

PEACE, SECURITY AND STABILITY IN KVEMO KARTLI

A COMMUNITY-INFORMED STRATEGY



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Peace, security and stability in Kvemo Kartli – a community-informed strategy

Introduction

This report summarises the results of a process to identify and plan for challenges to peace, security and stability in Kvemo Kartli, undertaken by a group of local society representatives in 2010. It first describes challenges identified by the group, then analyses the three challenges they consider to be most important and provides recommendations for how they should be addressed. The resulting ‘strategy’ is community-informed. This means that the group of society representatives consulted with a wide group of communities at each step of the process (i.e. identification of challenges, analysis of key challenges and strategising solutions) in order to get their thoughts and perspectives. As such, this is not an ‘expert analysis’, but one grounded in the understanding and reality of people living in Kvemo Kartli. We hope that this report will help local, national and international decision-makers to better address challenges facing the region.

This report is one outcome of the project *Promoting broader and more informed dialogue on conflict, security and peace in Georgia*. Jointly implemented by the Caucasus Institute for Peace, Democracy and Development, the Georgian Young Lawyers’ Association and Saferworld, this project is designed to develop the capacity of Georgian civil society to analyse, and play a constructive role in policy development on, issues related to conflict, security and peace. The process involves a two-way conversation between representative groups and wider society in the regions of Kvemo Kartli, Samegrelo, Samtskhe-Javakheti and Shida Kartli. It also involves regular meetings between representatives of these regions, to share outcomes from their respective analyses. The process has the following objectives:

1. to elicit information from community members about their perspectives on conflict issues
2. to provide more balanced and impartial information about conflict issues

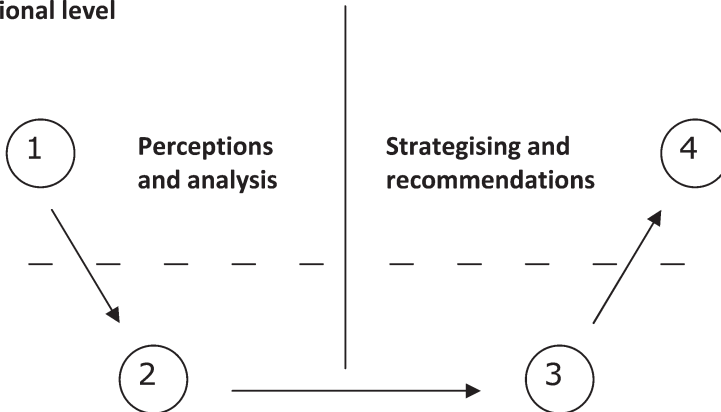
3. to stimulate people to think about these issues in new and wider ways
4. to share perspectives between community members in the different regions.

The overall process consists of four stages (see diagram below). The purpose of the first stage was to understand community perspectives on the causes and effects of the August 2008 war in the four target regions, and the differences between the perspectives held by people in these regions. The results of this stage are captured in the report ‘Community perceptions of the *causes* and *effects* of the August 2008 conflict in Kvemo Kartli, Samegrelo, Samtskhe-Javakheti and Shida Kartli’. The second stage focused on deeper analysis of challenges for peace, security and stability in each of the target regions, while the third stage focused on the development of strategies to respond to key region-specific challenges. This report is one of four summarising the region-specific results of stages two and three (the other three reports cover the remaining target regions). For the methodology used to analyse the challenges identified, and to develop corresponding ‘solution strategies’, please see the annex at the end of this report. The fourth and final stage is underway at the time of publication and involves representatives from all four regions working together to plan solutions to shared challenges at the national level.

The value of this process is that it promotes a deep and sustained dialogue among a consistent group of interlocutors, both within and between the four target regions. The strategies for peace, security and stability developed in this process for each of the four regions, and for the nation as a whole, will then serve as the basis for dialogue between Georgian civil society and decision-makers at the regional, national and international levels.

STAGES IN THE DISCUSSION PROCESS

National level



Regional level

1. Causes and effects of the August 2008 conflict
2. Analysis of region-specific challenges to peace, security and stability
3. Strategising solutions to key region-specific challenges
4. Strategising solutions to key shared / national challenges

Summary of the strategy

This strategy looks to identify the following key challenges for peace, security and stability in Kvemo Kartli, as identified by communities:

1. Heightened fear of ethnic and religious violence.
2. Poor state language skills among ethnic minorities.
3. Perception of unfair distribution and inefficient management of agricultural resources.

To address these challenges the representative group proposes the following:

Minimise tensions between different ethnic and religious groups in Kvemo Kartli through:

- Improving communication between different ethnic and religious communities and hence weakened stereotypes.
- Creating opportunities for shared interests between different ethnic and religious groups.
- Fostering higher levels of inter-ethnic understanding and acceptance.
- Ensuring that all ethnic groups in the region feel physically secure.

Increase fluency in Georgian among ethnic minorities in the region through:

- Increasing support for the integration of minority groups into the country's social and political life.
- Increasing motivation to learn Georgian among non-Georgian speaking citizens.
- Improving teaching programmes for Georgian as a second language.

Developing agriculture in the region through:

- Improving the provision of information on the distribution and management of agricultural resources.
- Developing agricultural infrastructure in the region.
- Increasing the number of qualified professionals in the agricultural industry.
- Developing agricultural business in the region.

Challenges for peace, security and stability in Kvemo Kartli

Community consultations conducted by the representative group in June 2010 revealed 11 region-specific challenges for peace, security and stability. Based on community views and feedback, the first three challenges below were identified as the most important, while the remaining eight were considered less pressing.

a) Key challenges

1. *Heightened fear of ethnic and religious violence.* Although ethnic and religious tensions in Kvemo Kartli between ethnic Azeris, Armenians and Georgians (as well as other ethnic groups residing in the region) are still at a fairly low and localised level, they have increased since the August 2008 war and the foundations for violence in the future are presently being laid. Estrangement and weak economic ties between local ethnic communities, poor communication, slow integration, mutual distrust and the growing role of religion in the region's public life add to tensions between different ethnicities.
2. *Poor Georgian language skills among ethnic minorities.* This was considered an especially pressing challenge as it impedes the integration of minority groups into the country's social and political life. There is limited motivation for minority groups to learn Georgian, and where motivation does exist language training is either unavailable or of low quality. Poor state language skills reinforce differences between ethnic Georgians and minority groups, as well as between different minority groups, and fuel a sense of estrangement and misunderstanding.
3. *Perception of unfair distribution and inefficient management of agricultural resources.* This perception mainly results from recent land reforms, which rendered landless many households that are heavily dependent on farming. Other causes include the fact that, due to difficult social conditions in the region, the majority of local resi-

dents are unable to rent and farm land plots, or harvest and sell their agricultural produce. These challenges are further magnified by limited access to modern agricultural technology and poor skills. Community representatives thought that this had resulted in increased migration from Kvemo Kartli, as well as public indignation and discontent with local and central governments.

b) Other challenges

4. *Insufficient investment in the region's development.* While Kvemo Kartli is an agricultural region, investments have mostly focused on other sectors such as energy resources and transport. According to community representatives, without investment in the region's agriculture, economic growth and improvements in local living conditions will be minimal.
5. *Industrial backwardness of the region.* While the region housed a substantial industrial sector during the Soviet period, most agricultural processing industries have since closed and were stripped of their assets.
6. *Environmental issues.* For Kvemo Kartli this mainly relates to wastewater discharged from the Kazreti-Madneuli industrial plant into a local river, which is the main source of irrigation for local farmers. Even though the company built a separate channel for irrigation, local residents claim this is not sufficient – leading to anger and protest. During consultations, local communities also identified illegal logging in Marneuli district as an issue of importance to them. This problem persists because local organisations have been unable to identify which institutions are responsible for resolving it, despite repeated attempts to do so.
7. *Insufficient water supply.* The entire water supply infrastructure of Kvemo Kartli is outdated and urgently needs renovation. This problem affects most municipalities in the region (the situation is somewhat better in Bolnisi and Dmanisi).
8. *Lack of direct support for locally-based non-governmental organisations (NGOs).* In previous years NGOs carried out a number of

successful projects to assist local communities, including free legal advice, civil education programmes, English and Georgian language courses, free computer courses and youth programmes. However, donor organisations have reduced funding for the region and NGOs have had to scale back their activities. Local NGOs are consequently heavily reliant on partnership with Tbilisi-based NGOs for survival.

9. *Migration from the region due to difficult social and economic problems.* Part of the population has migrated to other countries in search of seasonal or permanent employment. In Sadakhlo, for instance, the total population has shrunk from 13,000 to 3,000 over the last decade. During the consultations community members expressed the opinion that one of the key driving factors has been the 2006 land reform.
10. *Poor infrastructure.* Despite visible progress in the renovation of the region's infrastructure, much more remains to be done. For instance, although many major highways have been renovated, small rural roads are still in very bad shape.
11. *Weakness of the local education system.* In addition to the general problems facing the education system across the whole country, Kvemo Kartli has its own region-specific challenges. These include students' lack of knowledge of Georgian, the weak capacity of Georgian secondary schools to provide education to non-Georgian speaking students, the absence of teaching programmes and textbooks in the region's non-Georgian schools and the lack of vocational schools in the region. All this results in discontent with the education system on the part of the local non-Georgian speaking population.

Key challenge 1: Heightened fear of ethnic and religious violence

a) Importance for local peace, security and stability

Although ethnic and religious tensions in Kvemo Kartli between ethnic Azeris, Armenians and Georgians (as well as other ethnic groups residing in the region) are still at a fairly low and localised level, they have increased since the August 2008 war and the foundations for violence in the future are presently being laid. Estrangement and weak economic ties between local ethnic communities, poor communication, slow integration, mutual distrust and the growing role of religion in the region's public life add to tensions between different ethnicities.

b) Local impact (who suffers and how do they suffer)

- Many people from all ethnicities experience ethnic or religious tensions in their daily lives, on a small or large scale. This undermines their sense of wellbeing and security.
- All communities rely on rumour for their understandings of other ethnic and religious groups (e.g. the perception that other groups own illegal weapons).
- Negative attitudes between ethnic and religious communities are reinforced and divisions increased.
- Local communities live in constant fear that even a relatively small incident of ethnic or religious tension could spark a cycle of violence.

c) Driving factors (causes and actors)

- The region experienced violent inter-communal conflict in the early 1990s. People's memories of this conflict are still strong, as is the perception that if it has happened once it could happen again.
- Weak economic ties and poor communication between ethnic communities.

- The ongoing conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan has increased fears and negative perceptions between local Azeris and Armenians, as Azeris feel vulnerable to a possible attack by Armenia. This sense of vulnerability has increased since the August 2008 war, as Azeri residents are certain that the Russian aircraft that bombed Marneuli and Vaziani bases took off from Russian military bases on Armenian territory.
- This sense of vulnerability is particularly strong in those Azeri communities that reside along the Armenian-Georgian border because of problems with the demarcation of the border. According to local residents in these communities, there have been incidents of Armenian border guards trespassing on Georgian territory, stealing cattle and even detaining people. (According to a study conducted in Kvemo Kartli in the framework of this project, local Armenians also mentioned similar issues with Armenian border guards).
- There is a perception among some ethnic Georgians that ethnic Azeris own better agricultural plots (i.e. with better irrigation) and that the Georgian Government is providing more support to minorities than to ethnic Georgians.
- Some ethnic Georgians believe that the Georgian minority living in Azerbaijan faces significant discrimination and intolerance from the Azeri State. In the face of this perceived intolerance, some ethnic Georgians in Kvemo Kartli question why they should act tolerantly towards ethnic Azeris in their region.
- At the same time, minority communities feel that ethnic Georgians have unfair privileges, for instance better access to higher education, and that they are under-represented in the local government and in Parliament.
- The growing role of religion in the region's public life following the end of the Soviet Union fuels tensions between different communities, and low-level incidents between local Muslims and Christians do take place. There are also indications of increased tensions and possible conflict between liberal and fundamentalist Muslim groups.

- There remains a perception within the population that the Government is not doing enough and has not developed an adequate strategy for reducing tensions in the region. In some cases state institutions might increase tensions through implementing certain policies or actions which are perceived as discriminatory by ethnic minorities.
- There is a perception that many local families keep unregistered arms in their homes. This increases the prospect and fear of violence in the future.
- The local population relies on different media sources – the Georgian speaking population relies on Georgian sources, Armenian speaking communities on Armenian and Russian sources, and Azeri speaking communities on Azeri and Turkish media sources. This causes major differences in perceptions of regional issues by the different ethnic groups, and increases estrangement and mutual distrust between them, as explicitly demonstrated during the August 2008 war.
- Community representatives think that reliance on foreign media makes ethnic minorities vulnerable to misinformation. This causes some Georgians to perceive minority groups as a ‘fifth column’ and to attribute security threats to them.

d) Recommendations

In order to **minimise tensions between different ethnic and religious groups in Kvemo Kartli** and to avoid an outbreak of violence on the grounds of ethnic or religious affiliation, the representative group recommends the following:

1. *Improved communication between different ethnic and religious communities and hence weakened stereotypes:*
 - a) The Government, NGOs and donors develop and support local media, so that it covers the entire region and informs the local population about regional developments. Success stories of cooperation and good-neighbour relations between different ethnic and religious groups should be promoted.

- b) All actors support minorities to learn Georgian. All recommendations proposed under the second key challenge are relevant here.
 - c) Local authorities, the media and businesses increase efforts to communicate with the leaders of those communities that are more isolated, in order to encourage them to be more involved in the region's life.
 - d) The media and NGOs maintain information campaigns to demonstrate to ethnic minorities that their social and economic problems do not have an ethnic basis and are shared by other (ethnic Georgian) regions.
 - e) The Government, in co-operation with public and private television channels, creates a common information space within the region to ensure that non-Georgian speaking communities have access to Georgian media (and not only to foreign media). Channels should increase broadcasts in minority languages and should ensure that the content of these broadcasts is interesting and relevant to their audiences.
2. *Opportunities created for shared interests between different ethnic and religious groups:*
- a) The Ministry of Sports and Youth Affairs, the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Education and Science, the local government and NGOs organise regular multi-ethnic cultural events, including: sport and other competitions; exchange programmes; and festivals, concerts and exhibitions.
 - b) The local government creates mixed classes in preschools and the Ministry of Education and Science ensures that classes are mixed in schools; the Ministry also continues its efforts to increase the access of minority groups to higher education.
 - c) Employers build ethnically diverse teams. Foreign companies in particular should take into consideration the multi-ethnic nature of the region when recruiting staff.
 - d) Government and donors promote multi-ethnic businesses and projects. For example, grant competitions could include require-

ments for joint Azeri-Georgian or Armenian-Georgian implementation.

3. *Higher levels of inter-ethnic understanding and acceptance:*

- a) The Government, the media, human rights organisations, and the Ministry of Culture raise minority groups' awareness of their cultural rights and how these are protected by the State. Examples from other democratic states could also be provided to explain how a democratic country manages minority issues.
- b) The Government, the Ministry of Education and Science and NGOs run courses for both youth and adults on how to accept other cultures and live in a multi-ethnic society.
- c) The Ministry of Education and Science strengthens the civil education component in all schools, while NGOs support and monitor the process, and provide expertise.
- d) The national and local media cover minority issues in a sensitive manner.

4. *All ethnic groups in the region feel physically secure:*

- a) Security providers undertake initiatives to reduce illegal arms possession in the region, and to inform society of the actual scale of this problem.
- b) Security providers develop special programmes for policing border villages, and for monitoring relations between the local population and border guards from neighbouring countries (for example, to resolve tensions between locals and Armenian border guards in the Marneuli district).
- c) The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Inter-Agency Demarcation Commission speed up the demarcation process.

Key challenge 2: Poor Georgian language skills among minority groups

a) Importance for local peace, security and stability

This was considered an especially pressing challenge as it impedes the integration of minority groups into the country's social and political life. There is limited motivation for minority groups to learn Georgian, and where motivation does exist language training is either unavailable or of low quality. Poor Georgian language skills reinforce differences between ethnic Georgians and minority groups, as well as between different minority groups, and fuel a sense of estrangement and misunderstanding.

b) Local impact (who suffers and how do they suffer)

- Because they do not speak or understand Georgian, local ethnic minorities find it difficult to access state services (e.g. pensions) and they often do not have access to essential information about new programmes or laws. This disconnection with the State makes people feel that they are not an integral part of the country.
- Those few public servants who are from minority backgrounds have great difficulties performing their duties in Georgian and are not able to access information related to their duties and work (e.g. laws, regulations).
- While the older generation could speak Russian to each other, the younger generation now do not on the whole share a common language. This means that there is little interaction between ethnic groups.
- Poor communication fuels tensions between different ethnic groups, particularly a sense of estrangement and misunderstanding.
- Because of the difficulties associated with finding employment and access to higher education in Kvemo Kartli (because of poor language skills) many young people are leaving the country, mainly to neighbouring countries.
- Minorities tend to 'ethnicise' their everyday social and economic problems – that is, that they are likely to blame discrimination for

these problems rather than factors shared across all ethnicities. At the same time, ethnic Georgians are convinced that privileges are given to the Azeri minority because of Government policies.

- Ethnic Georgians are dissatisfied with the fact that ethnic minorities do not speak Georgian. They think that all citizens should speak Georgian as it is the state language.

c) Driving factors (causes and actors)

- During the Soviet period Russian (rather than Georgian) was used to communicate with government institutions and other ethnic groups. As a result, ethnic minorities did not think it necessary to learn Georgian.
- While motivation to learn the state language has increased (especially in larger towns), the state-sponsored Georgian language programme is inefficient and has been unable to meet demands (including failing to create opportunities for Azeris to study in Georgian public schools, lack of consistency in policy and a deficit of qualified teachers). NGOs also lack the resources to support those who want to learn Georgian.
- The ability to speak Georgian does not necessarily guarantee the ability to find employment, as a result of an overall lack of employment opportunities in the region. This reduces motivation to learn Georgian.
- Different ethnic communities in the region live in isolation and do not interact with each other, especially at the grassroots level – mixed villages and families are rare. Infrastructure and public transport is poor, and as a result those without cars are less likely to travel to municipal centres and interact with other groups.
- Currently, many ethnic Azeris living in Kvemo Kartli perceive themselves to be culturally, politically and economically more attached to Azerbaijan than to Georgia. Infrastructure programmes funded by the Azeri Government, investment by Azeri companies and a reliance on Azeri or Turkish media reinforce this perception.

d) Recommendations

In order to **increase fluency in Georgian among ethnic minorities in the region**, the representative group recommends the following:

1. *Increased support for the integration of minority groups into the country's social and political life:*
 - a) Create opportunities for different ethnic groups from the region to meet each other and to share interests.
 - b) Local, national and international NGOs develop local media so that it functions both in minority and state languages.
 - c) All relevant government agencies co-ordinate efforts to raise civil awareness among all ethnic groups, so that they have access to information about the Georgian State. This should include teaching civil education at secondary school and higher education levels, while additional courses should also be provided for adults.
 - d) All government departments protect the rights of non-Georgian speaking citizens to access services by providing appropriate translation facilities.
2. *Increased motivation to learn Georgian among non-Georgian speaking citizens:*
 - a) Relevant government agencies develop motivation programmes focused on young people, including contests, internships at state agencies and free retraining courses.
 - b) Local and national media promote success stories related to people from minority groups learning Georgian.
 - c) The Government ensures that Georgian language courses are available and accessible to all citizens.
 - d) Once Georgian language courses have been made universally available, the Government puts in place a certification scheme to ensure that new citizens have a basic knowledge of Georgian, while those seeking employment in the public sector have advanced language skills.

3. *Improved teaching programmes for Georgian as a second language:*
- a) The Ministry of Education and Science introduces an improved framework for teaching Georgian as a second language in schools, as well as in language centres for adults.
 - b) The Ministry of Education and Science provides more frequent Georgian language classes in non-Georgian secondary schools, while the local government strengthens state language teaching at pre-school level.
 - c) The Ministry of Education and Science properly assesses and monitors teachers of Georgian as a second language.
 - d) The Ministry of Education and Science and NGOs, with the financial support of donors, provide free language courses for the local population – both young people and adults – while local businesses provide language support for their employees.
 - e) The media creates Georgian language training programmes for television.

Key challenge 3: Perception of unfair distribution and inefficient management of agricultural resources

a) Importance for local peace, security and stability

This perception mainly results from recent land reforms, which rendered landless many households that are heavily dependent on farming. Other causes include the fact that, due to difficult social conditions in the region, the majority of local residents are unable to rent and farm land plots, or to harvest and sell their agricultural produce. These challenges are further magnified by lack of access to modern agricultural technology and poor skills. Community representatives thought that this resulted in increased migration from Kvemo Kartli, and public indignation and discontent with local and central governments.

b) Local impact (who suffers and how do they suffer)

- Many local residents lack the funds to rent and farm plots of land and therefore cannot generate an income, which in turn leads to increased impoverishment. Even those farmers who have access to land find it difficult to make a profit.
- There is a perception that the region's agricultural resources (land, water, agricultural equipment and machinery, development programmes, etc.) have been poorly managed and distributed unfairly.
- There is discontent with the Government, based on the perception that it could do more to protect the welfare of farmers by controlling the price of agricultural products through regulations on imports.
- Young people are no longer interested in farming because it does not ensure an income. Hence, there is a growing outward migration of young people from the region.

c) Driving factors (causes and actors)

- Russia was one of the main export markets for produce from the region. Now local farmers cannot sell products to Russia due to poor political relations between Russia and Georgia.

- After the collapse of the Soviet Union many residents from the region have struggled to adapt to private ownership, and have not developed a culture of individual responsibility for the success of farms or businesses.
- The Government-led land reform has left many local households that are heavily dependent on farming unable to access land. Lack of information about land reforms has made it more difficult for people to plan for them, with language barriers making it especially difficult for people from ethnic Azeri villages.
- The area has not kept pace with developments in agriculture and lacks modern technologies, equipment, and human resources such as veterinarians, agronomists, irrigation specialists and skilled managers. In addition, water for irrigation is expensive and in short supply; there is also inadequate infrastructure to ensure its provision.
- Many farmers do not understand the needs of the market. This means that too many farmers might grow the same crops in the same year. This problem is reinforced by the fact that only a few factories in the region buy and process local produce, and they usually buy the products from local farmers for a very low price. Local farmers also find it difficult to compete in price with cheap imports from neighbouring countries.

d) Recommendations

In order to **develop agriculture in the region**, the representative group recommends the following:

1. *Improved provision of information on the distribution and management of agricultural resources:*
 - a) The Ministry of Agriculture, together with other relevant agencies, conducts an inventory of all agricultural resources (land, water, equipment) and their distribution mechanisms, and disseminates the results throughout the region, in both the state and minority languages.
 - b) NGOs and the local media assist in disseminating this information on agricultural resources (once produced) throughout the region.

2. *Development of agricultural infrastructure:*

- a) The local government, the Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure, the Governor and the Ministry of Agriculture work together to renovate the irrigation system in Kvemo Kartli.
- b) The local government constructs local roads connecting villages and regional centres, as well as settlements with agricultural lands.
- c) The local government conducts a transport needs assessment and on the basis of findings develops a plan to improve movement within the region.
- d) The Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development, the Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure and the local government develop a programme to improve living conditions for rural communities.

3. *Increased number of qualified professionals in the agricultural industry:*

- a) The Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Education and Science, the local government and NGOs co-ordinate to increase the number of qualified agricultural specialists, including through retraining, attracting young people into training programmes, and establishing exchange programmes with other parts of Georgia and internationally.

4. *Development of agricultural business in the region:*

- a) Provision of cheap credits and other support programmes (including an insurance system) to farmers and small businesses. Such support will also need to be properly publicised within the region.
- b) The local government, together with the Ministry of Agriculture and the Tourism Agency, develops a programme to increase agricultural tourism in the region.
- c) The Ministry of Agriculture establishes information centres to provide advice to farmers on what to sow, in which season, and in what amount.

- d) The Ministry of Agriculture, with support from local businesses and donors, establishes an innovation programme to introduce new agricultural equipment and techniques (e.g. for storage, and hail and frost protection), and new kinds of crops (including bio-products) to local farmers.
- e) The Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure, the business sector and donors investigate the feasibility of establishing processing plants and service centres for agricultural produce in the region.

Annex: methodology for analysing problems and strategising solutions

For each identified key challenge the representative group worked through a process of first developing a more elaborated ‘problem statement’ to explain the challenge. On the basis of each problem statement, the group then developed a ‘solution strategy’ for how to resolve the challenge, which in turn provided the material for specific recommendations. At each stage in this process, the representative group consulted with a range of communities in their region, as well as with representatives from other regions.

Developing a ‘problem statement’

In order to develop a problem statement for a specific challenge, the representative group was facilitated to analyse (1) the driving factors behind the problem – that is *what* causes the problem and *who* is responsible, and (2) the impact of the problem – that is *who* suffers and *how* they suffer. Drawing on the identified impacts, the group was then asked to clearly articulate (3) why the issue is important for peace, security and stability in their region.

Turning a ‘problem statement’ into a ‘solution strategy’

Once the problem statement had been developed, the group was then asked to develop a corresponding ‘solution strategy’. To do this, they were first asked to identify (1) the overall change that they would like to see in relation to the challenge. They were then asked to identify the key things that need to happen in society to achieve this overall change. That is, to identify (2) the preconditions that need to be met, whether changes to policies, practices, attitudes or behaviours. The most difficult aspect of this part of the process was to make sure that the list did not become a long ‘shopping list’. As such, the group was encouraged to capture only those elements that are absolutely necessary, and without which the overall change could not happen. Finally, the group was asked to brainstorm (3) the steps or changes that are necessary in order to bring about each of these pre-conditions. Please see below for an example ‘solution strategy’ given to the group to assist their thinking.

Example solution strategy – for illustrative purposes only

1) Overall change wanted			
To create an enabling environment where marginalised women from conflict-affected communities can protect their rights and take an active part in decision-making			
2) Key preconditions that need to be met in order to achieve the overall change			
Women have increased confidence and desire to take part in political life	Women have increased and relevant skills to take part in political life	There are adequate laws to protect women's rights	There is public support for the inclusion of women in decision-making, public life, and for the protection of women's rights
3) Necessary steps to bring about the key preconditions			
↑	↑	↑	↑
Women's successes receive as much recognition as those of men	Women's access to development opportunities increases	There is clear and widespread understanding of what women's rights are	There are changes in the perception of the role of women in society
Women have a strong support network	There is an environment in which women can play multiple roles	Civil society is organized and is pushing for greater protection of women's rights	
Women feel an active demand for their input	Women are aware of appropriate career paths for political life	There are champions of women's rights in the political system	
Women see the results of their actions	Culture of politics and public life allows for skills to develop	There is a base of information on the social benefits of women's participation	
Political culture becomes less macho.			

Developing recommendations from the 'solution strategy'

The group was then asked to draw recommendations from the solution strategy by (1) reformulating each precondition as a key issue that needs to be resolved, and (2) reformulating each step as a precise recommendation of *what* needs to be done and *who* is responsible for the change. Please see below for example recommendations provided to the group to assist their thinking.

Example recommendations – for illustrative purposes only

1) Key issue to be resolved

Enhance the confidence and desire of women to take part in political life

3) Specific recommendations

- ↑
- That the Georgian media increase their coverage of women's involvement in community and public life, highlighting the contributions that women are making to Georgian society.
 - That national and international NGOs support women to play an active role in politics, by providing relevant training, encouragement and mobilizing women around opportunities for advocacy;
 - That all political parties, international organizations and NGOs actively seek the input of women when they are formulating new policies
 - That all political parties actively recruit women as members and examine their working culture and practices to ensure that they are gender sensitive.

This report is based on the consultations, analysis and strategising conducted by the following group members in Kvemo Kartli, and has been validated by them:

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The Caucasus Institute for Peace, Democracy and Development (CIPDD)

The Caucasus Institute for Peace, Democracy and Development (CIPDD) is a public policy think-tank specialising in the broad area of democracy development. CIPDD was founded in 1992 in Tbilisi, Georgia. It is a non-governmental and not-for-profit organisation. It advocates policy goals such as the development of a vibrant and diverse civil society, effective and accountable public institutions based on the rule of law and an integrated political community, one which at the same time respects and preserves the identities of different ethnic and religious communities. CIPDD's main activities include public policy research and publishing and disseminating its results, and organising different forms of debate – professional, political or public – about this work.



The Georgian Young Lawyers' Association (GYLA)

The Georgian Young Lawyers' Association (GYLA) is a non-governmental organization dedicated to promoting human rights and the rule of law. We adhere to the Constitution of Georgia, legislation and our Statute on the whole territory of Georgia. GYLA is a membership-based organisation.

Goals of GYLA:

- Promote the rule of law;
- Protect human rights and freedoms;
- Increase public legal awareness;
- Promote norms of professional ethics among lawyers;
- Develop the skills and competence of lawyers;
- Develop the legislative basis for civil society and the rule of law in the country.



Saferworld

Saferworld works to prevent and reduce violent conflict and promote co-operative approaches to security. We work with governments, international organisations and civil society to encourage and support effective policies and practises through advocacy, research and policy development and through supporting the actions of others.

Peace, security and stability in Kvemo Kartli – a community-informed strategy

According to local communities, the following challenges have to be met to ensure peace, security and stability in the region:

Minimise tensions between different ethnic and religious groups in Kvemo Kartli. Although ethnic and religious tensions in Kvemo Kartli are still at a fairly low and localised level, they have increased since the August 2008 war and the foundations for violence in the future are presently being laid.

Increase fluency in Georgian among ethnic minorities in the region. Poor language skills impede the integration of minority groups into the country's social and political life, while the inability of different groups to communicate reinforces differences and fuels a sense of estrangement and misunderstanding.

Development of agriculture in the region. People think that agricultural resources have been unfairly distributed and inefficiently managed. The result is increased migration, and public indignation and discontent with both local and central government.

Detailed recommendations for how to address each challenge are included in this report.

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