL ACCOUNTS STATISTICS COURSE**

The USAID Mission requested that the FORECAST program send the Head of the Macroeconomic Statistics Division to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) sponsored National Accounts Statistics (NAS) course in Washington DC (September 7-October 9, 2009). The NAS course was primarily designed for analysts and managers employed by agencies responsible for the official estimate of gross domestic product, with several years of experience compiling national accounts statistics. The course covered theoretical and practical aspects of the implementation of a System of National Accounts 1993 (1993 SNA). It also provided training on the estimation of goods and services transactions at current and constant prices when compiling the annual national accounts. Additionally, attention was given to foreign trade and final consumption expenditure before all goods and services transactions are brought together in the framework of Supply and Use tables. A number of sessions were devoted to the compilation of price and volume measures and real GDP estimates.

On the whole, this course contributed to the professional capacity of the Macroeconomic Statistics Division to more effectively adhere to international standards in national accounts statistics as well as exposed the participant to the latest practices, methodologies, and principles of compiling national accounts.

Of note, the Division of Statistics, a part of the Ministry of Economic Development of Georgia, was established as an independent entity (Geostat) on January 1, 2010.

### **TBILISI AGGLOMERATION DEVELOPMENT AGENCY (TADA)**

Most recently, Tbilisi municipality, together with bordering municipalities (Mtskheta, Rustavi and Gardabani), have formed the Tbilisi Agglomeration Development Agency (TADA) with a view to addressing municipal and regional development issues.

Because regional economic development in general, and agglomeration in particular, are relatively new concepts in Georgia, TADA is having difficulty in fully defining its mandate, structure and necessary capacities. The TADA staff does not have clear understanding of how the agency should function, and how to establish and maintain coordination and cooperation among the cities within the agglomeration structure, let alone develop the sort of detailed and dynamic strategy that will be required for the institution to move forward with equally dynamic development activities.

In light of this, FORECAST provides technical assistance to TADA to: a) build capacity, develop the technical skills and knowledge of TADA and its key staff, and b) assist in the development of the Tbilisi Agglomeration Development Strategy.

*Intervention I* (Capacity Building of TADA) – Completed.

A study tour to the Netherlands (Rotterdam, Amsterdam and the Hague) and France (Lille) for 5 TADA employees took place from July 10 to July 17, 2010. The study tour was organized by the Institute for Housing and Urban Development Studies (IHS). The participants extended their knowledge on the following four main topics: 1) what are Metros, and the models of successful Metros; 2) governance of metropolitan areas (policy issues); 3) management of metropolitan areas

(agency structure, governance model, organizational framework, external opportunities, national legal environment, management and human resources, planning and financing); and 4) key instruments for development projects. IHS developed and arranged trainings for the Georgian delegation during which the participants were introduced to the constraints faced by the city municipality governments, as well as to the practical cases from the experiences of different municipal governments of the Netherlands, France, Romania, Hungary and the Great Britain. The information and knowledge gained from the seminars, trainings, and visits to advanced European agglomerations (metropolis) gave the participants a better understanding of how to identify and develop areas of common interest and capacity amongst agglomeration members.

*Intervention II* (Contribution to the Tbilisi Agglomeration Development Strategy) – In progress.

Following the study tour, FORECAST intends to contract an international expert to work with TADA on the development of the Tbilisi Agglomeration Development Strategy, as well as to provide detailed recommendations on how to build TADA's capacity to undertake the strategy.

To this effect, job announcement for Agglomeration / Metropolitan Area Development Expert was developed and posted on DEVEX on September 23, 2010. In addition, a job announcement was released to a number of metropolitan development and urban management experts and consulting companies. The deadline for submission of applications was October 5, 2010.

#### **MINISTRY OF REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE (MRDI)**

The goal of the TA at the Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure (MRDI) is to assist the Government of Georgia (GoG), and in particular MRDI, in developing and finalizing its Regional Development Strategy and the Action Plan.

The program commenced in April, 2010 and is planned to end at the beginning of November. However, the negotiation regarding a two months extension is under way. The local team, consisting of the Action Plan Content Manager and seven analysts, has been contracted by FORECAST to implement key components of the project, including (but not limited to) the following tasks:

1. Organize field research/consultations in the regions with local and regional communities in order to research the diversity of needs, and reflect them in the action plan;
2. Contribute to articulation of the Regional Development Strategy action plan methodology, including prioritization and selection criteria for local and ministerial decision-making on infrastructure development projects;
3. Contribute to coordination meetings before the approval of the action plan and during the initial phases of its implementation;
4. Publication of the strategy and the action plan as well as their dissemination among the local and regional communities.

Later, following an intensive consultations with MRDI and EC, USAID has decided to revise the SoW of the local team, and remove the *prioritization and selection criteria for local and ministerial decision-making on infrastructure development projects* from their tasks.

The finalized Regional Development Strategy was presented and adopted by the GoG on June 25, 2010.

The narrative part of the draft Action Plan, including the introductory remarks and executive summary, brief description of crosscutting and priority issues was developed in August, 2010.

Currently, the local team continues work on identification of other core issues to be incorporated and updated in the narrative part of the Action Plan.

In early September, 2010 the local team requested FORECAST to extend the current project for an additional two months period. The justification for this is the following:

The development of the Action Plan of the State Strategy on Regional Development of Georgia is directly related to the process of elaboration of the document on Basic Data and Directions (BDD) for 2011-2014 and the 2011 State Budget Law. More precisely, the Action Plan should be in consistency with the BDD document as the latter represents the main framework plan for state development containing the information regarding the mid-term macro-economic and fiscal forecasting as well as the basic data on the development of central and sub-national governments. As for the central budget, it is expected to be one of the main sources for financing the activities/programs envisaged through the Action Plan.

The process of elaboration of the above mentioned documents might be prolonged till the third Friday of December as stipulated by the Budgetary Code of Georgia. The possibility is affirmed by the dynamics of the ongoing process. Therefore, it is reasonable to define the period for elaboration/submission of the finalized Action Plan as not earlier than January 1-15, 2011. Within this timeframe the Action Plan requires to be permanently updated and adjusted based on the intense collaboration with the spending units.

The above mentioned justification together with more specific arguments was submitted to the Mission on September 10, 2010. The extension is proposed till January 15, 2011. Currently, the Office of Economic Growth is reviewing this option. Should USAID agree with the submitted justification, FORECAST will prepare and submit to the Mission an amendment to the initial IIP.

## **2. ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT (EE)**

### **MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION AND NATURAL RESOURCES (HICD)**

The performance assessment and TA activities at the Ministry of Environment Protection and Natural Resources (MEPNR) aim to define management and programming gaps, to provide technical assistance to strategically plan for and address those gaps, and to recommend an intervention package to address priority performance shortcomings/gaps.

The program commenced in September, 2009 with performance assessment activities carried out by a team of international performance assessment consultants from the US-registered/Slovakia-based organization, Kelly Novak Opportunities (KNO) Worldwide, with the support of the local FORECAST partner organization, the Center for Training and Consultancy (CTC). The first phase of the assessment (September 7-13, 2009) was focused on initial in-briefs, in-depth interviews with internal and external stakeholders and institutional mapping exercises. During this primary phase the following tasks were completed:

- Assessment team orientation and planning (international providers were paired with the senior staff of the local partner organization - CTC);
- In-briefs with the Minister and the First Deputy;
- Interviews were held with MEPNR agencies and department heads, advisors and professional staff;
- Meetings with external stakeholders (mainly within the local NGO sector and international agencies);
- Formulation of preliminary findings;

- Team analyses and mid-point planning meeting.

During the second phase of the performance assessment (October 3-10, 2009) in-depth analyses of key organizational processes were carried out. Based on the gathered information key processes were mapped out and initial recommendations drafted.

In parallel, two team members (one international and one local) undertook field visits in the regions (Borjomi and Telavi) to visit the MEPNR departments that are located outside of Tbilisi: sub-office of general environment inspectorate, preserved/protected areas and forestry units. The field visit aimed to assess management systems and effectiveness of communication with the HQ through interviews with the local staff and their supervisors.

On October 26, 2009 KNO submitted to FORECAST the final report on the basis of which further interventions were identified. However, due to the abrupt restructuring processes that were underway at the Ministry, as well as due to the fact that some interventions identified by the MEPNR were recognized as not in line with FORECAST mandate, the final prioritization of the interventions was delayed.

Yet, after long and intensive discussions with the MEPNR the following interventions were agreed on and the Intervention Package approved on May 20, 2010.

1. PR and communication workshop for the media representatives;
2. TA/Training in Project Management (PM);
3. IT support for project management software/database development;
4. Assist MEPNR to set-up HR management and professional development systems.

*Intervention I (PR and Communication Workshop for the Media Representatives) – Completed.*

On July 30 - August 1, 2010, with FORECAST support, the MEPNR organized a three day in country seminar for media representatives and the ministry's Public Relations (PR) Department. Through this event the MEPNR hoped to involve media more actively in its public awareness raising campaigns related to hazards, natural disasters and preventive measures against the climate change.

Of note is the participation of the Minister Goga Khachidze and the Deputy Minister Giorgi Zedginidze in the seminar. The topics discussed included:

- Ministry's strategy, priorities and courses;
- Disaster communication and prevention;
- Environmental protection;
- Future plans of the Forestry Department;
- Infrastructure of protected areas;
- The tourism statistics of Georgia.

On the whole, the seminar gave the participants an opportunity to gain insight of the MEPNR's policy and functions. It served as a good educating exercise for the media representatives to understand and learn biodiversity protection, disaster communication and preventive ways against climate change and natural disasters with the view to convey this knowledge to a wider audience in a competent manner. At the same time the event provided ground for open discussion and supported the establishment of effective communication mechanisms between the Ministry (PR department in particular) and the media.

*Intervention II* (TA/Training in Project Management) – RFP released on September 10, with a response due date for proposals of September 30, 2010. The program is scheduled for November-December, 2010.

*Intervention III* (IT Support for Project Management Software/Database Development) – The implementation of this intervention depends on the outcome of the second intervention.

*Intervention IV* (Assist MEPNR to Set-up HR Management and Professional Development Systems) – RFP released on September 21, with a response due date for proposals of October 4, 2010. The program is scheduled for November-December, 2010.

For more information on this program, please see *Challenges and Constraints* below.

### **3. GOVERNMENT TRANSPARENCY, ACCOUNTABILITY AND RESPONSIVENESS TO THE PUBLIC**

#### **MUNICIPAL SERVICE PROVIDERS ASSOCIATION (MSPA) AND MUNICIPAL FINANCE OFFICERS ASSOCIATION (MFOA) (HICD)**

The goal of the MSPA & MFOA HICD program is to improve the overall performance of the associations in meeting their short- and medium-term goals. The first phase of the program, assessment and the technical assistance, aimed to define management and programming gaps at MSPA and MFOA, to provide technical assistance to strategically plan for and address those gaps, and to recommend an intervention package to address priority performance shortcomings/gaps.

The activity was conducted in July 2009 by Ms. Elissa Myers and Mr. Richard Dorman, two international consultants with practical and theoretical experience in association strategic management. The team of international consultant was supported by the IQC Category I local partner, consortium of three organizations: Partners Georgia, UNAG, and ARC.

The project team worked intensively with the MSPA and MFOA senior staff (the presidents, the executive directors, and the board members), as well as various international and local stakeholders (including GoG representatives) to thoroughly assess and develop the capacities of the associations to more effectively undertake activities in support of their goals and missions.

After receiving the final assessment report from the assessment team, FORECAST developed an intervention packages for MSPA and MFOA including the following components:

*Component I:* TA at MSPA - Short Term Survival (completed);

*Component II:* Commodity Purchase for MFOA - Financial Software (completed);

*Component III:* TA at MSPA - Local Government Toolkit (in progress).

#### **Component I: TA at MSPA – Short Term Survival – Completed.**

The first intervention took place December 2-18, 2009. The objective of this intervention was to assist MSPA in developing, packaging, and promoting programs and services that support the real needs of the cities/municipalities in Georgia, and generate revenues that will allow MSPA to survive, and position itself to continue into the future as an independent, sustainable organization that fosters competent, citizen-based, and effective local government in Georgia.

The team of experts comprised of the lead consultant Ms. Elissa Myers and the local co-consultant Mr. Zaal Japaridze initially focused on the importance of putting in place systems and programs

that will immediately generate revenues for MSPA – systematic communication, membership-building, and the development of new products and marketing and fund-raising schemes, as well as the collection of membership renewal dues. Ms. Myers laid out a strategy for generating advertising, exhibit, and sponsorship income, and for the development of endorsed programs, as well as a system for creating incentive rewards for staff and commission-based marketers.

Ms. Myers also assisted MSPA to develop:

- A work plan for 2010;
- A program-based budget for 2010;
- A year-end financial statement;
- A detailed proposal on the development of a rural sanitation program;
- A detailed proposal on the creation of two two-day seminars to be held in January and February in Telavi and Kutaisi on Smart Budgeting for Local Governments with follow-up consulting services;
- A detailed proposal on the creation of a seminar on Roles and Revenue for Municipalities in Creating or Managing Farmers Markets;
- A draft proposal on the creation of a task force to address Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten Education;
- A Strategic and Tactical Plan to attract corporate support of MSPA through advertising, exhibits and sponsorship, associate membership, and the like.

The final report was submitted to FORECAST on January 27, 2010.

#### Component II: Commodity Purchase for MFOA - Financial Software – Completed.

The objective of the second component was to create the foundation for a product line for MFOA, built around an automated financial budgeting and reporting system that will support the municipalities and the national government in recording and communicating financial data.

Georgian Software Systems (GSS), a local company specialized on the development and distribution of financial and bookkeeping systems for both public and private organizations, has been selected through a competitive bidding process and approved as the vendor for the procurement of the financial software at MFOA and its 20 member municipalities. GSS began installation of software on May 27, 2010. At the same time, GSS launched short training sessions on the software specifics for the finance and IT staff of MFOA. All the activities were completed by the mid of June. In July 2010 MFOA conducted the software related training for all beneficiaries.

#### Component III: TA at MSPA - Local Government Toolkit – (in progress)

The goal of the third and the last intervention is to assist MSPA in developing, packaging, and promoting programs and services that support the real needs of the cities/municipalities in Georgia, and that generate revenues that will allow MSPA to survive, and position it to continue into the future as an independently sustainable organization that fosters competent, citizen-based, effective good local government in Georgia.

In particular, FORECAST assists MSPA in developing a Local Government Toolkit that will contribute to the professional development of municipal leadership as well as responsible organizational units of local government administrations to support the adequate translation of community needs into the concrete services. This will provide MSPA with a solid product to be

offered to local governments in the future that will definitely strengthen sustainability of the association.

The intervention commenced in July 2010 and will end in January 2011. The FORECAST category I local partner organization, the Center for Training and Consultancy (CTC), and its sub-contractor, the local IT company, Idea Design Group, Ltd. has been selected as service providers for the program.

The following tasks are/will be implemented from July 2010 till January 2011:

1. Toolkit outline;
2. Municipal Council draft Terms of References and Scope of Works;
3. Gageoba draft Terms of References and Job Descriptions;
4. Consideration and approval of the drafts;
5. HR Management related draft procedures;
6. Consideration and approval of the HR draft procedures;
7. Consolidation of the comments and final design of the toolkit;
8. Training of Trainers conducted;
9. Testing of the toolkit in one of the selected municipalities;
10. Final update of the toolkit;
11. Developing, updating and testing HR software at the pilot municipalities
12. Developing, updating, and testing the incoming/outgoing correspondence software at the pilot municipalities.

For more information on this project, please see *Success Stories* below.

## **CONSTITUTIONAL COMMISSION**

The goal of the Constitutional Commission program was to support the activities of the Georgian Constitutional Commission to produce draft amendments to the Constitution of Georgia in a transparent and inclusive manner. The program consisted of the following components:

*Intervention I* - First Session of the Editorial Working Group (completed);

*Intervention II* - First Plenary Session (completed);

*Intervention III* - Three Regional Working Group Meetings (completed);

*Intervention IV* - Bazaleti Conference (completed);

*Intervention V* - American Experts visit to Tbilisi (completed);

*Intervention VI* - Second Plenary Session (completed);

*Intervention VII* – Third Plenary Session (completed);

*Intervention VIII* – Participation in panel discussion in the US (cancelled);

*Intervention IX* – Berlin Conference (under development);

*Intervention X* – Fourth Plenary Session (under development).

The first component of the program, an *Editorial Committee Meeting*, was held in Batumi on August 6-7, 2009. During the two-day session the heads of the working groups presented reports about their work along with the recommendation for future changes/amendments to the constitution in their respective areas of expertise. At the end of the session, the Commission adopted a summary document outlining the main aspects of the recommended amendments to be refined and finalized further by the Commission.

The second component of the program, the *First Plenary Session*, was held in Tbilisi on September 24, 2009. During the session the Chairman and the Secretary of the Constitutional Commission

presented the report on the work done as well as shared with the participants the future plans of the Commission. He also emphasized the importance of inclusion of civil society in this process. In addition, the heads of each working group reported on the work previously conducted. That was followed by voting on the issues raised as a result of the consultations.

Additionally, the *Regional Working Group Meetings* in Kakheti, Samtskhe-Javakheti, Imereti, Samegrelo and Adjara (the third intervention) were conducted in September, October and November, 2009. During these meetings the following topics were discussed:

- Imperfection of the judicial authority and direction of the reform;
- Social rights;
- Minority rights;
- Issues related to the local authority;
- Decentralization.

Following the regional meetings, a two-day conference on “*Pressing Questions of the Constitutional Reform*” was held in Bazaleti (November 13-14, 2009). The conference was attended by members of the Constitutional Commission as well as representatives of the legislative and executive branches of the government, parliamentary and non-parliamentary opposition, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), experts, and the Georgian Trade Union Confederation (GTUC). During the conference, the members of the Constitutional Commission held intensive consultations on: the necessity to toughen the law permitting changes to the constitution, regulations on socio-economic rights, and constitutional regulation of judicial authority.

The fifth component of the program, an *American Expert’s Visit to Tbilisi*, took place on November 15-16, 2009. During his short visit, Professor Lawrence Lessig met not only with the members of the Constitutional Commission but also with the representatives of the non-parliamentary opposition, non-governmental organizations and the GoG. Based on the information received, Professor Lessig emphasized the necessity to move away from the “super presidential” towards either a French or stricter parliamentary system in order to avoid further instability in the country.

On December 26, 2009 the Constitutional Commission held the *Second Plenary Session* during which the draft amendment package was presented and discussed.

On May 11, 2010 the Constitutional Commission held the *Third Plenary Session* during which three draft amendment packages were presented. The draft amendment package presented by the Secretariat of the Constitutional Commission supported an increase in the power of parliament to serve as a good counterbalance to the power of president; the project presented by Levan Ramishvili, the so-called “American model”, offered introduction of a federal system of government in Georgia; while the third draft amendment package, presented by Vasil Gonashvili and Levan Bodzashvili, implied the establishment of the institute of Vice President.

The discussion was followed by voting on the projects as a result of which the draft amendment package presented by the Secretariat of the Constitutional Commission was prioritized (received 31 votes out of 41) to serve as a basis for the new constitution.

The eighth intervention of the program, *Participation in Panel Discussion in the US*, has been cancelled due to the late request that came from the Commission as well as due to a weak justification for the visit.

The Berlin Conference was organized by the *Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit* (GTZ) on July 15-16, 2010. The Georgian delegation (consisting of key government officials and the

members of the Constitutional Commission) and international experts gathered in Berlin to go through and discuss/review articles from the draft amendment package prioritized on May 11 session and make the final decision on articles before the submission of the final draft to the President of Georgia. FORECAST supported the participation of Mr. Steven Fish, an American expert, constitutionalist, in the Conference. The final report received on August 6, 2010.

Following the Berlin Conference, on July 19, 2010 under the support of the FORECAST program the State Constitutional Commission held its last session (*The Fourth Plenary Session*) on which the members of the Commission reviewed the draft amendment package and ratified it with 44 votes against 3. The ratified draft was handed to the President of Georgia on July 20, 2010.

For more information on this program, please see *Challenges and Constraints* below.

#### **4. IMPROVED DELIVERY OF SOCIAL SERVICES**

##### **PHYSICIANS WITH HEART MEDICAL EDUCATION SYMPOSIUM**

Since Georgia's independence from the Soviet Union in 1991 and the country's subsequent political elections, the country has launched a series of reforms aimed at strengthening the economic and healthcare infrastructures. In January of 2007, the Government of Georgia (GoG) adopted a new Hospital Development Master Plan that mandated the privatization of all but a handful of hospital facilities. In addition to hospital privatization the government ultimately plans to privatize 900 public health care (PHC) facilities in rural areas as well as all existing facilities in cities and regional centers. Although health reform issues such as the privatization of health facilities and the implementation of health insurance schemes are long-term, large-scale programs, there is an immediate need to address the concerns of local physicians by providing training relevant to the current health care reform situation. To meet this need, on November 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Physicians With Heart through the FORECAST assistance hosted a two day symposia with a focus on Family Practice Management. The goal of the symposium was to foster the development of family medicine and improve the functioning of family medicine practices in Georgia, in light of the current privatization reform.

The program for the seminar was jointly developed by the Physicians With Heart, Tbilisi State Medical University and the Georgia Family Medicine Association. The Minister of Labor, Health and Social Affairs of Georgia, Mr. Alexander Kvitashvili and the new Rector at Tbilisi State Medical University, Professor Zurab Vadachkoria, opened the two-day symposium. Leading medical instructors, residency directors, and practicing family physicians from the United States participated in the symposium to open a dialogue with their Georgian colleagues on how to develop family medicine as a specialty in the country. In total, approximately 160 participants were given the opportunity to share their views and concerns about the Georgian healthcare system, family medicine development in Georgia and worldwide, primary care role and value of family medicine. The family practice management sessions covered such topics as collaboration between PHC facilities and hospitals, introduction of the Evidence Based Medicine, basics of the Patient-Centered Medical Home, types of medical practices, creation of a high performing clinical team and the impact of patient satisfaction on health care outcomes.

##### **NATIONAL EDUCATION ACCREDITATION CENTER (NEAC) (HICD)**

The goal of the National Education Accreditation Center (NEAC) HICD program was to improve the overall performance of the center in meeting its short- and medium-term goals in further developing the general education accreditation system and service delivery (training schools in self-assessment and training of external evaluators in evaluation methodologies).

The performance assessment of the NEAC was carried out by the German-based performance improvement consultancy company, Performance Design International (PDI) together with the Center for Training and Consultancy (CTC), the local FORECAST partner organization (July and October, 2008). Based on the recommendations received the intervention package was developed and approved in January, 2009.

*Intervention III* (Database Development, the last prioritized intervention) – The goal of the program was to develop a systematic information collection, analysis, management and dissemination framework at the NEAC. The program was conducted by the local IT firm United Global Technologies (UGT) selected through a competitive bidding process. The TA activities covered the period from March to June, 2010.

The following is the list of activities conducted by UGT at NEAC:

- Detailed needs analysis;
- Detailed system analysis;
- Identification and enumeration of key business processes;
- Detailed analysis of database structure;
- Detailed analysis of application software;
- Assessment of processes, database structure and external systems for need and readiness for interconnection and automation of data exchange;
- Recommended modifications of database structure;
- Recommended modifications of key business processes;
- Recommended development plan including assigned resources of database modifications to align it with business needs;
- Describe and document reengineering version of key business process;
- Describe and document recommendations regarding database security;
- Describe and document recommendations regarding application software optimization;
- Describe and document recommendations regarding user access module;
- Develop new structure of database and functions for:
  - Registry of high school;
  - Registry of professors;
  - Registry of students;
  - Specialty classification;
  - Study process execution;
  - High schools courses;
  - Individual development plan;
  - Grants accounting and calculation;
  - Mobility management;
  - Integration service configuration.
- Develop functions to allow data change logging;
- Develop database scripts to make automatic data cleanup;
- Improve database script to support transaction;
- Add database indexes on appropriate database table to increase data selections and update performance;
- Develop functions to integrate external NEAC organizations;
- Create Technical Framework document.

UGT has also conducted workshops on database at different universities. The goal of these workshops was to ensure database compatibility with external systems. Reviews uncovered that the database has universal capabilities and does not need customization for each university. Simple configuration of profile allows high schools to load and get all required data using modified structure of database.

The final report was submitted to FORECAST on June 24, 2010.

For more information on this program, please see *Success Stories* and *Challenges and Constraints* sections below.

### **TBILISI STATE UNIVERSITY (TSU) HICD**

The goal of the Tbilisi State University HICD program was to contribute to TSU's transition to an independent, self-financed and sustainable institution through the establishment of decentralized administrative and management structures and the development of a business plan for the university. The program commenced in July 2008 with performance assessment activities carried out by a team of international performance assessment consultants from the US-registered/Slovakia-based organization – Kelly Novak Opportunities (KNO) Worldwide, with the support of the local field of activity expert and three representatives from the local FORECAST partner consortium (Partners Georgia, UNAG, and ARC).

After receiving the final assessment report, FORECAST developed an intervention package that included three prioritized interventions:

1. Strategic Planning, Implementation and Monitoring (completed);
2. Recommend and Document Improved Work Processes (completed);
3. Development of Financial Sustainability Plan (in progress).

The first two interventions, *Strategic Planning, Implementation and Monitoring* and *Recommend and Document Improved Work Processes*, were conducted in May, 2009.

The third and the last recommended intervention, *Development of Financial Sustainability Plan*, commenced on May 31, 2010. The **goal** of the intervention was to assist TSU to develop its internal capacity to carry out an alumni relations function that will contribute to the broader fundraising and sustainability objectives of TSU.

Mr. William Kirschke was selected as a service provider for this intervention. During his first visit (May 31-June 12, 2010), the consultant assessed the potential for the university to undertake a successful program of alumni relations. The consultant conducted a number of interviews/meetings with senior administration and academic leaders as well as held seminars in Alumni Relations, Development (fundraising) and Marketing for the relevant TSU staff. A strategy and way forward has also been established for the Chief Alumni Officer with specific priorities.

During his second visit (July 3-10, 2010), Mr. Kirschke met with the expat volunteer for alumni relations and a newly appointed staff member of the Alumni Office. Training took place with both staff members and they were given specific tasks to further support the establishment of the operations of an Alumni Office. In addition, the alumni page on the TSU website has been developed: <http://www.tsu.edu.ge/ge/departments/alumni/home/>. Consultations were also held regarding a major reception that the TSU Alumni Relations plans to hold in order to introduce new alumni operation to TSU alumni, TSU community and the public. The consultant also met the

head of the Law School and discussed the formation of a foundation for TSU, the element necessary to facilitate the ability of TSU to accept private contributions/donations without tax penalties. Mr. Kirschke developed a draft of an agreement between the foundation and the university that has to form the basis of operation.

The third and the last visit of the consultant (July 27-August 7, 2010) was dedicated to the Strategy/Action Plan drafting that was first presented to USAID and then to the TSU administration.

Of note is the positive attitude of the TSU leadership, especially the TSU Rector, towards this undertaking during the whole intervention.

For more information on this program, please see *Challenges and Constraints* below.

### **NATIONAL PHYSICAL EDUCATION STRATEGY**

The goal of the National Physical Education Strategy program is to support continued education sector reforms in Georgia by assisting the Government of Georgia (GoG) to develop a national strategy on physical education in schools.

In particular, the activity aims to assist the local experts group (in education, health, sports), led by the National Curriculum and Assessment Center (NCAC) of the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia (MoES), selected by the GoG and sponsored by UNICEF, to develop the National Physical Education Strategy. The FORECAST's portion is to support the process by contracting international experts to assist the local experts group in introducing western-style models of physical education in schools, developing a draft national strategy on physical fitness, and developing an action plan and set of recommendations for future interventions to support the activities of the GoG in this field.

The Youth Sport Trust (YST), the British organization experienced in developing and managing educational sporting programs, has been selected as a service provider for the program.

The first visit took place on June 16-20, during which the YST international expert, Mr. Alan Bell, conducted series of meetings at the Parliament of Georgia, NCAC, Georgian Olympic Committee, as well as at the Children and Youth Sports Federation. At the same time, Mr. Bell provided assistance to the local experts in their work on the national strategy on physical education in the country. Mr. Bell submitted his preliminary findings, recommendations and analyses together with the interim report on July 5, before his second visit in August.

The second visit of the YST international consultants, Ms. Clare Stretch and Mr. Alan Bell, took place on August 2–6, 2010. Ms. Clare Stretch held two meetings with the team of Georgian experts. During the meetings the first draft of the new Georgian sport curriculum was discussed and some suggestions concerning revisions and additions were made. The comments received from the international experts were incorporated into the revised draft. Ms. Stretch also met with eight public school directors as well as other experts who have been involved in the project. The consultant also visited two schools.

On August 5, both experts met the Minister of Youth and Sport, Lado Vardzelashvili and the authorities of the Ministry of Education and Science (MoES). The consultants also held a presentation on the importance of children's sport development in Europe and discussed the criteria of evaluating the existing situation. The interim report on the second visit was submitted by Ms. Clare Stretch on August 12, 2010.

The third field visit of the international consultant, Mr. Trevor Smith is planned for November 1-7, 2010.

Meanwhile, the Consultative Board for Sport Development of Parliament of Georgia is working on the Georgian model of the National Physical Education Strategy. An interim meeting, where the first draft of the national model will be presented, is scheduled for the mid of October. The final draft of the document is expected at the beginning of November, 2010. Additionally, in September the National Curriculum and Assessment Center at the MoES has submitted revised National Curriculum Plan for Sport Education at Schools for 2011- 2016 to the international consultant Ms. Clare Stretch. The consultant's feedback has been received and incorporated into the final draft.

For more information on this program, please see *Challenges and Constraints* below.

### **NATIONAL CENTER FOR DISEASE CONTROL (NCDC) (HICD)**

The objective of the NCDC performance assessment and technical assistance intervention was to define performance gaps at the center, and to provide technical assistance to strategically plan for and address these gaps. The first phase of the program took place November 9-18, 2009.

Consultants from World Services, Ms. Sandra McCormick, Ms. Mary Anderson, and Ms. Maureen Jameson together with the local consultants (IQC Category I local partners) conducted a survey of the NCDC's internal and external stakeholders, including the Ministry of Labor, Health, and Social Affairs, the NCDC staff, laboratory staff, and other health care providers and policy makers. Meetings and interviews were held in Tbilisi, Kutaisi and Batumi, including visits to the Imereti Zonal Epidemiology Station and Batumi Plague Station.

During the interim stage between the first and the second phases, the team of local consultants contracted by FORECAST conducted 10 focus group sessions and surveyed 118 NCDC staff using those data collection tools that were developed in collaboration with the international experts during the first phase of the assessment. The survey was completed in mid December 2009, and the results of the survey were analyzed during the preparatory stage for the second phase of the program.

The second/final phase of the assessment took place on January 18-22, 2010. At the beginning of this phase, the World Services consultants held a meeting with the leadership of NCDC where the findings and recommendations from the first phase of the assessment were presented and reviewed. It should be mentioned that, given the limited time for the intervention and the relative size of the NCDC, the consultants had to focus on priority issues (2-4 key recommendations) as well as on creating a strategic plan for implementing immediate changes at the Center.

Additionally, on January 20-21 the team of consultants conducted two workshops for the NCDC key staff, aiming to:

1. Discuss organizational performance assessment, review key findings and create strategies to implement changes;
2. Assure organizational support for proposed changes.

During the workshop, the NCDC organizational chart was revised. The consultants also tried to engage the NCDC leadership in a dialogue to define "strengths and weaknesses" of the Center. As a result two areas of weakness were identified by participating leadership:

- Merging the Public Health Department of the Ministry of Labor, Health and Social Affairs (MoLHSA) and the NCDC was politically motivated and did not represent an optimal work structure; and
- Lack of focus on non-communicable disease at the government level.

The final report and other deliverables of the program were submitted to FORECAST on February 9, 2010.

### **HEALTH INSURANCE MEDIATION SERVICE (HIMS)**

The Health Insurance Mediation Service (HIMS) was established in 2008 through a joint initiative of the Georgian Insurance Association, the Ministry of Labor, Health and Social Affairs of Georgia and the USAID-funded CoReform Project. The mandate of HIMS is to:

- Conduct outreach activities to inform and educate the population and health care providers about the benefits included in the state-sponsored universal insurance program;
- Maintain a system for registration of claims and respond to inquiries from policy holders and other interested parties on health insurance-related issues;
- Prevent health insurance related disputes from occurring by actively engaging the parties to a potential dispute to address their differences;
- Resolve disputes between policy holders and health insurance companies through mediation services;
- Assist the health insurance industry and the Government of Georgia (GoG) to improve health services by identifying system bottlenecks and recommending ways to overcome them.

The program components include:

*Intervention I* – Establish Effective Public Communication Strategy (in progress);

*Intervention II* – Improving the Mediation Processes (in progress);

*Intervention III* – Establishing the Organization’s Quality Management System (QMS) (under development).

It has to be noted that HIMS went through the major transformations this year, in particular:

- Pursuant to Order enacted on July 1, HIMS was transformed into a Legal Entity of Public Law under the Ministry of Health, but retained its name;
- HIMS now stands independent from the Georgian Insurance Association (formerly, it was a unit of the Georgian Insurance Association); HIMS has a Supervisory Board composed of three members, which includes the representatives from the Ministry of Health, the National Bank and the Georgian Insurance Association;
- HIMS’s functions have expanded to accommodate handling of disputes between the medical clinics and the insurance companies in addition to its traditional dispute handling functions between the insurance holders and the insurance companies;
- According to the new law, HIMS only serves the state insurance holders, and does not settle disputes of other holders;
- HIMS and the Georgian Insurance Association have acquired complementary functions, and will continue to serve the needs of the same industry.

These transformations have affected the timeline of the interventions, and the dates for those had to be shifted to accommodate the emerging priorities for HIMS, considering the needs of the entire insurance industry as a whole.

*Intervention I (Public Communication Strategy) – In progress.*

The program commenced on June 14 and is carried out by the FORECAST Category I Local IQC partners: Partners-Georgia and ARC. This intervention was caught in the middle of the HIMS transformation process, and the local providers had to consult extensively with the Georgian Insurance Association and the HIMS management to tailor their needs emerging out of these changes to the HIMS communication strategy priorities. ARC completed their research exercise on August 27 and presented their findings to both GIA and HIMS representatives to be used as the major building block for the communication strategy to be developed by Partners-Georgia.

A strategic planning workshop to develop a communications strategy was held at HIMS on October 12, in which both GIA and HIMS representatives participated. The workshop was facilitated by Partners-Georgia and eventuated in the formulation of the communications vision, mission and the goals. The final deliverable in the form of the communications strategy report is expected by the end of October.

*Intervention II (Improving the Mediation Processes) – In progress*

The HIMS representatives visited the German Private Health Insurance Association (GDV) and the Private Health Insurance Ombudsmen's Offices in Berlin, Germany from June 20-26. The study tour was specifically tailor-made for the Georgian delegation and was targeted to support the improvement of customer protection in health insurance and the role of the health insurance ombudsman service in Georgia. The participants were involved in the review and discussions of actual cases, and were mentored in all procedural and judicial matters related to claims and claims processing. They worked directly with their seasoned German counterparts, as well as got acquainted with the specifics of the counterpart agency's management and support systems, exploring the additional issues, such as sustainability, statistics, reporting, and forecasting/planning.

The dates for the German expert's visit to Tbilisi and the second study tour will be negotiated with HIMS. This is contingent upon the availability of the German expert to visit Tbilisi.

*Intervention III (Organization's Quality Management System – QMS)*

Once the above two interventions have tangibly progressed towards actualization, FORECAST will contract a local organization that will undertake this activity at HIMS.

For more information on this program, please see *Challenges and Constraints* below.

### **MOES INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT AGENCY (ESIDA)**

The Educational and Scientific Infrastructure Development Agency (ESIDA) was established in January 2009 as a Legal Entity of Public Law under the Ministry of Education and Science (MoES). The mission of the agency is to support the provision of quality education through the renovation and construction of infrastructure in schools, universities, and scientific institutions, and the introduction of modern technologies in public secondary schools and Educational Resource Centers (ERCs). For all intents and purposes, the Agency is the conglomeration of the MoES' *Iakob Gogebashvili* (infrastructure) program, and the *Dear Leap* (ICT) program, both of which have been run as separate MoES entities for the past five years.

The FORECAST program aims to improve the general education infrastructure and ensure a more fair, transparent and fact-based decision making process in school construction and infrastructure

rehabilitation in Georgia according to modern standards. FORECAST worked with the ESIDA, the MoES, and stakeholders to assess the current legal and technical framework as well as capacities of the ESIDA and stakeholders to develop and implement a new standards regime. At the same time the program determined the needs-based criteria upon which Education Resource Centers (ERCs), local communities, and the MoES will evaluate, prioritize and recommend infrastructure rehabilitation and construction works for educational facilities, and upon which the ESIDA will make decisions regarding those rehabilitation and construction works. Additionally, as a function of developing the School Construction and Rehabilitation Master Plan, the program developed core processes including the identification and (re)assignment of functions, responsibilities and authorities; defining timelines; developing the necessary templates/forms and systems; and establishing communication channels to better allow the institution to solicit information from the schools, and prioritize and make decisions regarding works to be undertaken each year.

The following were the program components:

*Intervention I* – Study Tour for Improving the Institutional Capacity of the ESIDA (completed);

*Intervention II* – Technical Assistance on the Development of School Rehabilitation and Construction Master Plan (completed);

*Intervention III* – Technical Assistance on the Development of Modern School Rehabilitation and Construction Standards (completed).

Intervention I (*Study Tour*) – completed.

On January 11-16, 2010 two representatives from ESIDA and two from the Union of Architects of Georgia (UAG) participated in the *Learning and Technology World Forum* and *British Education and Training Technology Show (BETT)* in London. The goal of the intervention was to improve the institutional capacity of ESIDA and its stakeholders to undertake and systematize more advanced activities related to educational infrastructure development and planning according to internationally accepted standards. During the exhibition participants explored recent achievements and experiences in modern technology and school infrastructure development.

According to ESIDA, the study tour was very interesting and productive. The participants met with representatives of the *Partnership for Schools*, organization which coordinates the UK national program, *Building for Future Schools*. During the meeting, the participants were acquainted with the British program activities, standards, guidelines, and monitoring procedures that were established to support school infrastructure development in the UK. The delegation also met with the managers of the Microsoft *Partnership in Learning* program and discussed the new hardware and software packages that will be installed in Georgian schools in the coming future. Additionally, the Georgian delegation visited the New Line Learning Academy, a visit organized by the Microsoft Academic Program managers for a limited number of participants. The participants explored modern learning environments, new UK programs, assessed the school's technology readiness for better education, and attended a presentation on using modern information and communication technologies in the classroom.

On the whole, the information and knowledge gained from the seminars, meetings and school visits gave the Georgian delegates a better understanding of how to respond to and explore optimal solutions for the needs and requirements of modern teaching and learning methodologies in the country.

*Intervention II* (Master Planning) – Completed.

During their visit, the experts from MGT of America visited schools in Tbilisi, Sagarejo and Gori and conducted facility assessments of those schools, which were either fully rehabilitated, partially rehabilitated or not renovated at all. The consultants interviewed heads of regional resource centers, school directors, teachers, and representatives of local municipalities. The purpose of the study was to provide recommendations on the administrative structure for the education facility construction and rehabilitation master planning framework that is responsive to the needs of the MoES and local stakeholders.

On March 10, the experts conducted a workshop to introduce their preliminary findings and recommendations to the MoES, ESIDA, and other stakeholders, such as representatives of the MRDI, ERCs, schools, and local communities. The final report that included detailed recommendations on the master planning administrative structure and processes, facility database elements and collection procedures, facility assessment criteria and methodology, was submitted to FORECAST in mid April.

*Intervention III (Standard Development) – Completed.*

The development of the modern school rehabilitation and construction standards was also part of the technical assistance provided by FORECAST to the ESIDA. This TA effort was led by the international and local experts, and came to an end at the end of August. The international experts from MGT and its sub-contractor Schmidt Associates visited Tbilisi twice: the first visit covered the period of May 1 – 14, while the second covered the period of June 19 – 24.

During their first visit, MGT visited the ESIDA, schools in Tbilisi and the regions, met with the MoES representatives, ERC administrators and all other related stakeholders. The stakeholder meeting was held on May 4, where the international experts made presentations about the best international practices in school construction, rehabilitation and educational specifications, while the local experts discussed the regulatory and legal framework of the construction field in Georgia.

During the second visit, MGT presented their draft report and received feedback from the stakeholders (which were incorporated into their final report). The final report was delivered on July 2, followed by the Implementation Manual on July 8, 2010. The final report consisted of an overview of the national curriculum and the educational programs, modern school planning and design guidelines (site standards, facility requirements, sustainability and energy efficiency, safety and security, building systems and materials), and the prototype standards. The Implementation Manual included seven major recommendations and two supporting recommendations for implementing the standards.

A team of the local experts completed their portion of the standards report on August 2. The report included an overview of the existing normative and technical documents, assessment of the ESIDA's institutional capacities and the respective recommendations, and the Building Codes Illustrated for Elementary and Secondary Schools (a guide to understanding 2006 International Building Code).

Data Collection and Analysis: FORECAST, Chemonics/EMP Project, MoES, and ESIDA have gone through an extensive review and discussion process regarding creation of the school infrastructure assessment and a follow-on decision-making instrument for ESIDA, and its parallel incorporation into the MoES EMIS system. Taking part in these discussions was Delta System, the designated service provider for this TA intervention, which had previously designed a MoES SIS system under the EMP Project. Delta Systems, together with the FORECAST's direct client ESIDA, developed a specifications proposal on the creation of the software and the modules for EMIS. The proposal was revised several times to reflect the direct needs and expectations of all the

parties having a stake in, and involved in the discussion process. A contract is due to be signed with Delta Systems in October. Works are to start in November and last until April 2011.

## **MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SCIENCE – US UNIVERSITY INVESTMENT INITIATIVE**

Having completed a number of priority reforms at all levels of the education sector, the Government of Georgia (GoG) and the Ministry of Education and Science (MoES) have expressed their intent to take the higher education system in Georgia to the next level of modernization through the development of an ambitious initiative, that is: to establish the country as an international education center of excellence for the South Caucasus, Black Sea, Caspian Sea, and Central Asia regions. Based on the MoES vision, this can be attained through the establishment of a campus of a well-known US university in Georgia that will provide superior (and highly recognized) quality undergraduate and graduate education.

To assist the MoES in this endeavor FORECAST developed a program that consisted of two key components:

- Explore and determine advantages and disadvantages of Georgia as the choice location (internal and regional market), understand potential for and interest in investing in this initiative on the part of US universities, and make recommendations for the GoG accordingly;
- Develop a detailed proposal for the MoES to solicit consideration among the top-20 leading US universities.

A feasibility study to determine a viability of the MoES initiative was carried out by Arts and Science Group, the US-based consultancy company specialized in market-informed strategy for colleges and universities, together with the local consultants, Mr. George Simongulashvili and Mr. David Gochashvili. The activity was conducted within the period of April – June, 2010.

In order to determine what is required for attracting a leading US university, Art & Science Group and Georgia-based consulting partners followed a six-step process:

1. Assessed criteria based on which the US universities make decisions regarding internationalization efforts;
2. Considered comparative advantages and disadvantages of Georgia relative to the experience of US universities in other countries;
3. Assessed the current situation in Georgia in light of this initiative, that is: costs, regulatory framework, tax rates, and other issues affecting how readily a US university can get started and operate in the country;
4. Estimated the optimal parameters of a branch campus, taking account of the requirements of the university and the objectives of the Government in determining appropriate student and faculty size, capital and operating costs, as well as operating conditions;
5. Assessed the demand for US-style higher education (undergraduate and/or graduate) among prospective students in Georgia and the neighboring region.
6. Obtained initial reactions to the initiative from top US university leaders.

The project team worked intensively with various local and international organizations (e.g. NEAC, NAEC, OSGF, IREX and British Council) to compile all necessary data and information. They also conducted series of focus group meetings as well as interviewed the top-notch students from the private and public high schools in Tbilisi to gain understanding of the demand of Georgian students on international degree programs.

Additionally, in order to make a market research and assess a demand on international degree programs in the countries identified as strategically important by the MoES, the consultants conducted field visits in Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Ukraine and Moldova.

The final report which included findings from the assessment and recommendations was presented to the Prime Minister of Georgia and the Minister of Education and Science on June 29, 2010.

The overarching conclusion of the team of consultants is that bringing in a top US university is a highly ambitious objective, will be extremely difficult to achieve, but is possible. The focus on job creation in engineering, IT, and related fields is the right one. Skepticism about Georgia as a place stable, safe, and ultimately desirable enough for such an endeavor will need to be overcome, and three pivotal actions will need to be taken: (1) the Government and its financial partners will need to invest a very significant amount of money and sustain spending at a high level; (2) the Government will have to give the partner university considerable freedom and assurances of support; and (3) the Government will need to sponsor a sophisticated effort to identify and cultivate universities willing to risk launching a major initiative in a market where most will not.

### **THE SERVICE AGENCY FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES, ELDERLY AND CHILDREN DEPRIVED OF PARENTAL CARE (SERVICE AGENCY)**

The Service Agency for People with Disabilities, Elderly and Children Deprived of Parental Care (hereon Service Agency) is a legal entity of public law mandated to carry out (centralized) stewardship and governance over the country's social service institutions for child care, disabled and elderly. Currently, the Service Agency provides managerial, administrative, procurement and financial services to the 28 care institutions located throughout the country. However, as a newly created institution, the Service Agency suffers from institutional shortcomings at all levels. In order to identify performance gaps at the agency and define their root causes, FORECAST decided to conduct the performance assessment of the institution. With this intention, FORECAST contracted a team comprised of three experts from IQC Category I local partner organizations (CTC, Partners Georgia and UNAG) and the field of activity expert. The program commenced in September and will last till the end of October, 2010. The assessment of the Service Agency is carried out under the coaching and guidance of the Performance Design International (PDI) expert, Mr. Klaus Wittkuhn.

The local consultants started their activities from the assessment of the external environment of the Service Agency. The activities conducted included: collection and analyzes of the relevant documentation, interviews and meetings with the peripheral stakeholders (representative of international organizations, donors, the Ministry of Labor, Health and Social Affairs of Georgia), structural review, review of regulatory framework, development of the relationship map, etc. During this phase, the key functions of the Service Agency were identified, possible gaps analyzed and the first draft of the key performance indicators (KPIs) elaborated. All the preliminary findings of the assessment were discussed with the PDI expert and his feedback/recommendations were taken into consideration.

Currently, the consultants are assessing the internal environment of the Service Agency and incorporating their findings into the Performance Monitoring Framework (PMF).

### **GEORGIAN HOSPITAL ASSESSMENT (GHA)**

The Georgian Hospital Association (GHA) is a recently established association (June 2010) whose founding members are seven private and publicly owned hospitals in Tbilisi, all considered among the industry leaders in Georgia. These hospitals have approximately 1,500 of total bed capacity,

which is roughly 25% of total hospital beds in the country. **Targeted membership, however, is manifold the current one.** The overarching mission of the GHA is to strengthen the health of the population of Georgia by assisting member hospitals with improving their business practices in various areas of operations such as quality of health care services, human resource management, costing of health services, health insurer relationship management, and procurement of supplies. The mission of the GHA fits perfectly with the USAID/Georgia strategy in the health and social development that aims to help improve the health status of the citizens of Georgia.

The program that the FORECAST started to implement at the GHA is a full-HICD program to produce a strong organizational development strategy and a road map by which to implement it (*rather than a performance assessment which would be suited to an established institution with a track record of past performance*). This program sits within the HICD and M&E Capacity Development framework for Category I Local Partners. It is run by a team led by representatives of three Category I FORECAST IQC Local Partners, a PDI Expert/Coach mentoring team leaders, recognized international Field of Activity Experts in hospital associations, and a World Learning Program Officer.

The local service providers completed an assessment of the GHA's external environment and are now in the process of conducting an internal environment assessment that will be culminated in the strategic planning workshop to take place on October 19 with the GHA management and members. From October 4, a team of the local providers were joined by two international experts from the World Services of La Crosse, Inc who are reviewing the findings developed by the local providers and providing their input in the process. All the materials developed before and after the workshop conjointly by the international and local experts will be used as the foundation for the strategic plan and the road map to be submitted to FORECAST by November 15.

## **5. PROGRAM AND PROJECT SUPPORT (PPS)**

### **MINISTRY OF REFUGEES AND ACCOMMODATION (MRA) – TA**

The goal of the program was to contribute to building the capacity of the Ministry for Refugees and Accommodation (MRA) in developing and effectively operationalizing the GoG *Action Plan for the Implementation of the State Strategy for IDPs*. The project was undertaken by international experts Mr. Guy Hovey and Ms. Erin Mooney, with the assistance of local project officer contracted by FORECAST.

The first phase of the technical assessment at the MRA took place in February-March, 2009. That phase identified a number of capacity gaps in the MRA and formulated recommendations for addressing them. These findings were discussed and endorsed by the MRA and were also validated and strongly supported by MRA's main stakeholders in the international community and GoG. Indeed, a number of international partners of the MRA based their own capacity-building programs with MRA on the FORECAST findings and recommendations; this not only entailed a broader range of support for MRA but also ensured that these efforts were coordinated and mutually reinforcing. The FORECAST project also served to catalyze not only renewed confidence in the MRA but also concrete commitments of capacity-building support, based on a common analysis of needs, and a more coordinated international response to addressing these needs.

FORECAST's areas of focus for contributing to the collaborative effort of strengthening MRA capacity-building (in the second phase), fell into 4 intervention areas:

1. Technical Assistance at the MRA in key strategic areas central to operationalizing the IDP Action Plan;

2. Database and IT Strategy Development, providing technical advice to the MRA;
3. Communications;
4. Human Resources management.

*Intervention I (TA Phase II at MRA) – Completed.*

*Intervention II (MRA Information Technology Development and Strategy Design) — Completed.*

The project on the MRA IT Strategy Development commenced on November 12, 2009. The main aim of the project was to enhance expertise and increase capacity (human and technical) of the MRA for the collection, organization, management and dissemination of data. The local company BIT was selected through a competitive bidding process for implementation of the technical assistance and development of MRA's IT Strategy design. The main priorities identified during the project were as follows:

- Information the MRA required to lead implementation of the Action Plan on IDPs;
- How to obtain information utilizing new and existing sources;
- Identifying an appropriate database platform to store and retrieve the information;
- Design of the database;
- Software and hardware requirements;
- Training and operational requirements;
- Appropriate financial and intellectual support requirements.

In order to ensure efficient achievement of the project goal, activities were divided in several stages:

- **Stage 1** – Study business processes and create diagrams for each process;
- **Stage 2** – Formulate business requirements for software solutions;
- **Stage 3** – Define IT infrastructure recommendations;
- **Stage 4** – Create IT development plan for the MRA;
- **Stage 5** – Prepare budget estimates for IT components;
- **Stage 6** – Prepare recommendations for IT staff;
- **Stage 7** – Prepare a final report.

During the first week of the project, BIT mapped business processes for the new reception centre of the MRA and drafted the software recommendations for them. In addition, an outline of the MRA IT Strategy document was prepared.

In the following weeks, BIT continued to implement the following main activities of the project:

- Mapping business processes;
- Detailed description of main MRA procedures;
- Description of business processes related to key MRA functions;
- Creation of charts for business processes of the MRA reception centre;
- Elaboration of the budget required for efficient functioning of the reception center;
- General analysis of MRA IT Infrastructure;
- Elaboration of the final recommendations for MRA IT Strategy (including IT infrastructure).

A description of the main business procedures of the MRA as well as the main software requirements and projected costs were agreed between BIT and key MRA staff.

BIT submitted the final report at the end of February, 2010. The recommendations submitted by BIT were approved by the Minister. While the report is ambitious, the Ministry has engaged in internal discussions on the steps it needs to undertake in order to reach the goals set out. To this end, the MRA identified an IT expert with both private (banking sector) and MRA experience. Two IT staff employed by the MRA have been tasked to work with the new staff person and implement the BIT recommendations. That was the first time an IT strategy has been developed for the MRA and is seen as a platform not only for the development of the MRA but also as a resource which can be utilized as part of a wider MRA development strategy to approach donors for funding to 'fill in the gaps' which the MRA is unable to fund itself.

*Intervention III (Development of External/Internal Communications Strategy at the MRA)* — completed.

In order to improve the internal/external communications of the MRA and increase communication skills of key MRA personnel, a two-month joint project was implemented by Partners Georgia and GePRA which were selected through a competitive bidding process.

The project included two main components: 1) a comprehensive training program conducted by Partners Georgia; and 2) the development of an MRA Communication Strategy document (comprising of a 3 year Communications Strategy document and a 1 year Communication Strategy Action Plan) by GePRA. The main tasks of the project were the following:

- To define the project target groups among MRA employees working on central and regional levels;
- To assess the capacities and needs of project target groups and define the relevant types of technical assistance;
- To develop the MRA Communications Strategy document;
- To deliver tailored communication trainings to the project target groups.

As a result of the consultations held with the MRA key staff the following trainings were conducted by Partners Georgia:

- Effective telephone communication with beneficiaries, for MRA hot line personnel, July 16-17, 2009;
- Effective communication with beneficiaries, for MRA structural units responsible for direct communication with IDPs, July 23-25, 2009;
- Effective communication between MRA structural units (including regional employees of MRA), July 20-22 and July 28-30, 2009;
- Interrelations with mass-media and public speaking for the Minister, his Deputies and Advisors, September 15-18, September 28-29 and October 2, 2009.

In addition to key MRA personnel, the above topics were identified by the Minister Koba Subeliani as important issues for the Ministry's efficiency.

Apart from the trainings, in order to improve the effectiveness of the MRA's work and its communication units and to make Public Relations (PR) more effective, a Communication Strategy document was developed. The document detailed a comprehensive set of recommendations on systems, channels and instruments needed to meet the requirements of the different target groups.

Two retreats with the MRA staff were held (in mid-July and mid-September) on communications issues. The participants of the meetings included key staff from all levels of the MRA (including the Minister at the September retreat and heads of regional offices at both retreats). The specific objectives of the September 12-13 retreat were: (i) to provide comments and recommendations on the draft versions of the Communication Strategy documents; (ii) to agree on the basic importance of PR and to develop PR strategies; as well as (iii) to develop team working and internal communication skills. The concrete issues discussed during the retreat included: process of Communication Strategy elaboration, SWOT analysis of the communication process, communication values, strategic vision, communication mission, strategic framework, objectives and expected outcomes, communication matrix, recommendations on internal communication and organizational structure and evaluation systems of strategy implementation.

In addition, the facilitators conducted several team-building exercises the main aim of which was to develop team working skills. Each exercise was analyzed by the participants and lessons relevant to the Communication Strategy and Strategic Communications Action Plan were identified.

The recommendation/notes provided at the retreats were taken into consideration during preparation of the final version of the Communication Strategy documents. The facilitators agreed on a final version of the Communication Strategy document with the MRA senior staff. According to the MRA Communications Strategy document, the following strategic objectives defining the informational interrelations between the MRA and society were identified for the next three years:

- Maximum accessibility to information and transparency of MRA and services;
- Dialogue-communication stimulating involvement;
- Effective organization of MRA communication processes.

Partners Georgia and GePRA submitted the final report on the project on October 25, 2009.

*Intervention IV (Development of HR Management Systems at the MRA) — completed.*

Technical assistance (TA) at the MRA in developing its HR department and HR management systems was implemented by CTC through October 2009 - January 2010. The project aimed to assist the MRA in conducting a comprehensive program of HR support and strengthen/modernize the existing HR management and procedural systems including HR mapping, the development of job descriptions, and the drafting and finalization of an MRA HR manual.

Within the framework of this project CTC conducted a four-day HRM training/workshop with participation of the MRA Personnel Division, Legal Support Division, Administrative Department and International Affairs Department. The main topics of the training included the following:

- HR management systems and their components;
- Methods of job analysis;
- Job descriptions and format;
- Staff motivation, the leading theories of staff motivation;
- Application forms;
- Staff recruitment/methods;
- Job evaluation;
- Staff development;
- Planning staff development;
- Work processes;
- Design procedures;

- Work plan.

At the end of October, CTC held a meeting with the Ministry's Administrative Department during which draft versions of the HR Manual as well as draft forms of Staff Electronic Database, Job Description, Job Application, Job Announcement, Staff Development Record and Annual Training Plan were presented and discussed. As a result of the meeting, a working group was created at the MRA to cooperate with CTC regarding project related issues.

At the beginning of November, 2009 CTC began to elaborate job descriptions for IDP Department employees based on Job Interview Questionnaires. In addition, meetings were conducted with several departments of the MRA (Legal Department, Financial Department, Migration, Repatriation and Refugees Department, Administrative Department) in order to discuss and agree on the planned HR management activities.

In December, 2009 CTC conducted two workshops with staff from the MRA Personnel Division as a result of which the final draft of the HR manual was prepared. In addition, an Activity Plan was developed for the process of job description preparation for the rest of the MRA staff. The Activity Plan identified steps and timescales for each MRA department according to time schedule and ongoing responsibilities.

At the end of March, 2010 CTC submitted the final report together with all required deliverables (HR Manual, Concept paper for HR Data base, Instruction for Job Analyses, Job Analyses Questionnaire, Plan for drafting Job Descriptions, Staff Appraisal Form, Staff Monitoring Form, Staff Evaluation Form, Job Application Form, Staff Development Record and Annual Training Plan).

The HR manual and supporting documentation have been reviewed by the MRA and have been approved by the Minister. While there are strict laws setting out certain procedures for Ministries (particularly in hiring and appraisal) which cannot be changed, the CTC manual sets out modern, yet legally compliant interpretations of these policies which are vitally important and will enable the MRA to implement the restructuring recommendations. The manual was particularly welcomed by the Minister and his deputies as Koba Subeliani has been seeking a more formal method of staff management.

The expertise and leadership provided by FORECAST in the third phase of the project towards the institutional development of the MRA also fell into 4 key intervention areas:

1. MRA TA Phase III;
2. MRA Restructuring;
3. MRA Legal Department TA/Training;
4. MRA Finance Department TA/Training.

*Intervention I (TA Phase 3 at MRA) — Completed.*

FORECAST provided intensive TA to the MRA in preparation for the restructuring process. However, while acknowledging the need for restructuring and being very supportive of it, the MRA was reluctant to move forward with concrete actions. This was due to the upcoming local elections and the politically driven need for the MRA not to take any actions which may be construed in a negative light by the electorate. The restructuring retreat was therefore postponed until the end of June, 2010 – immediately after the elections. The retreat was very successful and the objectives of reaching a consensus of opinion among a wide range of senior staff that the MRA needs to undergo wide ranging and significant change was reached.

During the retreat, the issue of de-centralization was discussed and the decision was made to transfer the authority to decide IDP status, registration and other key responsibilities to the regional offices. The reason why it was impossible to undertake these changes before was due to the lack of accurate data in a workable database and the ability to access it remotely from regional offices. Since the FORECAST recommendations these have all been overcome with FORECAST being at the forefront of working with UNHCR to provide solutions.

In addition, during field assessment visits, communications between the MRA HQ, regional offices, municipal and village authorities were mapped. Empirical evidence from meetings with (particularly old case load) IDPs evidenced a marked improvement in the flow of information from the community level to the MRA and from the MRA to the community level. Coordination with municipal authorities has improved although this is still very much on an as needed basis as opposed to a regular information sharing. Long entrenched information mechanisms from the Soviet era still exist and each is reluctant to amalgamate.

FORECAST continued capacity building and targeted trainings. These have paid dividends with the Steering Committee (SC) and TEG systems and over the reporting period the capacity building (CB) was systematically withdrawn from the SC secretariat until it was functioning with a minimum of support and mentoring. The Steering Committee is now completely independent of FORECAST, is regarded as the pre-eminent meeting regarding IDPs in Georgia and is securely 'owned' by its members. The DRC will continue providing support to the Secretariat if and when required. Training, advice and mentoring was also provided to the Minister, the First Deputy Minister and the World Bank (WB) Community Development project within which FORECAST's advice has been integral to it potentially receiving extra support from the WB and the Council of Europe.

FORECAST worked closely with the DRC and other training/CB partners of the MRA to design and implement an effective exit strategy for FORECAST and smooth the transition from FORECAST leading the process of restructuring to the DRC. This strategy was implemented very effectively and now the DRC has a team of four working within the MRA including the former FORECAST local Program Officer, thus ensuring the transfer of institutional knowledge from one organization to its successor.

FORECAST leaves the MRA a completely different organization than when it joined it on the development journey. For example, information flows more freely and is accurate and evidence based, coordination with the International Community (IC) and civil society has never been closer and many international organizations have remarked on their better working relationship.

The close out event took place on July 20 in the Tbilisi Marriott. The final report was submitted at the beginning of August, 2010.

*Intervention II (MRA Restructuring)* — Commenced on March 29, 2010. CTC was selected as a service provider for the program to implement organizational, strategic and structural analysis and planning as a start to the HICD assessment. A team of consultants from CTC conducted a survey of the MRA's internal and external environment/stakeholders as well as assessed the organization, work place, and staff. Data was collected from a review of available reports, interviews and observation. CTC also reviewed the documents created on the MRA Coordination Unit's structure, functioning and responsibilities. Meetings were held with UNHCR project staff in order to better understand the work of the Steering Committee.

Retreat with participation of the MRA senior management team was held on April 30 - May 1, 2010 in Bazaleti. The retreat aimed to undertake a review of current and future roles and responsibilities of the MRA, review the current structure, and conduct a comprehensive internal and external mapping exercise of the institution. As was anticipated the senior management of the MRA emerged from the retreat with a consolidated and agreed understanding of the need for structural changes. The preliminary report was drafted and distributed among stakeholders for their review and feedback.

On July 9, 2010 CTC has presented the restructuring plan to the MRA leadership. The preliminary recommendations prepared by CTC were reviewed and discussed with the DRC and FORECAST consultants. CTC incorporate the received comments into the recommendation package. The final report was submitted to FORECAST on August 25, 2010.

*Intervention III (MRA Legal Department TA/Training) — Completed.*

Intervention commenced on June 28, 2010. The goal of the intervention was to strengthen the capacity of the MRA Legal Department in order to enable it to serve IDPs and the Ministry more effectively and efficiently. The Civil Society Institute Foundation (CSI) was selected as a service provider for this intervention to provide TA and training activities to the MRA Legal Department staff.

Within the scope of this intervention the team of the local consultants conducted the following activities:

- Review of the internal administrative procedures and practices of the MRA Legal Department;
- Provision of technical support to the MRA Legal Department to redevelop/redesign internal procedures and practices;
- Trainings on the following topics:
  - Legislation on IDPs;
  - Procedural laws and court proceeding;
  - Legal drafting and law making;
- Introduction of various legal and technical means to the MRA Legal Department staff.

As a result of this intervention, the capacity of the MRA Legal Department was improved in order to provide better quality legal assistance to its constituents. Namely, the knowledge, competence and technical skills of the participants was enhanced, enabling them to serve IDPs more efficiently and effectively through more timely and accurate expert legal advice, more efficient access to court proceedings, expediting the passing of relevant legislation into law, and normative acts. This, of course, included the improved understanding and interpretation of Georgian legislation.

The final report was submitted to FORECAST in August, 2010.

*Intervention IV (MRA Finance Department TA/Training) — Completed.*

This intervention consists of two components: *TA to the MRA Finance Department* and *the GIPA Training on Internal Audit for Public Servants*.

*Component I (TA to the MRA Finance Department) – Completed.*

The goal of these component was to strengthen the capacity of the Finance Department of the MRA through a) reviewing, streamlining and documenting the Ministry's finance and accounting

regulations and procedures; b) assisting the Finance Department in establishing an audit function; and c) providing the necessary TA and training aimed at building reporting and accounting systems in compliance with internationally accepted rules and donor requirements.

FORECAST contracted Policy and Management Consulting Group (PMCG) as the service provider for this component. The program commenced on June 1, 2010 and ended on July 30, 2010.

For the successful implementation of the program and achievement of its goals and objectives PMCG developed strategic approach consisting of four successive platforms:

**Platform One** – Assess and streamline the financial management and accounting system of the MRA;

**Platform Two** – Articulate and document controls and procedures to hold managers accountable and consolidating achievements under the Platform One;

**Platform Three** – Establish internal audit function to improve operational efficiency and mitigate risks that consolidated the achievements under the Platforms One and Two;

**Platform Four** - Integrate accountability and review processes for both financial and performance management domains. It consolidated achievements under the Platforms One, Two and Three.

The following documents have been delivered by the consultancy group as the result of the TA activities at the MRA Finance Department:

- Financial Management and Procurement Manual;
- Guide for Donor-financed Projects' Financial Reporting;
- Guide for Internal Audit Implementation;
- A Set of Recommendations;
- Performance Monitoring Plan;
- Training Needs Assessment.

In addition, the consultancy group provided several observations and the respective recommendations for the implementation of internal audit function within the Ministry and further strengthening the financial management arrangements, including budgeting, accounting, internal controls, and financial reporting.

*Component II* (GIPA Training on Internal Audit for Public Servants) – In progress.

FORECAST supports the participation of the key MRA finance staff and senior management in the training program proposed by the Georgian Institute of Public Affairs (GIPA): Internal Audit for Public Servants. The program is composed of three modules and aims to strengthen the financial management and reporting capabilities of the MRA to deliver high-quality financial services to its departments, and internal and external stakeholders.

The first module, *Public Law of Georgia and Managerial Accountability within the Framework of the Internal State Audit, and State Financial System of Georgia and Budgeting*, covered the period of April 17-June 25, 2010.

This module focused on the foundations and concepts of the internal state audit vis-à-vis domestic public law system and public sector management with comparative analysis of the UK, the Baltic States and the Netherlands, as well as the detailed overview of the Georgian model. The module incorporated legislative and procedural aspects that underlie the finance system and the budgeting

processes. The substantive part was structured around the discussions on active domestic and international legislation, focusing on corresponding laws, international treaties and covenants in the field, as well as the overall domestic system of finances, budgeting and appropriations, including the 2009 Internal Control and Audit Strategic Plan.

The participants got acquainted with the standards, methodologies and processes that are related to the state-of-the-art international and domestic audit and budgetary practices, including an overview of the key sectoral institutions operating in Georgia (National Internal Audit Center, Chamber of Control and audit service agencies), state finance system, budgeting levels and procedures, and the managerial accountability and reporting requirements.

The second module, *Accountancy and Financial Reporting for Budget Organizations and Internal Audit in the Public Sector*, commenced on June 28 and ended on August 6, 2010.

This module set forth the accounting and reporting methodologies for budgetary institutions, budget classifications pursuant to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) guidelines, compatibility with the guidelines, as well as inclusion of the treasury service principles into the accounting/reporting methodologies. The module focused on the detailed accounting procedures for the budgetary institutions, covering revenue and deposit recordings, classification and breakdown of expenses, assets and liabilities, owner's equity, corresponding transactions, depreciation, inventory.

Apart from that, the module covered the payment and funding practices that relate to the state treasury service organizations, and extended into the comprehensive review of the state budget appropriations, budget administration via cash accrual basis, accounting reporting forms, balance sheets, overall transaction effectiveness and efficiency, and streamlining audit activities with the state authority requirements.

The third and the last module, *Taxation and State Procurement*, commenced on September 20 and will end on November 15, 2010.

This module sets forth the Georgian tax system and tax authorities, tax reporting and control, liabilities, delinquent payment restructuring, tax categories (income, customs and property taxes, VAT), concept of state procurement and regulatory legislation, procurement planning and implementation, bidding, price quotations, negotiations, grievance handling procedures, procurement reporting, documentation and the overall procurement practices.

For more information on this program, please see *Success Stories* and *Challenges and Constraints* sections below.

### **STATE MINISTRY FOR REINTEGRATION (SMR)**

The goal of the program is to support the activities of the State Ministry for Reintegration (SMR) to develop the *State Strategy on Occupied Territories*, and *Action Plan for Engagement of Occupied Territories*.

The program consists of the following interventions:

*Intervention I* (Working Group meetings) – All five components completed.

The first component of the first intervention, *Meeting of Working Group I*, was held at Bazaleti on October 23-24, 2009. The initiative to assist the Ministry in the state strategy development process was strongly supported by the GoG partners and local experts. During the two-day session, the

working group members shared opinion on strategy development methods. The following topics were discussed:

- State strategy on occupied territories of Georgia;
- Economics and trade;
- Free relocation and the ways of information delivery;
- Health care and education;
- People to people contacts;
- Cultural heritage.

The second component, *Meeting of Working Group II*, was held at Georgian Foundation for Strategic and International Studies (GFSIS) on November 28, 2009. The meeting was attended by the representatives of UNHCR, USAID, NRC, the Institute for Conflict Analysis and Resolution, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation and other NGOs. The Vice-premier, State Minister for Reintegration Mr. Yakobashvili presented the vision of the GoG regarding the *State Strategy on the Occupied Territories*. Based on the feedback received from the international community, the SMR developed a draft Strategy which was published for further consultations.

Additionally, in December three similar meetings were held with the GoG partners, local experts and the ambassadors of those countries that actively participated in the strategy development process. On these meetings the Minister presented the revised draft strategy to the partners for review and discussion.

*Intervention II* (SMR Strategy Development) – In progress.

Mr. Kulick was selected as a service provider for the program in January, 2010. Since then he has been working in two main directions: developing the State Strategy towards the occupied territories and the Action Plan (AP), and the SMR capacity building.

As a result of intensive work and consultations with the SMR leadership and other stakeholders the consultant produced a draft Action Plan which was presented to the Europe-based analysts and officials, first, in Brussels and later, the second draft, in Paris. The recommendations received from the Europe-based analysts were incorporated into the final draft (for more information, please see interventions IV and V below). Both the Strategy and the Action Plan were approved by the Government of Georgia in July, 2010. This was followed by the work on the AP supporting regulations.

After the approval of the AP, SMR turned to its implementation that requires: (1) creation of new instruments, and (2) restructuring of SMR as a program-implementing agency. In these efforts, and in building the capacity to sustain them, SMR required additional technical assistance. USAID approved a six-month extension of Mr. Kulick's contract on September 9, 2010.

During the reporting period, the consultant has also worked closely with the SMR legal expert on the policy and legal implications of health, education, and travel reforms. In addition, Mr. Kulick conducted trainings to the SMR staff in order to improve their general analytical and presentation skills. The trainings were aimed to improve the work performance of the employees and enhance the effectiveness of their daily activities.

The consultant has been also working on the following issues:

- The Modalities document (regulation on the conduct of implementing organizations in the occupied territories);
- Georgia’s report for the UN’s Universal Periodic Review on human rights;
- Support to the SMR staff in preparing reporting on the US-Georgia Charter;
- Improvement of the information-flow management and reporting at the SMR.

*Intervention III* (SMR Strategy Development; Local Expert) – Completed.

In drafting the *Action Plan for Engagement for Occupied Territories*, the SMR has confronted a number of domestic legal issues which it lacked the resources to analyze. Consequently, the need of legal expertise arose in order to scrutinize thoroughly the impact of Georgian law on the activities outlined in the Action Plan. In response, in May 2010, under the FORECAST project, the SMR contracted a part-time local legal expert with comprehensive knowledge of Georgian Legislation in order to receive sound policy recommendations and fully ensure compliance of the Action Plan with Georgian Legislation.

The local legal expert, Ms. Ketevan Gabelaia, has been working on the following issues:

- Educational issues to be incorporated into the Action Plan;
- Accreditation of agriculture products in adjacent areas of occupied territories;
- Liberalization of taxation in socio-economic zones adjacent to occupied territories;
- Current legislation on entrepreneurial and non-entrepreneurial activities in Georgia;
- Issues related to commercial and non-commercial activities of people living on occupied territories and on the territories under the control of Georgia, as well as their employment;
- Current legislation on education and certification issues.

The program ended on June 30, 2010.

*Intervention IV* (Retreat in Brussels) – Completed.

On June 2-4, 2010 Mr. Kulick accompanied the SMR delegation, including the State Minister, Mr. Temur Yakobashvili, and the Deputy State Minister, Mr. David Rakviashvili, to Brussels to discuss the draft Action Plan with Europe-based analysts and officials, in order to produce a second draft. The retreat was organized by Antje Herrberg of the European Forum for International Mediation and Dialogue, who is contracted by the EU to advise the SMR on strategy development. The recommendations received were incorporated into the second draft presented in Paris.

*Intervention V* (Retreat in Paris) – Completed.

On June 25, 2010 Mr. Kulick attended the P4 +1 meeting (US, UK, FR, GR, + EU [EC-DG RELEX, EUSR]) in Paris, hosted by the French Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs. The meeting was moderated by the Veronique Bujon-Barré, the Deputy Director for the Political and Security Affairs, and attended by the Minister Bernard Kouchner. The Georgian delegation included the State Minister for Reintegration, Mr. Temur Yakobashvili, the Deputy Minister, Mr. David Rakviashvili, and the MIA Head of Analysis, the Deputy Secretary of the NSC, the MFA Head of International Organizations, as well as the Political Counselor of the Embassy.

The discussion focused on the engagement strategy generally, and the Action Plan more specifically. The Action Plan was well received; there were few critical comments or recommendations for changes, and many questions—seeking further detail, rather than expressing skepticism—about elements of the plan.

## **CAPACITY-BUILDING OF DGP AND IPPD CANDIDATE RECIPIENT ORGANIZATIONS**

The USAID *Development Grants Program* (DGP) was established by Section 674 of the US Congress Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2008 (H.R. 2764). The DGP is intended to expand development relationships between USAID and private voluntary organizations (PVOs) and indigenous non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that have had limited experience working directly with USAID.

Upon identification of potential recipients, USAID, Georgia carried out pre-award surveys to ascertain that the prospective awardees have adequate administrative and financial systems to protect and manage USG/USAID funds. The surveys revealed compliance gaps for each organization, and provided recommendations for improvement. Based on the findings, USAID imposed special award conditions to each of the recipient candidate NGOs, with timelines of 90 days for the candidates to take corrective actions.

To develop organizational capacities of the local organization to manage and account for the USG funds, FORECAST selected UNAG as a TA provider. During the course of the intervention (November 2009-January 2010) individual and group trainings as well as practical studies with each NGO were conducted to ensure proper application of new systems and procedures. With the assistance of the service provider, all of the DGP and IPPD candidates (GIPA, PSI, GWF, APDT and GCCW) have made the necessary changes and adjustments in their internal systems, procedures and policies in order to comply with the special conditions of their cooperative agreements. The effective and efficient design and implementation of the program ensured meeting of set deadlines by all five NGOs.

The follow up visit from the USAID Finance Office took place in early January. All of the organizations were evaluated against the special conditions set in their pre-award agreements; all organizations successfully passed the audits; and all of the special conditions were recognized to be fully met and in compliance with the terms of the pre-award agreement.

### **IDP SUMMER SCHOOL (SCHOLARSHIP AT THE AMERICAN ACADEMY II)**

The goal of the program is to support the Tserovani, Khurvaleti and Shavshvebi IDP schools to provide a quality education to students. The program consists of two components: *Summer School for IDP Students and Teachers* and *Teachers' In-service Training*.

*Component I* (Summer School for IDP Students and Teachers) – Completed.

The Guivy Zaldastanishvili American Academy in Tbilisi (GZAAT) deemed the last year's involvement of the IDP students in the summer program (also supported by FORECAST) as extremely successful, and also to make the results of that involvement more sustainable, made a recommendation to FORECAST to re-engage with some of the previous year's students from Tserovani. Thus, 10 out of 35 IDP students selected by the GZAAT in Tserovani village were the participants of the previous year program. The remaining 25 were selected in the villages of Khurvaleti and Shavshvebi. In addition, 10 school teachers were identified from the same villages.

The first component commenced on July 5, 2010 and ended on July 30, 2010. It provided the participants with the following:

- 1) Additional support for IDP teachers and children to overcome the post conflict trauma;
- 2) Created opportunities for greater educational progress and social integration;

- 3) Enhanced capacities among teachers to implement modern teaching methodology;
- 4) Increased proficiency in the instruction of English and Mat;
- 5) Increased knowledge of the core disciplines needed to pass the secondary and university entrance exams;
- 6) Improved instruction skills among IDP teachers;
- 7) Increased motivation to attend school and greater social integration of IDP children.

The program also increased competence of the participant IDP students for passing the GZAAT (and other) entrance examinations and thus enabled them to take advantage of the superior education that the Academy provides, and/or have a better chance at attending the University of their choice.

The component also included mentoring/training of Georgian English and Math teachers. In particular, the program provided new and less experienced Math and English teachers from underdeveloped regions of Georgia with an opportunity to participate in the development and implementation of lesson plans featuring communicative based language instruction, interactive classroom activities for learning mathematics, and an introduction to project-based lesson planning and learning. The program aimed to give visiting 10 teachers exposure to more contemporary and/or progressive teaching methodologies.

*Component II (Teachers' In-service Training) – Will commence in the middle of October.*

#### **MID-LEVEL HICD PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT TRAINING FOR CATEGORY I LOCAL PARTNERS**

In March and April of 2008, as a result of a competitive selection procedure FORECAST selected and signed IQCs for Category I local partners with the Center for Training and Consultancy (CTC) and a consortium consisting of Partners Georgia, the United Nations Association of Georgia (UNAG) and Applied Research Company (ARC). These selected organizations are participating in HICD assessment and programming activities as contracted providers of the FORECAST program for the duration of the FORECAST contract, or through May of 2011. During this time, the selected/contracted organization will assume a gradually increased burden of responsibilities for HICD activities called for under FORECAST, with a view to being able to conduct HICD activities for the final year of the program without the assistance of external HICD experts.

In July of 2008, prior to the commencement of HICD activities, FORECAST organized a two-day training conducted by Performance Design International (PDI) trainers/consultants, Klaus Wittkuhn and Monique Muller, in order to build/increase capacity and knowledge of the IQC Category I local partners on the basics of institutional performance assessment and the HICD methodology. By attending this training the participants acquired basic performance consulting skills and tools to analyze real performance situations, present possible solutions, and to evaluate the results.

During the first two years of the FORECAST project, all HICD performance assessment programs were conducted with international assistance provided by institutional performance improvement experts; FORECAST IQC Category I local partners had a secondary role in providing support functions to the internationals, while learning the HICD methodology through coaching and mentoring that was provided on-site. As is reflected in the task order, FORECAST expects local partners to gradually take the leading role and be increasingly capable of implementing the HICD programs independently (without international assistance) at the final year of the FORECAST project.

Thus, as the IQC Category I local partners have already gained a mid-level capacity and relatively higher level of understanding of HICD methodology and programming, conducting an advanced HICD training/workshop in the run up to the final year of the FORECAST project was of great importance in taking local partners to the next level regarding their capacity to conduct HICD performance improvement activities, filling existing gaps in knowledge, skills and abilities (KSA), and providing answers to a plethora of theoretical and practical questions that have come about as a result of the programs they have conducted in previous years.

Accordingly, on March 9-10, 2010 a two-day training was conducted by PDI leading consultant, Klaus Wittkuhn. As was noted above, Mr. Wittkuhn conducted the first training on HICD methodologies in July of 2008. He also carried out the performance assessment of a number of Georgian institutions in cooperation with Category I partners. Thus, having seen the local partners in action, Mr. Wittkuhn was well aware of their weaknesses and strengths and the training conducted by him added great value to their capacities.

As a result of this training the participants advanced their knowledge and experience on the application of methods and best practices to be used in the performance assessment activities; were introduced to more sophisticated techniques of data analyses, diagnosis and formulation/identification of performance solutions; and learnt how to translate performance assessment results into performance indicators (PIs) as well as how to analyze map processes and management systems that impact PIs.

#### **GEORGIA RED CROSS SOCIETY (GRCS), DISASTER RISK REDUCTION, RESPONSE AND MANAGEMENT**

Due to its experience and active involvement in emergency response activities the Georgia Red Cross Society (GRCS) has been assigned specific tasks in the State Emergency Response Plan. In accordance with the Presidential Decree #415 adopted on August 26, 2008 the GRCS is charged to provide its support to the respective State Institutions in performing rescue services, first aid activities and provision of food and water to affected, thus obtaining in reality its auxiliary role to the state authorities.

However, currently, the GRCS suffers from a lack of capacity in a number of critical areas. These capacity gaps impede the GRCS's effectiveness in meeting its core responsibilities and its ability to respond timely, quickly and effectively to the natural hazards and man-made disasters. To fill the gaps and to strengthening the capacity of the GRCS FORECAST supports it in a number of areas:

*Intervention I* – Coordination Meetings;

*Intervention II* – Support to the International Expert/Logistics Delegate; Seminar in Logistics;

*Intervention III* – Purchasing Finance Software and Equipment; Training for the GRCS Finance Staff;

*Intervention IV* – Strengthening the Capacity of the Finance Department of the GRCS.

*Intervention I* (Coordination Meetings) – The tasks assigned to the GRCS in the State Emergency Response Plan include the NGO/stakeholder coordination function. To fulfill its mandate and responsibilities the GRCS holds coordination meetings with the key stakeholders involved in disaster management bi-monthly, on a regular basis. These meetings serve as a co-ordination mechanism to enhance collaboration among stakeholders and to promote sustainable disaster risk reduction activities. During the coordination meetings the information is shared with all key actors to ensure that humanitarian gaps and duplication of efforts are identified in advance and reiteration of activities avoided/prevented.

The first coordination meeting took place on August 5, 2010. The meeting was attended by the representatives of all key actors involved in disaster management. During the meeting the OASIS software was presented and the benefits that will be brought by the use of this software explained to the attendees. Discussion was held regarding the need of coordination of all activities and the decision was made that the GRCS will sign memorandums with all the stakeholders responsible for the disaster risk reduction and the first line response during the emergencies.

The second coordination meeting is scheduled for October 12, 2010.

*Intervention III* (Purchasing Finance Software and Equipment; Training for the GRCS Finance Staff) – The Finance Department of the GRCS has its internal procedures for accounting, but when it comes to data entry and computerization the finance staff operates in excel sheets. This process is not reliable and is quite slow. Besides, it is hindered by the danger of losing data. In addition, the non-existence of the common finance software deprives the process of communication, cooperation and transparency between the HQ in Tbilisi and its branches in the regions. At present the Finance Department operates in a kind of isolation from its branches which prepare reports in hard copies and deliver them to the HQ. This is not efficient in terms of time and effectiveness.

Also, the overall picture is grimed by the fact that the hardware at the GRCS can not support advanced accounting systems and programs, thus, needs to be upgraded.

To improve the operation of the Finance Department of the GRCS and to prepare the ground for the fourth component of the program, FORECAST released two RFBs for hardware and software purchase on July 30 and August 3, 2010. As a result, **Orient Logic** has been selected through a competitive bidding process as a vendor for the procurement of hardware, while **Georgian Software Systems (GSS)** has been selected as a vendor for the procurement of finance software. The hardware will be delivered to the GRCS at the mid of October. Immediately after that the GSS will start installing financial software. Following this, the training will be held for the GRCS Finance Staff.

#### **HIGHER-LEVEL HICD AND M&E CAPACITY BUILDING COACHING & TRAINING FOR FORECAST CATEGORY I LOCAL PARTNERS**

FORECAST program is mandated by the Task Order to build capacities of selected Georgian organizations to provide Human and Institutional Capacity Development (HICD) services independently. In specific: the task calls to equip Category I Local Partners with appropriate methodological tools and knowledge to enable them to conduct complex organizational development programming, that involves planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluations of HICD interventions undertaken within FORECAST.

To this effect, in August 2011 FORECAST launched II component program – HICD and M&E Capacity Building for Category I Local Providers. The goals of the program are the following:

- At the end of their HICD apprenticeship, Category I Local Partners are able to undertake HICD projects on behalf of FORECAST independently and without support of foreign experts/providers. As such, they constitute a readily usable resource for future USAID Georgia project with an HICD component in it. This ensures Mission legacy in the field of HICD in Georgia;
- At the end of their M&E apprenticeship, Category I Local Partners are able to design and administer an M&E system on behalf of FORECAST, and under other conditions, be it for FORECAST II or any other client opting to outsource their M&E function. This will also equip those providers with an additional service within their portfolio, one of high value to potential clients.

HICD and M&E components are run in parallel, although for different lengths of time, under the coaching of different foreign experts, and along different components. For the HICD component FORECAST contracted Performance Design International (PDI) and its leading consultant, Klaus Wittkuhn, while for the M&E component of the program, FORECAST employed Ms. Ann Braun, Independent Consultant for Development Evaluation/M&E Support.

- HICD component includes the following activities:
  - HICD foreign expert assigns readings and administers exam;
  - Local providers work on two case studies based on real/past HICD projects conducted by foreign expert in a transitional economy/society;
  - Local providers lead two real projects under the FORECAST 2010/2011 activity plan;
  - HICD foreign expert gives in-country and distance coaching to local providers while they work on real case studies and real projects under the FORECAST 2010/2011 activity plan;
  - Foreign expert organizes in clinic clinics and distance webinars related to cases studies and real projects and led by foreign expert;
  - Foreign expert prepares local providers for their ISPI Certified Performance Technologist (CPT) application/documentation based on the real project they have been working on. Eventually, to be CPTs, they will have to fill out same documentation for two other projects, for a total of three.
  
- M&E component includes the following activities:
  - Foreign expert assigns readings and administers exam;
  - Local providers design an M&E System based on FORECAST Georgia under the coaching of foreign expert;
  - Local providers learn how to administer the FORECAST M&E System they designed (eventually, they are hired as such);
  - Local providers do a pilot run of the M&E system by entering a sample of FORECAST projects into it, to assess relevancy/validity of measurements as well as system admin management.

As to date the following activities have been implemented within the program:

*Intervention I (HICD Foreign Expert) – In progress.*

HICD expert, Mr. Klaus Wittkuhn undertook the following activities:

- Agreed with local performance assessment team (PA) on roles & responsibilities, escalation rules, quality standards, communication channels, and forms of intermediary results that are needed for coaching;
- Defined purpose and value of developing and establishing a unified/harmonized M&E framework and system for HICD work;
- Developed and posted test # 1 on *Survey Monkey*, an on-line survey tool, to assess the reading comprehension of the local HICD team;
- Provided coaching to the Service Agency HICD team:
  - Checked intermediary results of external assessment;
  - Set-up plan for internal assessment;
- Provided coaching to the Georgian Hospital Association (GHA):
  - Checked intermediary results of external assessment;
  - Set-up plan for internal assessment coordination with M&E team.

*Intervention II* (M&E Foreign Expert) – In progress.

M&E expert, Ms. Ann Braun undertook the following activities:

- Refined the M&E Needs Assessment. In this context she has:
  - o Modified the FORECAST program logic;
  - o Refined the key questions for monitoring needs;
  - o Refined the M&E framework;
  - o Developed basic guidance for the development of partner organization performance management framework by HICD consults;
  - o Developed basic guidance for the development of progress markers to be developed by intervention service providers to assess progress towards embedding interventions in a partner organization;
- The M&E expert, in cooperation with WL Chief of Party, and incorporating feedback from WL COTR Mr. David Dzebisashvili, has finalized the document - FORECAST Monitoring and Evaluation System Development and Guidelines, including edition of Continuum of Actions;
- Determined linkages between the two HICD performance assessments on the Service Agency plus GHA and the M&E system development process;
- Prepared a presentation on the rationale for and integration of M&E into the FORECAST HICD approach for the HICD consultants and for USAID;
- Refined and presented a series of tools on Developing a Performance Monitoring Framework (PMF) and Developing Progress Markers to help them carry out their role in the M&E integration;
- Prepared and submitted a recommendation for the use of an off-the-shelf solution for developing the FORECAST M&E online database;
- Assessed on-line IT products for developing FORECAST M&E database and delivered recommendations to COP.

Finally, M&E expert provides ARC coaching. She carried out an assessment of M&E skills, knowledge and experience of the ARC team, validated this with them and based on this developed an M&E study curriculum. The curriculum and readings are being delivered on-line via a WIKI, which will serve as a resource centre. Provision for interaction around questions arising from M&E study has been made by establishment of an on-line workspace to complement face-to-face meetings.

### ***Workplan Development***

As with the previous year, the FY 2010 FORECAST/Georgia workplan was divided into the following categories:

1. *Category I* target institutions and programs that are recommended for approval for implementation in FY 2009:
  - a. *HICD programs* - institutional assessments and performance improvement interventions;
  - b. *Partial HICD programs* - performance improvement interventions;
  - c. *Exceptional requests* – programs already approved by the mission on an exceptional basis – largely one-off training or non-HICD programming;
2. *Category II* target institutions and programs that may be recommended for implementation later in FY 09, but further information is needed for program development and/or final status determination.

FORECAST and the FORECAST COTR held consultations with the mission leadership technical offices, and as a result the FY 2010 workplan was drafted and submitted for consideration by the mission in November, 2009. The workplan was approved on December, 2009.

The status of all programs may be reviewed at **Attachment I**.

### **III. INSTITUTION-LEVEL AND FORECAST ACTIVITY PMPs**

#### *Institution-level PMPs*

Though not called for by the FORECAST Task Order, where practical and appropriate, FORECAST utilizes institution-level Performance Monitoring Plans for *partial* HICD programs. This is in addition to HICD program PMPs that are required by the HICD monitoring and evaluation process and the FORECAST task order. The following is a listing of those programs that have PMPs already formulated and drafted.

- ISET, Component I (partial HICD) – **Attachment II (A)**;
- ISET, Component II (partial HICD) – **Attachment II (B)**;
- MSPA – **Attachment II (C)**;
- MFOA - **Attachment II (D)**;
- TA at MRA – **Attachment II (E)**;
- Communications Strategy (MRA); AP developed – **Attachment II (F)**;
- Database Design (MRA) – **Attachment II (G)**;
- HR Management (MRA) – **Attachment II (H)**;
- MRA Legal Department TA/Training – **Attachment II (I)**;
- MRA Finance Department TA – **Attachment II (J)**;
- TSU (HICD) – **Attachment II (K)**.

#### *Activity-level PMP*

Please see **Attachment III** for the FORECAST/Caucasus activity-level performance monitoring plan report.

### **IV. LOCAL PARTNERSHIPS**

#### *Georgia*

Activities undertaken by CTC at MEPNR during the reporting period include:

- Participation in program strategy meetings with the Minister;
- Participation in fact-finding meetings with other key staff of the ministry (Head of Policy Department, Advisor of the Minister, heads of departments at the National Environmental Agency);
- Conducting interviews with the ministry staff: Head of HR division, Head of Chancellery, Chief Specialist of Chancellery, Head of Permits Department, Head of Administration of the National Environmental Agency;
- Analyzing documentation (legislation, ministry charter, draft environmental code);
- Internet search and analyses of the models of structures and mission/strategy directions in other countries, like: Israel, Germany, Bulgaria;
- Analyzing data collected at team meetings;

- Conducting meeting (together with the independent environmental expert invited by CTC) with a head and experts of policy division for identification of difficulties in the report procedures for defining the environmental targets;
- Collecting the data of the initial documents needed for defining the environmental targets;
- Drafting process maps (processing of documentation, license and permits );
- Reconfirming the process maps with relevant staff at the ministry;
- Contributing to the formulation of interim findings and recommendations.

The activities undertaken during the reporting period by the local assessors of NCDC, a consortium of three organizations (Partners Georgia, UNAG and ARC), include:

- Interviews with the heads of NCDC departments as well as with NCDC regional staff members conducted;
- Survey carried out among 118 institution respondents;
- Data, collected through interviews and survey, analyzed;
- Focus group sessions held;
- Internal regulations of NCDC reviewed (its structure, and the existing job descriptions as well as the analysis of the legal documentation related to the NCDC's work);
- Online consultations (conference call) with international consultants held;
- Reports submitted.

## V. SUCCESS STORIES

### *Georgia*

#### **Ministry of Refugees and Accommodation (MRA) Project Phases out and Hands over to the European Union**

The program to provide TA to the MRA finished at the end of July 2010 and was marked by a successful project close out event attended by Ministries, Government officials, international organizations, IDPs and other stakeholders. The event was attended by press in large numbers demonstrating the interest in the program which transformed the Ministry and the delivery of services to Georgia's IDP population.

Minister Koba Subeliani in a speech thanked USAID for its invaluable assistance and looked forward to working with the EU to continue to develop and implement the recommendations and strategies put in place by the TA. The USAID Mission Director, Jock Conly, thanked the Minister and spoke about the close partnership between the MRA, the EU, their implementing partner, the Danish Refugee Council (DRC), USAID and FORECAST.

This close partnership between the two donors and implementers saw the alignment of powerful donor country strategies towards the issue of IDP re-settlement/return and close cooperation in the provision of TA to the Ministry. Recognizing the need for the MRA to have longer term support the FORECAST program coordinated with the EU and the DRC to the extent that the EU funded DRC for two years to continue the work of and implement the recommendations made under the USAID funded FORECAST program. This coordination and cooperation has resulted in the USAID funding having an impact well beyond the life of the program while providing the opportunity for USAID to remain engaged in the process of MRA development.

During the reporting period the program saw the Ministry acknowledge the need to restructure comprehensively in order to meet current and future challenges. However, the period prior to the

local elections in May 2010 saw the MRA unwilling to make any controversial decisions which could damage the chances of the ruling party winning.

Following the elections the FORECAST partner CTC undertook a performance assessment of the Ministry as the start of the restructuring planning process. Two retreats were held with senior staff to discuss the restructuring with the final one being held only with the MRA senior management team which included the Minister who approved the restructuring plan. Following the end of the FORECAST program in July 2010 the DRC continued working with the MRA to implement and institutionalize the plan in partnership with the MRA and the EU.

In order to meet immediate TA needs and as part of the preparation for restructuring strategic departments were targeted for assistance. The Legal, Finance and HR departments received TA, professional training and performance enhancements aimed at improving efficiencies and delivery of services.

The reporting period also saw the MRA and its partners develop some of the tools put in place under the FORECAST program. For example, the Steering Committee and TEG system was evaluated by their key members and the ToRs altered slightly to increase efficiencies and the decision making processes. This was undertaken without FORECAST involvement which demonstrated the extent to which the tools have become institutionalized.

Another example would be the rehabilitation and re/construction standards designed, articulated and developed by FORECAST and approved by the TEG, Steering Committee and the Government. These standards have now become *the* standard by which IDP re-integration projects are evaluated and are quoted by donors and Government alike. A recent statement by the Georgian Ombudsman quoted the standards. This indicates that the standards, in addition to being a requirement for building contractors and the MDF, have become a rights compliance tool enabling IDPs and others to advocate for their entitlement to decent living conditions.

Other FORECAST initiatives such as the IDP reception centre conceptualized and articulated by FORECAST, built by DRC, supported by UNHCR and staffed by the MRA have improved services to IDPs with waiting time for inquiries to be answered shortened from days to minutes. By the end of the reporting period over 10,000 IDPs had used the reception center showing that USAID/FORECAST initiatives, developed and implemented with their partners continue to grow and serve the IDP population and increase the efficiency of the Ministry.

### **Short Term Survival: Immediate Revenue Development; Membership Building (MSPA)**

On December 15, 2009 an MSPA board meeting was held, where:

- The Board discussed the Rural Water Sanitation proposal, and voted to establish a Task Force on Rural Sanitation;
- The Board agreed to establish the concept of member/non-member fees for attending MSPA Conferences and Seminars;
- The Board agreed on the importance and value of bringing corporate involvement in to MSPA.

The meeting was attended by Ron Bergman, Resident Budget Advisor of the US Treasury, and ex-chairman of the International Committee of the International City Managers Association (ICMA). He invited MSPA to affiliate with ICMA and outlined various benefits of the affiliation. The

MSPA Board voted to sign the affiliation agreement and subsequently developed the work plan that was submitted to ICMA. MSPA has received the verbal agreement from the Association.

Additionally to the board meeting, the MSPA conducted a meeting with the representatives of 15 private companies involved in municipal service provision in the city of Tbilisi to present sponsorship opportunities and benefits to join the association. As a result, three companies, Dutch Design Garden, Europlant Georgia, and Eris Imedi, immediately agreed to join MSPA as “platinum” members and paid 5,000 GEL as annual membership fees. Special offers/proposals were developed for these companies with the assistance of Ms. Myers, FORECAST contracted consultant.

The following is an abstract from the progress report submitted by Ketevan Jakeli at the end of March, the MSPA Executive Director:

*In January – February MSPA has conducted series of regional meetings within the membership growth campaign. Those meeting were held at the Governors’ Offices with participation of Chief Executives of municipalities and Governors. The purpose of those meetings was to increase MSPA membership and inform municipalities and the regional government on implemented activities in FY2009 as well as the plans for the FY2010. As the result of those meetings 9 new member municipalities signed the membership agreement. Totally MSPA currently has the 45 municipalities. 11 municipalities and 3 associated members already paid the membership fee that made possible MSPA operation till today.*

*During this period MSPA has issued 2 monthly newsletters, organized two consultations with the Chief Executives (Gamagebelis) of member municipalities on social infrastructure issues, created the Task Force on Municipal procurement issues and designed three training programs for the local government officials.*

During FY2010 MSPA has assisted its first platinum member, Dutch Design Garden (Dutch company), to get contacts through the presentation on their business in two MSPA member municipalities: city of Rustavi, conducted in January, 2010 and city of Batumi, the meeting is scheduled for late October, 2010. Organization of this type of meetings was the part of the membership agreement between MSPA and Dutch Design Garden.

In addition, in July-September, 2010 MSPA conducted two studies under FORECAST FoF: (1) training need assessment of municipal officials and (2) accessibility to municipal services in MSPA member 15 municipalities. Based on the results of the training need assessment, MSPA is currently working on the training program for FY2011. The other activity that is currently in progress is development of the LG Toolkit - the activity is implemented under the FORECAST assistance program. In September, 2010 the first meeting of the group of consultants was conducted to review the model of HR software that will be designed for the municipal administrations and will be advertised as one of the products that MSPA will offer to its members in January, 2011.

### **The Executive Director of the Municipal Service Providers Association serves as a consultant for the Georgian Rural Development Program**

The Georgian Institute of Public Affairs (GIPA) has contracted Ketevan Jakeli, Executive Director of the MSPA, to serve as a consultant for their Georgian Rural Development Program (GRDP). Ms. Jakeli commenced activities at the beginning of April using the HICD methodology which she became acquainted with during the PA of the MSPA (conducted by FORECAST contracted consultant Ms. Elisa Myers). By the end of May – beginning of June, Ms. Jakeli developed an assessment report and recommendations as well as individual Action Plans (APs) for the period of July 2010 – December, 2011 for three regional vet associations, i.e. Kakheti, Samtskhe-Javakheti,

and Samegrelo. The strategy has also been drafted and submitted to the GRDP for the further discussion. The three regional vet associations will form the National Vet Association (NVA) for which Ms. Jakeli will also develop recommendations.

### **International School of Economics (ISET) follows recommendations developed within the FORECAST project**

ISET dynamically acts on the recommendations developed by the Component II providers. In particular:

- It was recommended to create a Financial Reporting Package and design Quickbook financial statements that would ensure appropriate management oversight of ongoing financial activities and support making informed fundraising decisions. Implementation of this recommendation is in progress. Some of the Financial Reporting Package forms have been used but PEER still needs to develop the QuickBook form for combined PEER-ISET reporting.
- The service providers recommended developing an Informed and Timely Donor Reporting system. However, due to the fact that each donor sets forth its own reporting requirement ISET draws up and submits the financial reports in compliance with the donors' instructions.
- Following the recommendation on ensuring the compliance with the financial policies and procedures, ISET prepares quarterly Financial Reports in order to provide comprehensive description of all expenditures;
- To pursue the recommendations provided by the FORECAST consultants on designing the Grant Management Manual to properly segregate activities managed by PEER from activities managed by TSU, ISET developed a Payment Request Form and Monthly TSU-ISET Financial Report. The forms have been approved by PEER president. Grant transfers by PEER to ISET/TSU are conducted in accordance to these forms;
- In order to ensure a proper management of grants, it was recommended to conduct a relevant training for the Director, Admin Officer and Finance Manager of ISET. ISET has delivered the recommended training for the staff involved in grants management;
- The PEER senior staff has accepted the audit strategy proposed by FORECAST. Audit for FY2008/2009 was conducted according to the proposed audit strategy plan. As for FY2009/2010, ToR was sent to different audit companies in the US and Georgia (according to the consultants recommendations) as a result of which an audit company has been selected and approved by donors and Audit Committee Members of PEER. Currently, the PEER audit is in process. ISET has followed all the recommendations provided by the consultants regarding the audit selecting process;
- Following the recommendation on hiring a contractor/employee independent of TSU to act as a Grant Manager, ISET submitted a relevant request to the Governing Board. The latter has approved the ISET initiative. Currently ISET is in the process of selecting the appropriate candidate (part-time job); ISET is still working on the issue to determine responsibilities of a Grant Manager and identify right candidate.
- In order to ensure that the staff has comprehensive understanding of amendments made to the policies, it was recommended to conduct five day training on new policies and procedures. To pursue recommendation, the relevant consultants have trained ISET Financial and Administrative staff comprised of two employees.

### **Georgian Accreditation Center (GAC) Elaborates Workplan and Signs Contract with the European Co-operation for Accreditation (EA)**

During the technical assistance at GAC program, the GAC management, with the assistance of the FORECAST international experts, elaborated a *Work Plan for the Georgian Accreditation Center*. This work plan focuses on those issues (seventeen in total) that GAC needs to perform in order to meet international requirements in the field of accreditation. According to the GAC General Director:

- *The new policy of GAC on traceability of measurements is under development;*
- *GAC revised management system documentation and presented it to the director for the approval. However, the approval is pending due to the required changes in Georgian legislation. Changes in legislation will take place in the nearest future and the full set of management system documentation will be approved;*
- *Implementation of new requirements of management systems: new forms and templates for assessment and expert evaluations have been introduced and put in process;*
- *Training of GAC technical staff completed. Trainings on accreditation and assessment technique were carried out according to the international standards ISO/IEC 19011 and ISO/IEC 17025 “General Requirements for the Competence of Testing and Calibration Laboratories”. GAC plans to conduct some more trainings for its staff by the end of the year;*
- *Laboratory and product certification committees have been formed. In addition, three sub-committees were created under the laboratory committee: physical-chemical, pharmaceutical-clinical and metrology sub-committees. Establishment of more committees in progress;*
- *Georgian and English versions of the GAC website are already functioning;*
- *Four ILC/PT programs are implemented and appropriate certificates are issued by the PT providers.*

Additionally, on November 25, 2009 a Cooperation Agreement was signed between EA and GAC at the EA General Assembly. The cooperation of GAC with EA began yet in 2008. However, at that time GAC was not ready for EA membership. FORECAST therefore assisted GAC to undertake the necessary institutional performance improvements. As a result of the TA activity (implemented within the scope of FORECAST project April-May, 2009) and based on the recommendations received, GAC revised its Quality Management documentation in accordance with the EA requirements, adopted international standards for process and facility assessments, accredited a pharmaceutical company in lab standards (ISO 17025) and the like. This was followed by the submission of the application for EA membership. The GAC procedures and activities were positively evaluated by the EA Committee and the Cooperation Agreement was subsequently signed between the parties in November, 2010. This will greatly assist Georgia to enter negotiations with the EU on signing a Free Trade Agreement.

In the framework of the Cooperation Agreement signed between EA and GAC, and with the support of TACIS project, the GAC representatives participated in the following events organized by EA:

- Certification Committee meeting, Istanbul, Turkey. Dates: February 22-26, 2010;
- Laboratory Committee management group meeting, Amsterdam, Netherlands. Dates: March 8-12, 2010;
- EA General Assembly held in Zurich, Switzerland on May 18-22, 2010;
- Laboratory Committee management group meeting, Sofia, Bulgaria. Dates: September 14-16, 2010;
- Certification and Inspection Committee working group meeting, Copenhagen, Denmark. Dates: September 29- October 1, 2010;
- EA Multilateral Agreement Council meeting, Ljubljana, Slovenia. Dates: October 6-7, 2010.

One of the main issues discussed at the Certification Committee meeting was using product certification schemas by certification bodies. It should be mentioned that Georgian accredited certification bodies are using product certification schemas which are not fully in compliance with international ones. The information and knowledge received at the meeting will be discussed at appropriate Certification Committee meeting by GAC.

## **The National Education Accreditation Center (NEAC)**

On June 2, 2010 the National Education Accreditation Center (NEAC) conducted the regional summit on “Capacity Enhancement for Implementation the Bologna Action Lines in Georgia” at the University of Georgia. The summit was attended by the representatives of the local and regional universities and the representatives of the Ministry of Education and Science. One of the main issues discussed at the summit was the NEAC database development project implemented under FORECAST. The UGT service provider conducted an informative and well-structured presentation as well as introduced the redesigned functions and improved mechanisms of the information management and administration to the audience.

## **VI. CHALLENGES AND CONSTRAINTS**

### *Georgia*

During the reporting period FORECAST Georgia faced the following challenges:

1. In March 2010 TSU announced a vacancy of a Chief Alumni Officer as an initial step towards the establishment of the Alumni Office. However, the university turned unable to offer a competitive salary to the final candidate as a result of which the position of the Chief Alumni Officer was re-opened. Due to this challenge, the starting date for implementing the third intervention was moved to May;  
The intervention was conducted and completed successfully in summer, 2010. Yet, the change of TSU leadership three times during the month of September impeded the further development of the alumni relations as well as postponed the launch of the reception that the TSU Alumni Office planned to hold in October. In addition, the highest priority continues to be the compilation of a database for TSU. This process continues at a somewhat slow pace because of the absence of adequate records throughout the university;
2. The management of NEAC applied to FORECAST with a request to redesign the scope of the last intervention and to undertake TA on Database Development instead of the originally-proposed IT Solution Activity for Work Processes and Data Management in order that the institution may better track student registration, enrollment/migration, and faculty activity, deemed a priority by the NEAC following their recent change in leadership;
3. The director of NAEC, Maya Miminoshvili submitted an official letter to FORECAST where she stated that due to the business of the center NAEC was not able to implement a number of the recommended interventions. She also stressed that due to the same reason they can not commit to the establishment of the HR unit which was one of the main requirements for the implantation of this intervention. Therefore, she requested to cancel the program. Her request has been discussed with USAID and approved;
4. Although initially it was assumed that the Constitutional Commission program would end by the end of December, 2009, the Commission requested to move the remaining components to July, 2010 when the working process on the amendment package was completed. The US study tour has also been cancelled due to the weak justification provided by the Commission as well as the late timing for it;
5. Due to insufficient intake of students/participants for the course, the beginning of GIPA Training on Internal Audit for Public Servants (MRA Finance Department TA/Training,

Component I: Training for MRA Finance Staff and Senior Managers) was postponed to April 19, 2010. Also, due to unavailability and frequent business trips of the GIPA trainer the end of the first component was postponed till the end of June. This was discussed with GIPA management and the promise was received that such problem will not arise again.

6. The reorganization process at the MEPNR, that included changes in the leadership, and the 20% cut-off of funding from the state budget, has been taking place since December 2009. These changes impeded identification and formulation of the final solutions/interventions necessary to address the recognized performance shortfalls. Yet, after months of negotiations with the Ministry, the interventions were identified and approved. However, the start of the implementation process was slowed down due to the rumors regarding the possible change of the leadership at the Ministry as well as its probable merge with the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development.

7. In early 2009, at the behest of USAID, FORECAST explored the available options in assisting the Government of Georgia to develop a national strategy on physical fitness in schools. At that time, FORECAST made it clear that it intended to support this initiative by bringing international experts to Georgia to work with stakeholders on the development of both technical and policy issues related to a new strategy on promoting physical fitness and healthy lifestyles in schools. However, FORECAST felt strongly that the involvement of the international experts would not be sufficient without the active involvement of a governmental (inter-ministerial) working group, which should have been created from the representatives of the Ministry of Education and Science, the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, the Ministry of Culture and Sport, and others stakeholders not directly associated with the government. Unfortunately, no effort was made to create such a working group. This caused the program delay for almost a year.

However, in April 2010 FORECAST was informed that the Ministry of Education and Science through its National Curriculum and Association Center would lead the process of the National Physical Education Strategy development. A group of local experts (e.g.: in education, health, sports), sponsored by UNICEF/Georgia, were assigned to work in collaboration with the line ministries and the Parliament of Georgia. In line with the originally-approved IRF for the program, FORECAST decided to support this process by contracting international experts in order to assist the local group in introducing western-style models of physical education in schools, developing a draft national strategy on physical fitness, and developing an action plan and set of recommendations for future interventions to support the activities of the GoG in this field.

8. Pursuant to the governmental Order, HIMS was transformed into a Legal Entity of Public Law under the Ministry of Health. HIMS is now independent from the Georgian Insurance Association, and its functions have expanded to accommodate handling of disputes between the medical clinics and the insurance companies in addition to its traditional dispute handling functions between the insurance holders and the insurance companies. According to the new law, HIMS will only serve the state insurance holders, and will not settle disputes of other holders. Because these changes directly affect the Partners-Georgia's work with HIMS, the intervention completion dates were extended beyond July to flexibly accommodate all ongoing changes into the final deliverable.

### **III. UPDATE ON FOLLOW-ON FUNDING ACTIVITIES**

Follow-on Funding (FoF) activities (small grants and sub-programs directly funded by FORECAST) of up to \$10,000 are awarded under the FORECAST program to facilitate post-intervention grantee initiatives. FoF is a flexible intervention that may be awarded as a strategically planned component of USAID assistance to address performance gaps. FoFs may be used to complement the work of a technical assistance provider, or to help facilitate the execution of participants' action plans.

[www.mediaeducation.ge](http://www.mediaeducation.ge), *News, Information and Educational Resource Website on Media for Students, Teachers and Professionals*

In December 2008, representatives of the Georgian Institute of Public Affairs (GIPA) and the Caucasus School of Business (CSB) submitted a request for FoF to FORECAST. The application was subsequently approved by the Mission in February 2009. The goal of the project was to establish mediaeducation.ge, news, information, advisory and training forum for journalism and media students, teachers and professionals in Tbilisi, Georgia. mediaeducation.ge had to carry information about: academic and training programs in the field of journalism, media management, public relations and communication, as well as creative media programs announced by Georgian universities and training organizations; international media education opportunities abroad; loans and fellowships, internships and jobs; competitions available to the citizens of Georgia.

To facilitate this project, the applicants hired as a project director Ana Keshelashvili. Ms. Keshelashvili wrote a Request for Tenders to design a website, contacted potential bidders and provided them with the necessary information and consultations. The project collected three bids by June 10, 2010 from Omedia Studio, LLC Pixel and Neuron Studio ltd.. Based on the proposed timeline and budget, the Neuron Studio was selected as the best bidder. This company created the website engine and interface.

On September 2, 2009 the applicants submitted the final version of the website to USAID. The mission PR department made some suggestions regarding the website design and structure, and based on that guidance the website's content was updated.

On November 25 the final version of the website was presented to Universities, government officials, NGOs, international donors, and the Georgian public. The final report was submitted to FORECAST on December 10, 2009.

*Introduction of International Standards and Appropriate Guidelines of Quality Infrastructure of Georgia (FoF Project)*

In February 2009, the Director of the Georgian Accreditation Center (GAC), Paata Gogolidze submitted the FoF request to FORECAST. The approval process was delayed due to the issues related to the scope of activities as well as the copyright compliance but was subsequently approved in January, 2010. The FoF project proposed introduction of international standards and appropriate guidelines to the quality infrastructure stakeholders and producers/suppliers of Georgia.

Within the framework of the proposed FoF activities GAC has purchased the international standards from the Georgian National Agency for Standards, Technical Regulations and Metrology for its internal use. The guidelines have been translated, edited and incorporated into the brochures which were printed and distributed to the representatives of the accredited laboratories operating in Georgia. Those translated guidelines that were not included into the brochures were posted on the official web site of GAC.

Translation and publishing of these documents had a crucial role for the performance improvement of the Georgian conformity assessment bodies and is a significant step towards the international recognition as well as for the obtaining European Cooperation of Accreditation (EA) membership.

As a result of the proposed activity, 140 conformity assessment laboratories were introduced to the international guidelines. The duration of the project was five months (February-June, 2010).

#### *Creation of Alumni Office at Ivane Javakishvili Tbilisi State University*

In 2008, USAID through FORECAST/Georgia funded performance assessment (PA) at TSU. Given the fact that TSU has a very large alumni population, both within the country and emigrated, one of the recommendations provided by the international experts, which was later incorporated into the TSU strategic plan, was creation and funding of an alumni office at TSU. Thus, in March of 2010 the Head of the Department of International Relations of TSU together with the Rector submitted the FoF request to FORECAST which has been reviewed and subsequently approved.

The creation of alumni office with the goal of building a powerful network of successful TSU alumni able to contribute financially to the university's development, will move forward development and fundraising projects of the university. By introducing this function and appropriate models, TSU hopes to create a favorable environment and supporting mechanisms to effectively reach alumni and the general public who are willing to assist the university or are eager to participate in the university's projects/events.

Through the proposed FoF project the following activities will be implemented:

- Facilitating the development of a strategy for TSU alumni relations;
- Developing a 3 year alumni office action plan, target activities and “starter” fund raising efforts;
- Providing networking opportunities;
- Setting up membership fees for individuals, organizations and associations;
- Organizing “starter” alumni event;
- Supporting awareness campaign organized for TSU employees to get them familiar with the idea and culture of reaching out to alumni to create favorable and supporting environment for effective launch of Alumni Affairs Office activities.

FORECAST has contracted Ms. Trisha Bergman as a short-term in-country volunteer consultant to facilitate the activities defined under the TSU FoF project.

As a result of this project the overall operation of TSU and its organizational performance will be substantively improved. In particular:

- University will be able to develop its alumni outreach function and set a foundation to carry out broader alumni fundraising and advancement activities;
- TSU will develop its internal capacity to effectively manage alumni affairs, and to provide support in designing support systems accordingly;
- TSU leadership and faculty will be introduced to know-how and best practices of alumni relations and other basic sustainability activities.

The duration of the initiative is six months (June-November, 2010) with a budget amount of \$9,802.00, though, due to the recent changes in the TSU leadership the “starter” alumni event will be moved to January 2011.

#### *Professionally Managed Local Governments – Way to Better Communities*

The Executive Director of the Municipal Service Providers Association (MSPA), Ms. Ketj Jakeli, on behalf of the MSPA submitted the request for Follow-on Funding to FORECAST which was reviewed and subsequently approved on June 17, 2010.

The goal of the project was to support popularization of the local governance and promotion of professionalism in municipal leadership through the effective networking of municipal leaders.

The objectives of the project were to:

- Increase awareness of electorate in municipalities on importance of local elections and their participation in them;
- Conduct the quick needs assessment in member municipalities to define the key problems of the community, develop the “Issue Books” for newly elected municipal leaders in targeted municipalities;
- Support networking of the newly elected municipal leaders and promote the creation of good understanding of the role of municipal administration in the process of the sustainable development of the community.

Through the proposed FoF project the following activities have been implemented:

- Two types of posters have been developed, printed and distributed in 15 member municipalities explaining the roles and responsibilities of the council, functions of the executive office “Gangeoba” and particularly functions of the chief executive;
- Needs assessment of municipal services has been organized and conducted in 15 member municipalities in order to define the main problems community faces in daily life;
- Needs assessment trainings of municipal servants have been organized and conducted in 15 member municipalities;
- The assessment reports have been developed and the presentation conducted for the newly elected municipal leaders.

Based on the results of the assessment conducted under the above listed activities separate reports for each targeted municipality have been developed according to the needs of municipal service. The report is being titled “Issue Book” and will serve as the guide for the newly elected council members as well as newly appointed executives in planning their working processes as well as defining the resources for improving the situation in their communities.

As regards the report on training needs, it will be used by the MSPA for developing the capacity building program for its members and non-members for the period of 2010 – 2011. Both documents will be publicized on the MSPA website ([www.mspa.ge](http://www.mspa.ge)) as well as presented for the discussion at the MSPA members meeting in late July of 2011.

#### **IV. UPDATE ON PARTICIPANT PROCESSING SERVICE (PPS) ACTIVITIES**

Under its Task Order, FORECAST is mandated to provide a full range of participant processing services (PPS) to USAID-funded implementers upon request. PPS activities are provided within the framework of the USG ADS 252 and 253 and USAID Europe and Eurasia Participant Training regulations. These activities are most often associated with, but not limited to, US-based and third country training and include: facilitating the issuance of visas (i.e.: J-1 visas for US-based training, including VCS entry and administration), arranging medical exams, arranging for health and accident insurance, and conducting English Language testing. For this purpose, World Learning enters into an agreement with the USAID-funded implementers for specific participants processing support services. Under FORECAST, such services are fee of charge.

During the reporting period, **FORECAST/Georgia** signed and processed the following PPS agreements:

1. National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners (NARUC) – to send five participants of the GNERC to the *Kentucky Public Service Commission Activity 1* in Frankfort, Kentucky, May 15-23, 2010;
2. Health System Strengthening Project (HSS) – to send two participants to the *AUPHA Annual Conference* in Portland, Oregon from June 2 to June 8, 2010;
3. CHEMONICS International – to send 27 participants to the study tour in support of Input 1.1. Masters of Education (M.Ed.) Administration Program Established at Ilia State University (ISU) and study tour in support of Input 2.3. Education Management Information System (EMIS) further developed to provide data for decision makers in Los Angeles, California (13 participants) and in Washington D.C. (14 participants). Program dates: July 9-25, 2010;
4. Advanced Engineering Associates International, Inc. – to send one participant to Minneapolis, Minnesota for the *Master of Science in the Management of Technology* program. Program dates: August 15, 2010 – May 27, 2011;
5. Georgia State University, Institute of International Business — to send one participant to Atlanta, Georgia for the *Establishment of a PhD program in Business Administration at Caucasus University in Tbilisi, Georgia*. The program commenced on August 10, 2010 and will end on December 30, 2010;
6. National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners (NARUC) – to send two participants on a study tour to Midwest ISO (Carmel, Indiana) from October 16 to October 23, 2010;
7. Georgia State University, Institute of International Business – to send one participant to Atlanta, Georgia for the *Establishment of a PhD program in Business Administration at Caucasus University in Tbilisi, Georgia*. The program dates: August 20 – December 24, 2010;
8. Advanced Engineering Associates International, Inc. – to send two participant to the University of Wisconsin Madison – Nelson Institute of Environmental Studies for the *Master of Science in Environment and Resource with a Concentration in Energy Analysis and Policy* program (August 29, 2010 – May 30, 2011) and to the New York Institute of Technology for the *Master of Science in Energy Management* program (September 6, 2010 – May 15, 2011);
9. DPK Consulting – to send 6 participants to the Georgia JAMR US Study Tour to Arlington, Virginia from September 21 to October 4, 2010;
10. United States Energy Association – to send two participants from the Black Sea Regional Transmission project to the US study tour to Washington D.C. on November 6-8, 2010.

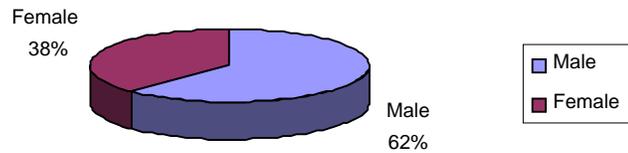
The total number of participants processed under Participant Processing Services for the reporting period was 27 male and 20 female.

## V. REVIEW ON GENDER DEVELOPMENT PROGRESS

According to U.S. Government and USAID policy, FORECAST must work to ensure equal opportunity for the participation of women in all training interventions. As per the ADS and the FORECAST Task Order, the level of participation of women is targeted at 50%. FORECAST further encourages the use of women as training providers and the inclusion of gender awareness modules throughout training programs where applicable, including orientation, community service, cultural activities, and re-entry planning.

During the reporting period **FORECAST/Georgia** processed 1,289 participants, of whom 489 were female (38%) and 809 male (62%).

**FORECAST/Georgia pax processed  
during the reporting period**



The total number of the participants processed to date is 3,521 of whom 1,740 (49%) were female and 1,781 male (51%).

**VI. UTILIZATION OF MINORITY SERVING INSTITUTES (MSIs) AND HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES (HBCUs)**

The use of MSIs is governed by U.S. Government policy that intends to strengthen the capacity of HBCUs and MSIs to provide quality education and to increase opportunities to participate in and benefit from Federal programs. To conform to this policy, the E&E Bureau has as its target that no less than 10 percent of newly programmed U.S.-based training will be provided by HBCUs and MSIs. During the reporting period FORECAST/Georgia did not procure services from any MSIs or HBCUs.

**VII. ADMINISTRATIVE OVERVIEW**

*Georgia*

*HR/Personnel*

In November 2009, Ms. Nino Bigvava resigned from the position of Training Officer and was contracted by FORECAST as a local Project Officer for the *Educational Scientific Infrastructure Development Agency (ESIDA)* program. In March 2010 Ms. Bigvava also resigned from the position of Program Officer and left the organization. Ms. Bigvava has been replaced by Ms. Sophio Motsonelidze, who had been working in the USAID/PAR project as a Public Outreach Coordinator until November 2009.

FORECAST has also recruited and hired Ms. Natia Vepkhvadze as a second Organizational Development Officer, a position that was vacant since September, 2008 when Ms. Elene Jibladze resigned in order to obtain the doctoral degree from the Central European University in Budapest, Hungary. Ms. Vepkhvadze started her duties at World Learning in January 2010.

In June 2010, Ms. Eka Todria resigned from the position of Deputy Director and moved to the US Embassy in Tbilisi. Consequently, World Learning Country Director, Patrick Coughlin, has appointed Roman Tsutskiridze as a Deputy Director for Programs and Dea Pagava as a Deputy Director for Admin/Finance. Eka Leonidze has been promoted to the position of Organizational Development Officer and WL recruited Victoria Todria for the position of Program Assistant.

### *Procurement*

During the reporting period FORECAST purchased one laptop and three office armchairs in accordance with the WL procurement policy. All newly-procured items were labeled with USAID stickers and entered into the WL master inventory list. The laptop is dedicated to the ESIDA Program Manager, and the armchairs were purchased due to the fact that the existent chairs were in a state of disrepair from use over the years, and declared unfit for the health and wellbeing of staff.

### *Operational Manual*

The FORECAST/Caucasus Operations Manual was developed at the start of the Task Order in September 2007, and approved by the CTO in December 2007. The manual serves as a comprehensive guide to all aspects of FORECAST, Caucasus program operations and procedures; and as such is being localized to the maximum extent possible. Through consultations with COTR and through analyses of program activities and the flow of support/approval documentation, the manual is regularly updated and forms/documents (re)designed.

### *TraiNet Reporting*

FORECAST continues to collect and report TraiNet data on behalf of all USAID partners. USAID partner organizations provide WL with the information about the TC and IC Trainings using the special form designed by WL/Georgia. During the reporting period eight organizations out of 35 responded. There were 57 programs in total: 57 ICT and 0 TCT. The total number of participants was 1268, of whom 1044 (82%) were female and 224 (18%) male.