

Center for Strategic Research and Development of Georgia (CSR DG)



Annual Report 2022

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2022 Annual report

27 year for you and with you!

CSRDG was founded in July 1995, a time when the country was experiencing difficult political processes.

For a small group of people that gathered around one idea to bring any benefit to the country and the community, the solution was to establish a civil society organization. This is how the Georgian Center for Strategic Research and Development (CSRDG) was established. Since then, for 27 years, it has been serving the public interests, economic empowerment of the society, and the establishment of sustainable institutions. Since its establishment, CSRDG conducted numerous researches, promoted many legislative initiatives, contributed to establishment of a network of community organizations throughout Georgia's regions, supported development of social enterprises and social services, pioneered public awareness raising about corporate social responsibility and promoted protection of consumer rights.

Foreword

It is due to our commitment to our values that, after 27 years of successful work in the civil sector, has established us as a strong research, and expert institution, trusted partner, and community development organization.

We are pleased to present the overview of the activities performed in 2022 by the Center for Strategic Research and Development of Georgia. The document reflecting implemented activities of the organization is presented to the public annually. It is our responsibility to inform all stakeholders about the positive contribution made by the organization to the economic, cultural and social development of the country, the achievement of sustainable development goals, and the introduction of the principles of democracy.

The present report is an integrated document that incorporates our annual program report and communication on engagement with United Nations Global Compact.

In 2007, CSRDG has joined UN Global Compact Initiative. And since 2010, CSRDG has been an organizational supporter of the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI).

 COMMUNITY MEMBER	2022
Global Reporting Initiative is an international network organization, which aims at elaboration and continuous improvement of universal standards of sustainable development reporting.	

 <p>This is our Communication on Progress in implementing the principles of the United Nations Global Compact and supporting broader UN goals.</p> <p>We welcome feedback on its contents.</p>	UN Global Compact is the largest global initiative on corporate citizenship. It is based on organizations' voluntary initiatives to implement universal sustainability principles and take steps to support UN goals.
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Within this report, we reaffirm our continued support for the ten universal principles of the Global Compact, in the areas of Human Rights, Labour, Environment and Anti-Corruption.

We express our readiness to continue our support for the implementation of these principles within areas of our activities and influence, and to publicly express our support for the Global Compact to our stakeholders and the general public.

We also reaffirm our readiness to:

Cooperate with the UN Global Compact and participate in its activities and events within realm of possibility; Participate in partner projects, which aim at supporting corporate responsibility and sustainable development; In case of necessity and request, examine the annual Communications on Progress of other companies joining the Global Compact initiative.

In this Communication of Engagement, we describe the actions that our organization has taken to support the UN Global Compact and its Principles as suggested for an organization like ours. We also commit to sharing this information with our stakeholders using our primary channels of communication. We welcome feedback on its contents.

In 2022, CSRDG worked in three main directions under the core program: developing the civil society sector, promoting open governance, promoting economic and social change. These directions include programs such as: Community Development, CSO Development, Good Governance, Promoting European Integration, Social Entrepreneurship, Corporate Social

Responsibility, Consumer Rights Protection, and Social Service Development Programs. In frames of these programs, in 2022, CSRDG implemented 11 ongoing projects, detailed information regarding which is given in the present report.

And finally, I would like to thank CSRDG's personnel, our partners and supporters, stakeholders, whose efforts enabled us to carry out the activities described in the report, and achieve the set objectives. Special thanks to each and every employee of the organization who spared no energy, responded to so many challenges and successfully, equipped with new skills, knowledge and experience, completed this the most difficult year.

Eka Urushadze,

Executive Director, CSRDG

Geography

The range of our activities extends to the entire country; although, within certain programs, we focus specifically in following municipalities: Dedoplistskaro, Lagodekhi, Akhmeta, Signaghi, Kvareli, Telavi; Sagarejo; Ozurgeti, Chokhatauri, Lanchkhuti, Chkhorotsku, Abasha, Martvili, Zugdidi, Senaki, Khobi; Mestia, Oni, Ambrolauri, Kutaisi, Gori, Bolnisi, Tetrtskaro; Akhaltsikhe.

Our headquarters are located in Tbilisi, and the regional office – in Telavi.

Mission, Vision and Strategic Objectives

Mission

Our mission is to promote good governance, stable and inclusive economic development, and the formation of an active civil society for the welfare of Georgian society.

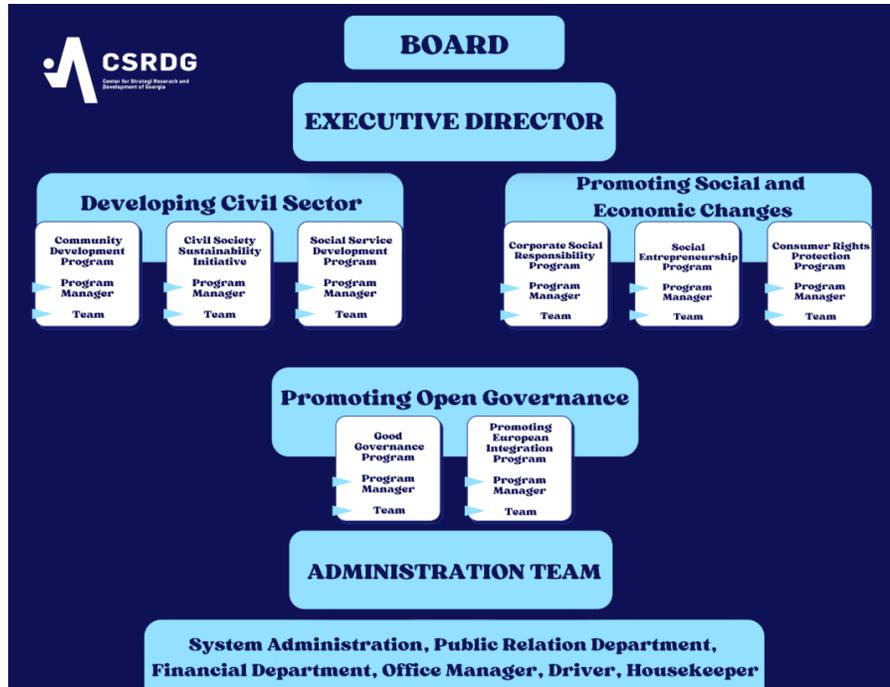
We contribute to the sustainable development of the country by promoting democratic values, and strengthening cross-sector partnerships.

Vision:

We respect the equality and human dignity; we believe that high civil responsibility, professional competence, mutual cooperation and solidarity are the prerequisites for the development of the country.

Strategic Objective : Promoting an active civil society, socially responsible business and good governance for poverty alleviation and sustainable development of the country.

Organizational Structure



Our team

1. Eka Urushadze	18. Lia Todua
2. Eka Datuashvili	19. Nino Kituashvili
3. Nino Vasadze	20. Tamar Gobejishvili
4. Vakhtang Kobaladze	21. Lela Khoperia
5. Maka Asambadze	22. Nona Aladashvili
6. Tamar Khachidze	23. Levan Rostomashvili
7. Manana Mchedlishvili	24. Ketevan Kalandadze
8. Kristine Kandelaki	25. Beka Guntaishvili
9. Dodo Gokadze	26. Nia Chelidze
10. Tamar Germanashvili	27. David Chikvaidze
11. Ekaterine Chkhetia	28. Mikheil Gogichaishvili
12. Giga Chitishvili	29. Lily Ushveridze
13. Ekaterine (Ana) Iluridze	30. Nona Rukhadze
14. Natia Metreveli	31. Ana Philauri
15. Zurab Tatanashvili	32. Mariam Mchedlishvili
16. Salome Topuridze	33. Mariam Japaridze
17. Ana Nadirashvili	

Financial Statement for the Year Ended December 31, 2022

Funding from donors by years:

- 2018 – GEL 3,091,110
- 2019 – GEL 3,980,197
- 2020 – GEL 3,495,122
- 2021 – GEL 3,903,783
- 2022 – GEL 4,307,501

Annual income

Source	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Funding from donors	3,091,110	3,980,197	3,495,122	3,903,783	4,307,501
From individual contributions	52,345	60,407	47,090	27,222	126,241
Income from services provided	7,531	72,718	62,276	41,786	3,390
Total	3,150,986	4,113,322	3,604,488	3,972,791	4,177,870

Brief information about activities

- Worked with 48 communities in 24 municipalities;
- Elaborated 4 video lessons on European Integration (www.asocireba.ge);
- Ongoing 11 projects (grant contracts); 3 service contracts;
- 7 publications were elaborated by experts;
- 10 publications assessing the fulfillment of obligations outlined in the AA were elaborated within awarded grant projects;
- 37 consultants have been involved in pro bono cases from 17 companies. Overall, 504 pro bono hours have been spent. 31 social benefit organizations (11 CSOs, 10 SEs, 10 CBOs) benefited in total from these pro bono cases and solved 39 issues;
- 36 different meetings were conducted with the representatives of local authorities in target regions in order to provide consultations and professional assistance in effective implementation of presented recommendations.
- Consumers rights protection program provided 136 consultations to citizens, covering a range of legal and non-legal issues, and provided lawyer services in three cases.
- 15 out of the 25 recommendations on waste management system improvement delivered to the three target municipalities have already been implemented;
- 4 CSR/DG recommendations were reflected in the Law on Consumer Rights Protection;
- 59 out of 93 submitted recommendations to support proper institutionalization of basic administrative procedures at local municipalities have already been implemented; and 12 significant types of regulations/normative acts were approved;
- A nationwide communication campaign aimed at promoting philanthropy, promoting models like Community Foundations and Crowdfunding was held;

- 57 different format meetings (trainings; workshops; seminars) held with 1275 participants;
- Rights-based service standard was established as umbrella standard.;
- Developed and issued packages of internal organizational documents for social services targeted at elderly and disabled individuals, including quality management manuals, case management manuals, limitation documents, various tools, and organizational manuals;
- Provided training to 57 representatives from social service provider organizations on rights-based social service planning, delivery, and evaluation.
- Successfully piloted rights-based social services in seven municipalities.
- Integrated rights-based social services into bachelor's and master's programs in social work, along with the creation of reading materials.
- Conducted monitoring of social work implementation and an advocacy campaign, resulting in the issuance of three shadow reports.
- 20 blogs were published on the CSR Blog;
- The "Georgian Responsible Business Competition Meliora " was successfully announced for the fourth consecutive year.
- CSR stakeholders Forum was established;
- An international group was formed to collaboratively work on the development of a state framework document supporting CSR;
- collaborated with a total of 22 social enterprises as part of the program;
- More than 100 consultations were provided to social enterprises;
- A total of 177 B2B meetings were conducted
- Over 200 young people were introduced to the concept of social entrepreneurship;
- The first impact fund Actio was established;
- Six Learning and Employment Support Centers (LESC) were established, enabling employment for nearly 300 locals and providing essential services like training, retraining, and skill development to over 3,000 job seekers.
- Six Work Integration Social Enterprises (WISE) were funded, aiding the integration of less competitive individuals into the workforce;
- CSRDG financed 177 projects of individuals and organizations for the total amount of GEL 1 547 267.

Publications

- [Study: Social Impact of Community Groups and Projects](#)
- [SOCIAL ENTERPRISES IMPACT STUDY - GEORGIA - ANALYTICAL REPORT](#)
- [SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP RESEARCH](#)
- [RIGHT BASED SOCIAL SERVICE STANDARDS](#)
- [DOCUMENTS REQUIRED FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF RIGHTS BASED SOCIAL SERVICES OF CHILDREN AND ADULTS WITH DISABILITIES](#)
- [DOCUMENTS REQUIRED FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF RIGHTS BASED SOCIAL SERVICES OF THE ELDERLY](#)
- [MONITORING REPORTS ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACTION PLAN OF THE LAW ON SOCIAL WORK \(2020, 2021, 2022\)](#)

Events

- Community Leaders Forum 2022;
- The first "Ideas Auction" held in Georgia;
- Organized the first national conference on rights-based social services;
- Georgian Pro Bono Network Meeting;
- Round Table – Protection of Consumers' Rights;
- The 3rd B2B exhibition of social enterprises held.

Implemented and ongoing projects

1. Civic Engagement, Social Responsibility and Good Governance, continuation”- 2020-2023 – Brot für die Welt;
2. Civil Society Initiative -Sustainable, Open and Accountable Civil Society Organizations for the Development of Georgia- The European Union; Konrad Adenauer Stiftung
3. Empowering Women for Change – The United Nations Development Programme;
4. Promotion of Rights Based Social Services for People with Disabilities and Elderly -The European Union;
5. Advancing Social Entrepreneurship for Sustainable and Inclusive Society--The European Union;
6. Skill Building and Innovative Job Opportunities for Regional Development of Georgia - The European Union;
7. COLLABORATE FOR IMPACT - Cooperation for change-Development of Social Entrepreneurship and Social Investment for Economic and Social Empowerment in Easter Partnership Countries- EVPA, -The European Union;
8. Sustainable Models of Mobile Elderly Care in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Georgia- Hilfswerk International; Austrian Development Agency;
9. Starter Grant to support the live crowd fudning event based on the TFN donor circle model- The Funding Network;
10. National Conference to Proomote Rights Based Social Services in Georgia- Austrian Development Agency;
11. THE EUROPEAN FUND FOR SOUTHEAST/EFSE/-B2B Fair

Relevance of our Programs with Sustainable Development Goals

Goal	CSR DG's Programs	Page
Goal 1 – No Poverty	Community Development; Social Entrepreneurship; Skill Building;	10; 31; 40;
Goal 2 – Zero Hunger		
Goal 3 – Good Health and Well-being	Rights Based Social Service	20;
Goal 4 – Quality Education	Community Development, CBO Development; CSR- Program; Social Entrepreneurship; Skill Building;	10; 25; 31; 40;
Goal 5 – Gender Equality	Community Development; Skill Building; European Integration;	10; 40; 50;
Goal 6 – Clean Water and Sanitation		

Goal 7 – Affordable and Clean Energy		
Goal 8 – Decent Work and Economic Growth	Community Development – Women Eempowerment for Change; CSR- Program; Social Entrepreneurship; Skill Building;	10; 25; 31; 40;
Goal 9 – Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure		
Goal 10 – Reduced Inequalities		
Goal 11 – Sustainable Cities and Communities	Community Development; Good Governance	10; 48
Goal 12 – Responsible Consumption and Production	Community Development; CSR Development; Good Governance	10; 25; 48
Goal 13 – Climate Action		
Goal 14 – Life Below Water		
Goal 15 – Life on Land		
Goal 16 – Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions	Good Governance	48;
Goal 17 – Partnerships for Goals		

Programs

There are three main strategic directions that serve to achieve the mission of the organization:

1. Development of Civil Sector;
2. Promotion of Economic and Social Changes.
3. Promotion of Good Governance;

Programs that are part of our daily activities are grouped under these directions.

Development of Civil Sector represents one of the oldest strategic directions of CSRDG. It aims at supporting civil society to safeguard interests of, and to improve provision of relevant services for its target groups at local and national levels. Community Development Program, Civil Society Organizations' (CSO) Development Program, and Social Service Development Program operate under this strategic direction.

Community Development Program (Village and community levels) aims at improving institutional, advocacy and fundraising skills of the community, to enable community members to actively and significantly contribute to the local development.

CSO Development Program aims at institutional capacity building of local and national CSOs, thus enabling them to provide better services to their constituencies.

Social Service Development Program aims at developing of the rights-based social service in civil and public sectors in Georgia, to promote and respect social, cultural and economic rights of vulnerable individuals.

Community Development Program

CSRDG has been working on community development since 1998. The primary goal of this program is to empower civil society in various regions and provide support to community leaders, civil organizations, and initiative groups. The aim is to enable these groups to better represent their communities' interests and address the prevailing needs effectively.

To accomplish this, the program operates in the following key areas:

1. Enhancing the operational environment for community organizations and initiative groups.

2. Providing financial support for community initiatives and projects.
3. Strengthening existing networks of community organizations throughout the country.
4. Promoting philanthropy and introducing new mechanisms to mobilize local resources.

While the program's activities cover the entire country, it focuses intensively on regions such as Kakheti, Samegrelo, Guria, and Shida Kartli.

Improving the operating environment of community organizations/initiative groups/promoting connections and experience sharing among them (Networking)

In pursuit of this objective, the program encompasses various activities conducted by the Community Development Resource Center (CDRC.GE). This includes the maintenance of a database of community groups and organizations, regularly updating the map, provision of essential information and news to community organizations, and active participation in coalitions of organizations dedicated to national-level community development, exemplified by the Community Development Coalition (CoDeCo). The program also involves conducting thematic research and organizing collaborative meetings among community organizations, notably the annual forum for community leaders.

In 2022, the **social impact research of community organizations/projects** initiated in conjunction with the Community Development Center (CDC) in 2021 was successfully concluded. This research represents a pioneering effort to assess the influence of community groups and their projects, building upon the Community organizations Mapping research conducted in 2020. The research report, inclusive of its review section, offers recommendations across various sectors. Implementing these recommendations will enhance the operational environment for community groups and organizations. You can access the full research report at the [following link](#).

The presented study's summary conclusion is as follows:

The work of community organizations in local communities has had an overwhelmingly positive impact at the individual, community, and municipality levels. These organizations play a vital and tangible role in addressing the current challenges faced by communities. Therefore, it is imperative that donor organizations continue to extend their support to community organizations. However, it is equally important that this support takes into account the complex environment in which community organizations operate and the resources available to them.

It is crucial that the support from donor organizations adopts a more long-term and systematic approach. This approach will empower community organizations to undertake projects with larger-scale, long-term, and sustainable outcomes, ultimately enabling them to have a more significant and enduring influence on their target groups.

The study's findings were presented to the general public at the Community Leadership Forum, CoDeCo coalition meetings, and a printed version was distributed to interested organizations and individuals. The electronic version was shared through social media channels.

On November 9-10, 2022, the eighth annual Community Leaders' Forum was successfully hosted in Kakheti. The forum was conducted as part of the ongoing "Civil Society Initiative" project with support from the European Union and the Konrad Adenauer Foundation. The event attracted 145 participants, including community leaders, civil activists from various regions of Georgia, as well as representatives from government agencies, businesses, and international organizations.

During the forum, the attendees were presented with the results of the research on the social impact of community groups and projects, led by one of the research authors, Ana Margvelashvili. Additionally, online inclusion expert Shota Murghulia introduced the economic impact assessment results of the projects to the audience.

The forum also featured the traditional "Best Community Initiatives" competition for 2020-2021, with six community initiatives submitted for consideration:

- The jury selected the "NTI in your home" project by "New Thinking Institute - NTI."
- The audience's choice was the project "For the Children of the Mountain" by the Racha Community based Organization.

Each winner was honored with a special prize and a £500 grant from the University of Birmingham.

Several businesses, including Aldagi, TBC Bank, Bank of Georgia, Credo Bank, Crystal, and Moore ABC, played a crucial role in supporting and preparing community groups participating in the competition. These businesses also established special awards for the participants. Also, various organizations contributed to the competition by providing special prizes. These included the United Nations Development Program, social enterprises "Dediko" and "Mirabaldebi," the Alliance of Social Enterprises, and a group of community organizations.

During the second day of the forum, multi-sector panel discussions covered the following topics:

- "Crowdfunding" as an alternative financing option.
- Youth policy and opportunities for young people residing in rural areas.
- Access to social services at the community level.
- Social entrepreneurship in community organizations.

Supporters of the 2022 Forum, in addition to the European Union and the Konrad Adenauer Foundation (KAS), included the United Nations Development Agency, the Swedish Embassy, Bread for the World, and the University of Birmingham.

Financial Support for Community Initiatives and Projects

As part of the Community Development Program, a nationwide grant competition is regularly announced to support small community projects and initiatives. While the specific topics of these grant competitions may vary, their ultimate goal remains consistent:

a) Addressing local challenges and responding to community needs through the collective efforts of local groups and community engagement. b) Enhancing the capacities of community groups and leaders themselves by implementing projects, receiving intensive mentoring from the program team, and gaining skills, self-confidence, and recognition and trust within the community.

In 2022, within the framework of the EU-funded STAR program, **two grant competitions** were announced in September and November to support community initiatives. The number of applications received for both competitions was 167, which indicates the great interest and need for this type of grant competition in the country.

The competition aims to support community projects and initiatives that will make substantial contributions to strengthening public and community organizations, activist groups, and their capacity development. This encompasses gaining public trust, effectively utilizing available local resources, and addressing existing issues in specific geographical or social communities through efficient mobilization of local resources, including beneficiaries, supporters, volunteers, sponsors, and material/financial resources.

Before announcing the competition, an educational initiative was conducted, featuring a series of training sessions focusing on **enhancing public relations skills using digital tools**. These two-day training sessions were held in ten locations, covering all regions of Georgia, and attracted a total of 145 participants. The training topics included civil society, community engagement, public relations, digital communication platforms and tools, various campaign types (social, political, advertising, advocacy, and crowdfunding campaigns), attracting supporters, and campaign planning.

In 2022, 8 community projects/initiatives of the first stream were financed, for which the granted grant amount amounted to 236,871.95 GEL.

Funded projects are:

#	Organization/Group	Project name
1.	Iormugalo Community center	Importance and awakening/ promotion of positive activism
2.	AAP Civil society end Media Development Institute CSMDI	"Informal education youth multimedia training center in Akhaldaba"
3.	AAP Journalism resources center	Kokhta Mediateka
4.	AAP Council of Elder Women	Strong women- strong society
5.	AAP Community's social-Economic development association "Imereti"	Young leaders for community development
6.	AAP "Green pole"	Promotion of monitoring of stone cutting by dry method in Tbilisi
7.	Initiative Group " Womenth strength for Magraani"	Development of community-based tourism in Maghran
8.	AAP Youth center of Akhalsofeli	Creation and strengthening of initiative groups in rural areas

The village of Maghraani in Akhmeta municipality boasts abundant natural and cultural resources that are ideally suited for tourism development. However, before the project's initiation, these assets were merely viewed as untapped potential. The project's planned activities aim to create and promote Maghraani as a vibrant new tourist destination.

The project encompasses a thorough investigation of Maghraani village's tourism resources, the provision of training and master classes in tourism services, the organization of festivals, showcasing local products, and collaborating with tour operators to offer practical lessons.

The project's primary objective is to foster economic and social progress in the villages of the Maghraani community, including Maghraani, Fichkhovani, and Argokhi, through tourism development. Local residents have already begun expressing interest and taking their initial steps in the realm of tourism, which is a pivotal indicator of the project's effective implementation.

It can be confidently stated that the "Discover Maghraani" project is already telling its story. Media outlets have shown keen interest in the project, with multiple reports planned for the future. Notably,

the first backpackers have started to explore the area, signifying that the project is poised to achieve even more remarkable results in its final stages than originally anticipated by the team members.

Strengthening the Network of Community Groups in the Country

This direction includes the strengthening of the 27-member network of community groups and organizations that were established in the target villages and townships of Kakheti, Samegrelo, Guria, and Shida Kartli as part of the center's diversity programs in previous years. The network is reinforced through a combination of **technical assistance (including training sessions, workshops, and consultations) and financial support from the program.**

In 2022, the program collaborated closely with a consortium of regional organizations to work with **16 member organizations and initiative groups** from the network. This consortium, in addition to representatives from the center and its Telavi office, includes representatives from regional organizations such as the Georgian Civil Development Association - Kakheti, Development Hub - Samegrelo, and Democratic Development Union - Guria.

The 16 community organizations served in Telavi (Pshaveli, Saniore, and Kvemo Khodasheni), Lagodekhi (Heretiskari, Shroma, Vardisubani, and Tsodniskari), Dedoflistskaro (Arboshiki, Khornabuji), Khobi (Torsa), Chkhorotsku (Mukhuri, Lesichine, Chkhorotsku, and Bandza), as well as community groups operating in Ozurgeti (Jumati) and Gori (Skra) municipalities. These groups received a total of six training sessions covering various topics:

- Organizational development and self-assessment methods.
- Organizational resilience and skills for working with young people.
- The essence and application of the board game "Women from Georgia."
- Basic principles of social entrepreneurship.

In total, more than 100 individuals participated in these training sessions, with over 90% of them being women.

In addition to the training sessions, after the training on organizational development and self-assessment methods, individual self-assessment workshops were conducted for the organizations and groups (a total of 14 working meetings). During these sessions, the knowledge acquired during the training was put into practice, enabling the community groups to identify their organization's weaknesses and development opportunities more clearly.

Additionally, the program continued its series of online meetings known as "Community Conversations" for the members of the network of community organizations. Throughout the year, four two to three-hour meetings were conducted, with a total of 100 community leaders participating. These meetings featured guest speakers from various backgrounds, including: The founder of the online platform "Dopomoga Ukraine"; Kea Caucasus, a representative of the project addressing the crisis in Ukraine; Successful women entrepreneurs residing in rural areas. The

discussions covered a range of topics, including the participation of community groups in the local budgeting process (as both a challenge and an opportunity) and violence against women, along with the existing mechanisms for its prevention and victim protection in Georgia.

Simultaneously, with the facilitation and support of program team members, community organizations developed one-year action plans. These plans serve as responses to the challenges and needs within their communities and encompass a wide range of activities, including educational, sports, and cultural events, as well as an advocacy component for addressing local issues. The advocacy component involves conducting research on local problems and providing feedback to local municipalities and relevant agencies. The program provided **modest financial support** for the implementation of these action plans, averaging around 7,000-8,000 GEL per group/organization. Over the course of the year, community groups executed approximately **400 events** as part of these action plans. Additionally, through fundraising efforts involving advocates and other donor organizations, community groups successfully **addressed 69 local issues and needs** during the same period.

Within the same program direction, special attention is given to addressing environmental issues, with an emphasis on educating members of the network of community organizations and involving them in fieldwork. Waste management was chosen as a focal issue, with a pilot initiative conducted in three target municipalities: Telavi, Lagodekhi, and Ozurgeti. This initiative involved monitoring the approved municipal waste management plans and engaging community groups and existing eco-clubs in fieldwork.

As a result of analyzing the collected information and the outcomes of field monitoring, monitoring reports and comprehensive recommendations were prepared for each municipality. These recommendations primarily focused on addressing prevention and remediation of spontaneous landfills, increasing the number of waste collection containers in specific local areas, enhancing the frequency of container emptying, and initiating the process of separating paper (or plastic) waste. A total of 25 sub-issue recommendations were provided.

Progress has already been made in implementing some of these recommendations. For example, several spontaneous landfills have been prevented in Ozurgeti, the separation of plastic waste from other waste has commenced, and the number of garbage collection containers has increased in some areas. In Lagodekhi, based on the recommendation, the municipality acquired 50 plastic 1100-liter garbage bins and 40 units for separating plastic. In total, 15 out of the 25 recommendations delivered to the three municipalities have already been implemented at this stage.

Promotion of philanthropy and introduction of new mechanisms for mobilizing local resources

The organization's efforts in promoting philanthropy and introducing new mechanisms for mobilizing local resources began in 2020, and over time, it accumulated valuable experience in this area. The activities focus on popularizing the concept of philanthropy within the community, providing education and information about its various forms and examples, and introducing and promoting models like **Community Foundations and Crowdfunding**.

In 2022, a nationwide communication campaign aimed at promoting philanthropy continued. The campaign's mission was to highlight the benefits of philanthropy, showcasing examples from the past and present of how people can help others through crowdfunding and support various environmental and social projects. To achieve this, four video stories and four photo stories were prepared and actively distributed through social media platforms, reaching the wider public. The stories included:

- [Auction of Ideas](#)
- [Nika Gogoladze hand to hand](#)
- [To build a knowledge cafe](#)
- [For Ukraine](#)
- [Gori earthquake in 1920](#)
- [Women from Guria](#)
- [The story of Natia Chikovani](#)
- [The story of Zura Tatanashvili](#)

In addition to the communication campaign, a grant competition was announced in May as part of the STAR program, funded by the European Union, to support crowdfunding campaigns. The competition aimed to provide support to initiatives that mobilize the resources required for solving specific problems or for social initiatives using various crowdfunding tools. As the concept of crowdfunding is relatively new in the society, only five applications were received, and one application was selected for funding by an independent commission. This project, "Civil Initiative," was related to mobilizing funds for the renovation of the first floor of a community's knowledge cafe building through a crowdfunding campaign. The project aimed to collect a minimum of 15,000 GEL but managed to gather 24,000 GEL with active support from local businesses and citizens.

This year marked the successful hosting of the first-ever idea auction or live crowdfunding event (known as Giving Circle) for our organization. In May, the first "Ideas Auction" was held in Georgia with the support of the Star program, taking place in the historic House of Writers. The event aimed to raise funds for three different groups and their ideas, and it exceeded its initial target by collecting 20,900 GEL instead of the planned 15,000 GEL. The auction brought together 98 participants, representing the private sector, international and local public organizations, media, and government entities. The event received support from The Funding Network and the Frederick Mulder Foundation.

The auction's nominees successfully implemented their plans with the support they received, :

"Dats Ezo."

The objective of "Data Ezo" is to raise environmental awareness among Rustavi's population and promote urban gardening. Data aimed to establish an educational space in his own yard to host regular meetings, discussions, and lectures on environmental topics. This space provides young adults and schoolchildren concerned about air pollution in Rustavi with a place to come together and seek solutions.

With the funding received, Data was able to purchase a high-quality microscope and a projector, which he uses to conduct science lessons for educated youth, observe environmental issues, organize film screenings, hold discussions, and more. See photos: <https://bit.ly/3zAD6HB>

Dimeli Women:

The group "Dimeli Women" aims to promote education and economic empowerment in the Dimi community. With the funds collected at the "Ideas Auction" (5000 GEL), They purchased all the necessary equipment for an open-air cinema in the village. For the second year in a row, they have been organizing successful movie screenings. Additionally, one of the fans donated the needed speakers for the cinema to the group for free. The entire village is actively involved in preparing for the film screenings, and people of all ages from the entire district attend these screenings.

See photos: <https://bit.ly/3Q1Zcbc>

Children and Adolescent Development Center:

The Children and Adolescent Development Center focuses on addressing the needs of disabled individuals in Akhaltsikhe. They won support for increasing awareness and education of parents in the Samtskhe-Javakheti region at the 'Ideas Auction.' Their goal was to improve and expand existing services for children with autism spectrum disorders. The biggest challenge they faced was the language barrier for ethnically Armenian children in the region. Thanks to the support they received, the organization was able to train an Armenian-speaking therapist and provide more comprehensive services to children. They organized a series of meetings in villages across all three municipalities, using kindergartens as their base, to address important topics such as children's early development, the age at which children start speaking and communicating, early signs and management of autism.

These initiatives are making a positive impact in their communities, and they serve as excellent examples of how philanthropy and crowdfunding can drive positive change.

See photos: <https://bit.ly/3oyEnIP>

Under the same direction, the promotion of the concept of community funds and preparatory work for their initiation continued in the municipalities of Telavi and Lagodekhi. More specifically, to identify groups interested in the idea of community foundations in Telavi, two informational meetings were held with the local population of Telavi (with up to 25 participants in total), and a contest was announced to express interest in the initiative group. As a result, a group was selected, with which the work continued. In Lagodekhi, as a result of a three-month communication campaign and individual communication with interested young people, an initiative group consisting of three members was formed.

After recruiting the Lagodekhi and Telavi groups, four online meetings were held with both groups, the purpose of which was to increase the knowledge of its members regarding community funds, as well as practical work on the principles of project writing and conducting an idea auction."

Simultaneously, the CSRDG project team summarized the ongoing processes in both regions and outlined a new approach to support these groups. The new approach allowed newly formed groups to present short-term action plans for holding a mini-ideas auction in their municipality. After a successful pilot initiative, selected groups will be given the opportunity to participate in a long-term cycle of support for community funds developed by the organization. Following the approval of the grant applications submitted by the groups and the provision of financial support, both regions actively commenced the implementation of the presented trial project. Consultative meetings (five meetings) were conducted with the groups on the administrative management of the grant, preparation of financial documents and reporting procedures, project visibility, preparation of online grant applications, and the design of materials for social media. In the initial stage, the primary activities of the groups included refining the database of target groups, studying the attitudes towards the community fund in specific segments of the population, generating ideas among the community, and announcing the auction. The identification of supporters among individuals and various organizations/businesses was also part of this process. The competition announced by the Lagodekhi Group concluded in December, and three winning ideas for auction were selected by the special council created for the competition. The same process is underway in Telavi, and the auctions themselves are scheduled for early 2023.

Development of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)

Within its CSO Development Program, CSRDG supports Georgian civil society sector by building its capacity, raising awareness and increasing public perception about it. We started the Program in 1998.

To achieve Program goals, we continuously offer CSOs tailored technical support, which enables them to improve organizational management systems, offer quality services to target audiences, and most importantly, ensure organizations' financial and institutional sustainability.

Program Activities

Project activities in general are spread over CSRDG's different programs. However, all activities and achieved results support strengthening of civil society in Georgia. Overall, during 2022, at the request of international and local organizations, number of seminars, training and workshops were prepared and implemented within the CSRDG Program.

Summary data:

- 57 trainings; workshops; seminars.
- 1275 participants (among them 322 –male; 933-female);

Social Service Development Program

"Beneficiaries are not strangers, vulnerable people or groups, the beneficiaries are each of us, who at one or another stage of life, due to various circumstances, find ourselves in a vulnerable position and need support by protecting dignity and other rights." - Zurab Tatanashvili, head of the program.

In 2019, with the support of the European Union, the organization initiated a comprehensive three-year project titled "Promotion of Rights-Based Social Services for Persons with Disabilities and the Elderly." Concurrently, the organization launched a new social services development program aimed at fostering rights-based social services in Georgia. The program's objective is to safeguard and support the social, cultural, and economic rights of vulnerable individuals.

Rights-based social care is rooted in the belief that social care should not be perceived as charity but as a fundamental right for all members of a healthy, democratic, inclusive, and supportive society. It treats recipients of social services as "right holders" while regarding the government and service providers as "right entitlement responsible" entities.

Rights-based services are planned, implemented and evaluated according to the following six key standards: 1. Facilitation of rights, 2. Participation, 3. Individual outcomes, 4. Feedback, 5. Service accessibility and 6. Service management. All directions are aimed at facilitating the realization of a specific right of the beneficiary and outline the role of the service provider in the realization of this right.

Main activities of the program

1. Capacity development of public organizations providing social services in order to develop, plan, implement and evaluate their social services
2. Improvement of relevant political, legal and educational resources

"Developing the capacity of public organizations providing social services to develop, plan, implement and evaluate their social services":

Under the financial support of the program, "Promotion of rights-based social services for persons with disabilities and the elderly," implemented within the framework of the Center for Strategic Research and Development of Georgia, funded by "Bread for the World," social service delivery and pilot testing were carried out in **7** municipalities of Georgia. **8** different organizations, **5** of which cater to people with disabilities and children, and **3** serving diverse populations, were involved.

The program aimed to establish a framework for implementation, evaluation, and assessment of rights-based services through various instruments and indicators, including Guidelines for quality management in services with relevant indicators and tools, case management guidelines, feedback and response forms, limitation document, etc. Packages created for the development of rights-based social services (for services of persons with disabilities and children and older generations) are open and available to all interested parties.

In addition to organizational procedures, the program also focused on enhancing the infrastructure of service-providing organizations and providing training and consultations to their employees based on identified needs. It's worth noting that, given the shortage of various specialists in the regions, experts from Tbilisi and other cities were engaged, both in person and remotely. These specialists from different cities provided direct service providers with professional advice and consultations. Furthermore, a component of professional supervision was introduced within these organizations.

Regular joint and thematic coordination meetings were organized with service provider partners and grant recipient organizations. During these meetings, participants shared knowledge and experiences, openly discussed challenges, and explored potential solutions to overcome these challenges. The meetings also provided a platform to identify opportunities for more cost-effective utilization of existing resources.

In addition to these coordination meetings, the program team conducted *supportive monitoring* aimed at promptly identifying achievements and challenges while collaboratively seeking solutions. Supportive monitoring is an open, cooperative and non-punitive process. To accomplish this, the program remotely collected and analyzed information about ongoing activities and held support meetings with partner and grant recipient organizations. Additionally, the program team conducted on-site visits to the mentioned eight organizations to support ongoing activities and maintain service quality. During these visits, the organizations received consultations on necessary issues. Based on the results of these visits, additional training and consultations on various topics were planned and implemented.

A total of 204 beneficiaries, including 137 persons with certain abilities and 67 people of the older generation (60+), received services with the support of the 2022 Access Program.

Hilfswerk International implements project "SUSTAINABLE MODELS OF MOBILE ELDERLY CARE IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA AND GEORGIA" with partners Hilfswerk International's Sarajevo office and "HAJDE Aid and Development Association" in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Displaced Women's

Association "Consent", "Association of Social Workers of Georgia", " Strategic Research and Development Center of Georgia" together in Georgia. Within the framework of the project, both home care and active aging day services are introduced and developed. The role of the Strategic Research and Development Center of Georgia in this project is the organizational strengthening of the support house, planning of business models and service packages.

Improvement of relevant political, legal and educational resources

Rights-based service standard was established as umbrella standard upon which all regulations for managing social service quality should be built. The creation of this standard involved close collaboration with various stakeholders, including representatives of the Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories of Georgia, Labour, Health and Social Affairs as well as the State Care and Assistance Agency for Victims of Trafficking.

The initial working version of the service standard was discussed over *four remote meetings* with representatives of service provider organizations serving disabled and elderly individuals, along with user groups. After incorporating their proposed changes into the document, the final version of the standards and the plan for its implementation were discussed during a round table meeting involving various stakeholders. These stakeholders included service provider organizations, representatives from the Ministry of Health, the Care Agency, the Parliament, and the Office of the Public Defender.

As part of the program, the second round table in 2022 focused on discussing the next steps for implementing the standards.

On October 19, 2022, a groundbreaking national conference on rights-based social services was held in Georgia for the first time. This event, made possible with the support of the European Union and the Austrian Development Agency, aimed to introduce an innovative and unique approach tailored to Georgia's reality, with a focus on enhancing social services for individuals with disabilities and the elderly.

The conference provided a platform for discussing the future of social services in Georgia, the benefits of adopting rights-based social services, and the knowledge and experience gained in this domain. The event was inaugurated by representatives from the Center for Strategic Research and Development of Georgia, the European Union Representatives in Georgia, the Austrian Development Agency, the Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories of Georgia, Labour, Health and Social Affairs, the State Care and Assistance Agency for Victims of Trafficking.

In attendance were representatives from government agencies, civil society, organizations offering social services, as well as various professionals in the field and service users, **totaling 76 participants**. As part of the conference, the stakeholders in the sector signed a declaration with the aim of advancing rights-based services and advocating for their widespread implementation. Additionally, success stories of individuals who have benefited from similar services were showcased through photo stories at the conference.

In 2021, **reading materials** totaling 147 pages were created for four subjects within the bachelor's and master's programs in social work. These materials were used by 290 students who took these subjects in 2022. Printed copies of the textbooks were provided to representatives from Ilia State University and Iv. Javakhishvili State University, as well as to the authors of the textbooks and other interested individuals. An electronic version of the manual is also made available to the public.

Additionally, a series of **photo stories** featuring users of rights-based services were published, effectively demonstrating the advantages of this approach in enhancing the social well-being of vulnerable individuals.

Similar to previous years, efforts to strengthen the organization of the social workers' union persisted. In addition to the workshops and consultations offered under this component, the union, with financial and expert assistance from the program, conducted a research and advocacy campaign regarding the accomplishments and obstacles associated with the action plan for implementing the law on social work. These three-year reports have generated valuable evidence on the enforcement progress of the law, which will play a crucial role in its future full implementation and any necessary adjustments to it.

The program is dedicated to advancing new state strategies and services with the aim of incorporating a rights-based approach into social service policy and practice. The program's leader plays an active role within the Unified Coordinating with Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons From The Occupied Territories, Labor, Health and Social Affairs Of Georgia on council of measures aimed at the enforcement of the law of Georgia for the Implementation of “the Law on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities”, as well as its two committees: the "Committee for Promotion of Development of Deinstitutionalization and Alternative Care Services" and the "Committee for Promotion of Development, Quality Monitoring, and Evaluation Mechanism Improvement of Social Services Promoting Equal Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities." Georgia's Law Enforcement Action Committees have worked on both strategies and action plans (e.g. deinstitutionalization strategy and action plan), as well as programs such as personal assistant programs, home care programs, etc. It should be noted that the Council, in parallel with the development of programs, works on the development of quality control mechanisms, including the standards of new programs. It's noteworthy that the Council, in conjunction with program development, is also focused on establishing quality control mechanisms, including the standards for new programs.

The program team collaborates closely with public organizations that provide services to beneficiaries and engage in advocacy efforts.

Main achievements of the program:

1. Conducted research on rights-based social services.

2. Developed and issued packages of internal organizational documents for social services targeted at elderly and disabled individuals, including quality management manuals, case management manuals, limitation documents, various tools, and organizational manuals.
3. Provided training to 57 representatives from social service provider organizations on rights-based social service planning, delivery, and evaluation.
4. Successfully piloted rights-based social services in seven municipalities.
5. Offered supportive monitoring to eight organizations delivering social services.
6. Integrated rights-based social services into bachelor's and master's programs in social work, along with the creation of reading materials.
7. Conducted monitoring of social work implementation and an advocacy campaign, resulting in the issuance of three shadow reports.
8. Developed and issued a state standard for rights-based social services.
9. Organized the first national conference on rights-based social services.

Successful case:

The main success of the program is that it has created a unique knowledge and experience of rights-based services in the country that is accessible to all stakeholders.

During the last three years, and especially in 2022, as a result of the activities carried out within the framework of the program, the topic was actualized and the discussion was brought to the policy level. Various materials created within the program are used in the planning of social service programs and their standards in the country. Social service delivery organizations have begun to use a variety of materials designed for rights-based services.

As a result of the reading material included in the various subjects, students in the Master's and Bachelor's programs in social work study issues related to the rights-based approach each year. This material is especially important for social workers, because it is with this approach that it is possible to increase the social functioning of users and protect their rights, which is the main goal of this profession. And the reports of three years of implementation of the law on social work have created evidence on the basis of which further steps should be planned for the final implementation of the law.

Promoting Economic and Social Change - strategic objective of this direction is to increase the social responsibility of civil sector, business and citizens of Georgia. The organization has three programs running under this direction; these are Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Development, Social Entrepreneurship and Consumer Rights Protection Programs.

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) - CSR concept and practice contribute to the social and environmental welfare in all sectors. For business companies it is important to understand responsibility they have towards society and to play active role in sustainable development of the country.

Social Entrepreneurship (SE) – is the effective way for economic inclusion of vulnerable and socially unprotected groups in environmental and social problem solving processes. With help of SE it is possible to tackle social problems that aren't in the focus of business companies interest, and for solution of which there are no sufficient resources in government.

Consumer Rights Protection – works efficiently only when appropriate state policy mechanisms are in place. Business is more responsible towards consumers, while citizens as consumers are more actively protecting their own rights.

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) program

Since 2004, the Center for Strategic Research and Development of Georgia has been implementing the Corporate Social Responsibility Development Program. Within the local landscape, the Strategic Research and Development Center of Georgia emerged as an early pioneer in directing its efforts toward the implementation of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). In order to popularize the CSR concept and inform various sectors in Georgia, the center conducts research, communication campaigns, trainings, seminars, stakeholder forums and conferences. Its proactive engagement extends to collaboration with state agencies, large, medium, and small enterprises, higher educational institutions, and the media.

Activities carried out within the program:

Georgia's responsible business awards-Meliora

The national-wide competition, which was established by CSRDG in 2018, serves as a platform for acknowledging and honoring business entities operating within Georgia for their exemplary projects and initiatives implemented by them in the field of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR).

The competition, in which up to 90 companies participated with more than 200 CSR projects, aims to develop and popularize corporate social responsibility in Georgia. Also, to encourage companies to implement CSR principles and approaches in their activities, becoming an example for others.

The annual competition is conducted with the steadfast support of business associations dedicated to advancing corporate responsibility, as well as international and local expert organizations and public entities. In the year 2022, the esteemed supporters of the competition included: Enterprise Georgia; Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development of Georgia; LEPL-The Academy of the Ministry of Finance; Ambasciata d'Italia a Tbilisi; Embassy of Switzerland in Georgia; Annual Report and Transparency Award (BARTA); Service for Accounting, Reporting and Auditing Supervision (SARAS); Business Georgia; UN Women; Deutsche Wirtschaftsvereinigung - (DWV); EU-Georgia Business Council (EUGBC); European Business Association (EBA); Infrastructure Construction Companies Association; International Chamber of Commerce (ICC); Georgian Microfinance Association; Georgian Chamber of Commerce and Industry; Georgian Tourism Association (GTA); Georgian Trade Union Confederation (GTUC); Georgian Farmers' Association.

Major achievements:

- The 2022 competition witnessed a remarkable milestone with a record number of applications. A total of 60 companies actively participated, showcasing 88 implemented projects. This surge in participation signifies the escalating popularity of the competition and the concurrent development of corporate responsibility practices within the business community.
- Many international and local supporting organizations and business associations were added to the 2022 competition, The cooperative engagement with these entities played a pivotal role in the successful execution of the competition.

CSR Stakeholders Forum

In 2022, the Center for Strategic Research and Development of Georgia (CSR DG) established the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Stakeholders Forum. This Forum, founded by representatives spanning various sectors, serves as a distinctive platform for dialogue and collaboration concerning state policies that promote CSR.

At the ceremonial event hosted at Pullman Hotel in Tbilisi, the establishment of the CSR Forum was formally endorsed by representatives from the private, civil, and public sectors, as well as civil and international organizations, business associations, individuals from educational/academic institutions, and the state sector. The creation of the CSR Forum marks an important step forward towards the development of CSR in Georgia and fostering an environment conducive to its growth.

Major Achievements:

The CSR Forum, drawing inspiration from the experiences of European countries, stands as the pioneering association in Georgia. It has successfully united representatives from civil, private, and state structures, laying the groundwork for the collective promotion of Corporate Social Responsibility development in the country.

Promotion of development of CSR policy framework of Government

CSRDG, within the frameworks of European Union and Konrad Adenauer Foundation funded project 'Civil Society STAR Initiative', aims to promote CSR and develop a CSR-enabling environment through advocacy for CSR policies.

With this aim CSRDG has created the working group consisting of leading local and international experts, who already started to develop and advocate CSR policy framework recommendations/drafts for Georgian government.

Raising awareness in terms of CSR

The Corporate Social Responsibility Information Hub is an online platform created by CSRDG. It serves as a centralized space where comprehensive, up-to-date information on corporate social responsibility, sustainable development, and responsible business practices, both globally and within Georgia, is compiled.

This platform stands as the sole information web portal in Georgia dedicated to corporate social responsibility and corporate sustainability. It provides a diverse array of resources to aid in navigating this intricate subject.

The primary objective of the website is to share information and resources, fostering the promotion of knowledge and promoting the concept of CSR within the business sector and various societal groups. Moreover, it seeks to establish principles of sustainable development and responsible business practices in Georgia.

In addition to its invaluable resources, the website consistently publishes articles covering current news related to corporate responsibility, both locally and globally. In the year 2022, the platform featured 20 news articles.

Major achievements:

Throughout the year 2022, the site attracted approximately 4,000 visitors, providing them with insights into various aspects of corporate responsibility and facilitating the deepening of their knowledge in this domain.

www.csrblog.ge

The CSR blog aims to elevate awareness regarding the principles of corporate social responsibility and sustainable development. It serves the public by sharing information on current news and events in this field while also providing a platform to share the insights and expertise of professionals. Throughout the year 2022, the CSR blog featured over 20 engaging articles, actively shared across various social networks. Furthermore, these blogs, distributed on the CSR blog, were dispatched to its 400 subscribers, expanding the reach of valuable information and perspectives in the realm of corporate social responsibility.

Pro bono direction

Activities carried out within the program

For corporations, pro bono services represent a manifestation of their social responsibility, specifically, a facet of employee volunteering known as corporate volunteering.

Pro bono services leverage the expertise and intellectual resources of the private sector, making them available to organizations dedicated to community welfare. This approach enables companies to assist segments of society whose interests align with and are expressed by various civil organizations.

The "Georgian Pro Bono Network" functions as an informal association comprising local and international companies operating in Georgia. These companies are driven by the desire to utilize their professional expertise and resources for the betterment of society. The network's primary objective is to integrate corporate expertise into the pursuit of public goals.

Established officially in October 2015, the "Georgian Pro Bono Network" was initiated by the "Center of Strategic Research and Development of Georgia" with the support of MitOst e.V. Foundation, BMW Herbert Quandt Foundation, and Taproot Foundation.

At present, the network boasts 22 member companies, the details of which can be accessed here: <https://bit.ly/39LewpX>

Comprehensive information about Pro Bono and the Georgian Pro Bono Network is available on the official website: www.probonogeorgia.ge.

Communication campaign of Pro Bono Network of Georgia

The Pro Bono Network of Georgia conducted a communication campaign in collaboration with CSRDG and network member companies to enhance its visibility. The campaign involved active communication about the network and its achievements on both CSRDG's social networks and the social networks of network members, through various media channels and other avenues.

Within the scope of this campaign, diverse materials were prepared to highlight the network's activities, including infographics, news posts, articles, and a press release. These resources were actively shared throughout the campaign.

Major Achievements:

- Representatives from member companies actively contributed to the campaign's planning, thereby enhancing awareness of pro bono activities.
- The communication campaign resonated across various companies, media outlets, and the civil sector, playing a pivotal role in elevating awareness about pro bono initiatives in Georgia.

ProBono mediations

In 2022, the Georgia Pro Bono Network, along with its partners, facilitated 26 pro bono mediations. The provision of pro bono support represents a significant stride in advancing the civil sector. Through the communication plan established within the pro bono mediation framework, coupled with new branding, civil organizations achieved broader outreach to beneficiaries, established communication platforms, integrated new services into their activities, and deepened connections with the private sector for future collaborations.

Simultaneously, social enterprises leveraged pro bono support to export their products to foreign markets, increase sales, rebrand services and products, all accomplished without incurring any costs.

Mentoring Social enterprises to prepre for B2B exhibition

Members of the Pro Bono Network and partner companies have implemented an amazingly large-scale project to help social enterprises prepare for the B2B exhibition. 27 companies were involved in pro bono consultations, including 7 business companies that are members of the pro bono network.

These consultations commenced in August to ensure that social enterprises could present a comprehensive business proposal for the exhibition scheduled at the end of September. The scope of the consultations covered critical aspects such as information about the enterprise, key messages, concise communication text for potential partners, identification of target companies, and the creation of relevant and individual proposals.

In total, the 27 pro bono business companies conducted over 100 meetings with 47 social enterprises, contributing more than 300 pro bono consulting hours and formulating over 30 business proposals.

Pro bono network to support community organizations

In October and November of 2022, an additional large-scale pro bono mediation project was executed, uniting five business companies and five civil activists. The mediation process focused on preparing nominees for the "Best Community Initiative" competition—a segment of the annual

"Community Leaders Forum" event managed by the Strategic Research and Development Center of Georgia since 2015.

During the project, civil activists showcased their initiatives to the audience. Members of the pro bono network, along with representatives from supportive companies, played a pivotal role in identifying compelling aspects and presenting the initiatives in a unique and impactful manner.

Overall Achievements of the Program in 2022:

- The "Georgian Responsible Business Competition Meliora " was successfully announced for the fourth consecutive year.
- CSR stakeholders Forum was funded
- An international group was formed to collaboratively work on the development of a state framework document supporting CSR.
- Several television and radio programs were produced, highlighting and showcasing the program's activities.
- Numerous articles about CSR and the program were published in both online and print publications.
- To enhance public awareness, a communication campaign was executed to promote the Pro Bono Network of Georgia and its activities.
- Regular blogs were published on the CSR Blog created within the program.
- A series of consultation meetings were conducted as part of the pro bono mediation framework.

Successful case:

With the support of the European Union and the Konrad Adenauer Foundation (KAS), the Center for Strategic Research and Development of Georgia (CSRDG) established the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Stakeholder Forum in 2022. The CSR Forum was founded by representatives of various sectors and it creates a unique platform for dialogue and collaboration on matters concerning state policies that promote CSR.

Forum is unique, because agreement was formally signed, which outlines the commitment of representatives from the private, civil, and public sectors, civil and international organizations, business associations, educational/academic institutions, and state sector representatives to collaborate on CSR initiatives. The establishment of the CSR Forum signifies a pivotal advancement in the development of CSR in Georgia and the creation of an environment conducive to its growth.

Against the backdrop of the accelerated European integration process in Georgia, the promotion of corporate responsibility and responsible business activities at the state level is gaining increasing importance. Many EU countries actively support CSR through government policies, and the establishment of consultative bodies—such as CSR forums or platforms involving all three sectors—is a common practice to foster sectoral engagement in policy formation. The CSR Stakeholder Forum in Georgia draws inspiration from the experiences of European countries, reflecting a commitment to aligning with international best practices in the realm of corporate responsibility.

Social Entrepreneurship Development Program

Since 2009, the center has strategically prioritized the Social Entrepreneurship Development Program. Through entrepreneurial support, we aim to address society's crucial challenges by fostering sustainable and entrepreneurial social networks. We collaborate with civil, private, and governmental organizations to contribute to societal development. We firmly believe that entrepreneurship is a means to ensure social welfare, economic inclusion, and to address public and environmental challenges.

Program Objectives:

The program focuses on two key strategic directions:

1. Strengthening Social Enterprises in Georgia and Promoting New Ventures: Enhancing the
2. Operational Environment for Social Enterprises

Activities carried out in 2022 and results achieved:

Our focus was on strengthening existing social enterprises in Georgia and fostering the creation of new ventures. This involved implementing tailored financial and technical support mechanisms for both established and startup social enterprises.

The selection of enterprises for the support program was carried out through a competitive process. Once selected, the program team engaged with the chosen enterprises for a duration of 2-4 years.

Throughout 2022, we collaborated with a total of 22 enterprises as part of the program. This included 3 startups and 4 operating enterprises selected in previous years. Additionally, we initiated partnerships with 15 enterprises, consisting of 9 startups and 6 operating enterprises during the same period.

Selection Process for Target Social Enterprises

The competition for selecting startup social enterprises was announced twice during the year, with the following selection cycle:

I stage:

- Idea's competition was announced twice
- 180 people attended informative meetings and seminars
- Independent commission selected 19 ideas for 2 stage

Trainings cycle:

- 63 participant attended intensive training-program about social and business issues
- 19 Business plan was developed by experts

2 stage:

- 6 best business plan was selected by grant commission for following stage
- 6 startup social enterprise got financial support

#	Social enterprise	Project description	year
9.	Profesio	The social cafe-bar "Profesio" serves as a social space with the mission of fostering employment and career development for members of large families. Additionally, Profesio provides young people with opportunities to enhance their social skills, acquire knowledge and experience in current affairs, and explore various entertainment options.	2022
10.	STEM space	The mission of "STEM Space" is to promote youth employment and popularize the STEM field by offering LEGO education courses. This social enterprise focuses on working with school students, with a particular emphasis on girls, to develop STEM skills. These skills will be instrumental in helping them establish themselves in the local and international labor market in the future.	2022
11.	Archivi	"Archivi" establishes an inclusive environment that fosters employment, professional, and personal development for both young people and individuals with special needs. This social cafe assists young people in realizing their potential and making rational use of their free time, contributing to the overall development of the region.	2022
12.	Techgogo	The mission of the social enterprise is to economically empower women and girls residing in Kvemo Kartli, with a particular focus on ethnic minorities. This is achieved through the provision of digital education and employment opportunities. "Techgogo" hires girls who have received training in digital professions, placing them in its advertising agency that adheres to high standards, as well as in other partner companies.	2022
13.	Nebula	Nebula's mission is to elevate the education level of young people in Georgia by providing educational technologies and high-quality learning resources in general education subjects. The social enterprise develops a digital education platform accessible across Georgia, wherever there is an internet connection.	2022
14.	Creative tours	The mission of the social enterprise "Creative Tours" is to enhance the entrepreneurial skills of women and girls who are victims of domestic violence, fostering decent employment opportunities in the labor market. The enterprise provides a range of tourist services to visitors while supporting the target group By improving the professional skills of representatives and increasing competitiveness for employment in the tourism sector.	2022
15.	Komli	The mission of Komli is to foster the development of Kaspi municipality by establishing a community space where individuals can engage in thinking, observing, researching, working, and co-creating new knowledge. Komli aims to make knowledge accessible to people with fewer opportunities, support community initiatives, empower local entrepreneurs, and engage	2022

		with the youth. The services offered include overnight stays in a hostel, meeting spaces, catering, an open cafe, educational programs, and more.	
16.	Latliishd	<p>The social enterprise established in the village of Latali in Svaneti contributes to the development of the local community by empowering vulnerable groups, particularly women, and promoting traditional crafts.</p> <p>The social enterprise "Latliishd" provides customers with a range of local products and services, including soap, salt, hats, textile products, masterclasses on creating local products ect.</p>	2022
17.	Ringovet	"Ringovet" is an innovative technological startup that offers a multifunctional mobile application designed for dog and cat owners and beyond. The primary and crucial function of "Ringovet" is to locate 24-hour emergency veterinary care for both domestic and stray animals.	2022
18.	Tanave	"Tanave" is a social confectionery established with the aim of developing professional skills, providing employment, and empowering women and young people economically. The confectionery village offers a unique space where customers can purchase and savor both modern and traditional confectionery and snacks in a serene, comfortable, and warm environment.	2021
19.	Lurji Alaverdi	The mission of "Lurji Alaverdi" is to promote the economic empowerment of vulnerable people living in Akhmet municipality, as well as self-employed low-income young and adult farmers in agriculture, through employment, education, and training. The social enterprise operates in the hospitality sector, providing tourists with a variety of services.	2021
20.	Orbis bude	"Orbis Bude" is a tourist center located in the exceptionally beautiful Samshvilde village of Kvemo Kartli. It offers visitors the organization of various types of hikes, tours, and masterclasses, as well as camping equipment rental and dining services. The social enterprise was created for the economic empowerment of local youth and women, especially those from ethnic minorities.	2021

A competition was announced for active social enterprises, and three enterprises were selected. Along with the enterprises selected in the previous period, activities were carried out with a total of nine operating enterprises in 2022:

#	Social enterprise	Project description	year
1.	Agama	The enterprise's mission is to promote the employment of socially vulnerable and conflict-affected internally displaced persons living in the Imereti region. Utilizing modern technologies, "Agama" produces and processes environmentally friendly agricultural products, particularly strawberries, and prepares compotes, jams, and jellies.	2022
2.	Chempi	The mission of "Chempi" is to improve the welfare of the population living in the vicinity of the occupation line through the development of local, healthy, skilled production. "Chempi" produces a variety of apple chips and the innovative snack "Tsmatsi."	2022
3.	Kafune	"Cafune" is a social cafe in Rustavi, whose mission is to strengthen less competitive groups and young people in the labor market by increasing access to professional training, employment, and various cultural and educational events.	2022
4.	Redo	The mission of this social enterprise is to employ and reintegrate individuals in conflict with the law. "Redo" produces decorative tiles for paving yards.	2022
5.	Poteria	The mission of "Poteria" is the economic empowerment of women with various needs and the promotion of resocialization. It combines a ceramic workshop, art therapy courses for working with clay, educational, and exhibition space in one facility.	2021
6.	Ethnodesign	The mission of the social store "Ethnodesign" is to improve the economic situation of traditional craftsmen by developing their products and promoting their sales. Along with the traditional sales channel, the store "Ethnodesign" plans to build, equip, and place a "mobile store" in various crowded places.	2021
7.	Kodala	The social enterprise "Kodala" promotes the resocialization of disabled people and socially vulnerable youth, their integration into society, and decent employment. "Kodala" creates handmade, environmentally friendly, safe wooden toys, souvenirs, and children's furniture. The enterprise plans to introduce dual and inclusive professional training programs for disabled and socially vulnerable persons.	2021
8.	Babale	Babale's mission is to provide independent living for people with Down syndrome through employment and professional skills development. The social enterprise "Babale" combines two spaces: a creative workshop, where young people with special needs receive education using a special methodology, get a job, create products, and a salon where works are exhibited and sold. Along with the local market, Babale plans to sell its products on the international online market, namely on Amazon.	2021
9.	Bebias	"Bebias" is a Georgian brand that offers customers hats hand-knitted by grandmothers. The mission of the enterprise is to strengthen grandmothers and provide them with a dignified old age.	2021

In total, the financial support provided for the period of 2022 amounted to 300,240 GEL, including 207,952 GEL for startups and 92,288 GEL for operating enterprises.

Consultations and Customized Technical Support:

Within the framework of the program, we provide social enterprises with tailored technical assistance to meet their needs.

In 2022, the information resource for social entrepreneurs was completely updated - <https://www.segeorgia.org>, offering interested users a variety of information about social entrepreneurs. The website includes informative animations and videos, scientific articles, studies, best examples, interesting links, training courses, and more.

More than 100 consultations were provided to social enterprises, covering various topics such as business plan refinement, accounting and financial management, communication strategy, branding, product development and design, creation of walking tours, social media management, HSP requirements, etc.

Improving the operating environment of social enterprises

Activities for improving the operating environment of social enterprises are carried out in several directions:

- Promotion of social entrepreneurship among young people

In order to promote social entrepreneurship among young people, in 2022 we revived the competition - "Young Ambassadors of Social Entrepreneurship" in an updated format.

The competition includes several stages:

In 2022, as part of the competition, over 200 young people were introduced to the concept of social entrepreneurship. Twenty-three participated in the summer school, from which four ambassadors were selected in four regions - Kvemo Kartli, Shida Kartli, Mtskheta-Mtianeti, and Samtskhe-Javakheti. The young ambassadors then introduced the concept of social entrepreneurship to their peers in their respective regions.

The final event of the competition is scheduled for March 2023, during which the winner will be announced.

"As an ambassador, I witnessed my own growth. I've discovered that if you believe in an idea and want to share its values, there is a lot of motivation, energy, and joy in the process. After each activity, I was not only tired but also very satisfied." - Anna, Ambassador in Mtskheta-Mtianeti.

"This project is very important for Khashuri. I really hope that it will become the foundation for the creation of the first social enterprise in Khashuri." - Mariami, Ambassador in Khashuri.

Importance and achievements of Social enterprises B2B exhibition

The 3rd B2B exhibition of social enterprises held on September 30 and October 1, 2022, was significant for fostering business relationships, promoting social entrepreneurship, and supporting the development of social enterprises in Georgia.

A total of 47 social and green enterprises took part in the exhibition, 11 of them were service providers, and 36 were production enterprises.

Key outcomes of the exhibition include:

- Over 130 business companies and organizations visited the exhibition.
- A total of 177 B2B meetings were conducted.
- 27 social enterprises received individual pro bono support from business companies.
- On-the-spot product sales by enterprises and the signing of partnership contracts amounting to 70,000 GEL.
- Formation of collaborations with long-term potential, enhancing the ability of enterprises to sell their products.

Impact fund Actio

Since 2021, the center's team has actively worked on developing the concept of an impact fund and promoting impact-oriented investing. By 2022, the concept had taken its final form, leading to the official presentation of the "Actio" fund on June 22. To date, Actio has successfully attracted two impact investors and one impact partner, committing a total investment of \$60,000 over the next five years. This investment is anticipated to significantly enhance the social and economic impact of at least ten social enterprises.

The impact fund "Actio," aims to provide social enterprises with both technical assistance and financial support totaling €50,000. Noteworthy is the introduction of an innovative financing mechanism tailored to the needs of social enterprises – a 0% loan. This support package, including a substantial increase in grant funding (€40,000), underscores Actio's commitment to fostering the growth of impactful social enterprises. An essential aspect of this support involves the evaluation of the social impact and results achieved by the enterprises.

Following the fund's presentation, the portfolio was opened, and applications are accepted on an open-door basis, evaluated by an independent investment committee. In 2022, Actio received four expressions of interest applications. Notably, two social enterprises, "Babale" and "Istorial," have progressed to the idea development stage.

Additionally, the year 2022 witnessed the establishment of the "Impact Investor Club" to promote the concept of impact investing. The club organized three meetings, gathering impact investors and individuals interested in the field.

To enhance awareness and understanding of Actio's mission and impact-oriented investing, a dedicated website, www.actio.ge, was launched. Various articles and videos were prepared to effectively communicate Actio's goals and initiatives.

Successful Case:

About Lataliishd:

Latliishd is an inspiring example of a community-based social enterprise initiated by women in the village of Latali in 2020. The enterprise aims to strengthen the community through education, the preservation of traditional crafts, labor integration, and social inclusion. Latliishd's mission is the economic and social empowerment of women living in the Latali community by promoting employment and teaching traditional crafts.

The social enterprise is situated in the municipality of Mestia, at the heart of the Latali community, adjacent to the central road. The factory building has undergone renovation, and the shared space includes a sewing area, a section dedicated to traditional crafts, open spaces for meetings and events, among other facilities. Additionally, the enterprise boasts a well-equipped yard where various activities, such as competitions, master classes, meetings, and other events, are organized during the summer season.

Key Success Factors of Latliishd Social Enterprise:

Community Initiatives: The enterprise was initiated by local community members who recognized the need for social inclusion and employment opportunities for women in the village. This community-driven approach ensures that the company's activities are deeply integrated with the needs of society.

Enterprise Viability: The business maintains economic sustainability and viability by selling various products, including Svan salt, soap, traditional ornamented clothing, bags, and offering master classes (such as traditional river gold mining). These diverse offerings contribute to the enterprise's financial health.

Sales Channels and Income Sources: The social enterprise utilizes multiple sales channels, including exhibitions, three stores in Mestia, online sales, and master classes. The income generated from these channels supports the financial sustainability of the enterprise. Additionally, the enterprise conducts educational programs for the population free of charge, showcasing its commitment to community development.

Skill Development: The enterprise plays a vital role in skill development by providing employment to women in the local community of Latali. Women are initially trained in needlework at a tailor shop and subsequently engage in steady work. The enterprise also imparts knowledge to young community members in the production of traditional Svan salt and soap.

Community Engagement: Latliishd actively engages with the community through workshops, events, and information programs. By fostering collaboration among local schools, government entities, and businesses, the enterprise contributes to building a sense of unity and shared purpose. Annual events, such as the chess tournament, further strengthen community bonds.

Collaboration: The enterprise has successfully established partnerships with local governments and non-profit organizations. This collaboration enhances access to resources, secures additional funding, and expands the network of support for Latliishd.

Additional Social Impact: Latliishd extends its social impact beyond economic empowerment. The enterprise promotes an environmental lifestyle by engaging in sustainability initiatives, including the development of solar panels and beekeeping. The use of solar panels reflects a commitment to energy independence in daily activities.

Measurement of Social Impact (Technical Assistance): With the support of CSRDG, Latliishd has implemented impact planning and evaluation mechanisms. This includes identifying community issues, defining social outcomes, introducing relevant indicators, developing a three-year plan of activities, outlining a theory of change, and evaluating impact. This structured approach ensures a comprehensive understanding of the enterprise's social impact.

Results:

- The enterprise currently employs 6 women, and 3 young individuals have received training in traditional Svan salt production.
- Latliishd organized a master class for tourists on gold extraction from the river using traditional Svan methods.
- The products of the social enterprise are consistently available in three stores in Mestia.
- Prior to CSRDG support, the enterprise had an average monthly income of 1500 GEL. With the assistance received, last year's income reached 22,500 GEL, reflecting a monthly income increase of at least 150%.

Future Plans: The enterprise aims to receive consulting assistance in implementing financial accounting and operational mechanisms, enhancing its financial management capabilities for sustained growth.

Conclusion: Latliishd stands as a promising example of a community-based social enterprise. By directly addressing local needs, actively involving community members, and establishing partnerships across different sectors, the initiative not only creates employment opportunities but also holds the potential to significantly contribute to the economic and social development of the

community. The substantial increase in income demonstrates the positive impact of strategic support from CSRDG on the enterprise's financial sustainability and success.

Project: Skill Building and Innovative Job Opportunities for Regional Development of Georgia

The Overall Objective of the project is “Developing and maintaining local human capital in order to promote social and economic empowerment in Guria, Kakheti and Kvemo Kartli regions.” In order to reach the goal, increasing regional potential in formal and informal education is planned under two specific objectives: to develop new employment opportunities via labour market demand-driven skill building for jobseekers and innovative linkages between jobseekers and potential employers; to equip the young population in selected regions studying in schools and VETs with sufficient skills and knowledge to use relevant employment opportunities.

Results achieved within the project by the end of 2022:

- Six **Learning and Employment Support Centers (LESC)** were established, enabling employment for nearly 200 locals and providing essential services like training, retraining, and skill development to over 1,000 job seekers.
- Six **Work Integration Social Enterprises (WISE)** were funded, aiding the integration of less competitive individuals into the workforce.
- Two **business projects** received funding to generate new employment opportunities in targeted regions.
- **The Idea and Entrepreneurship Lab (IEL)** was introduced across 29 schools, benefiting over 700 students by deepening their knowledge in various professions and nurturing entrepreneurial skills.
- An ongoing partnership exists with five **VETs** aimed at enhancing their organizational capabilities.

Learning and Employment Support Centers (LESC) are located in six cities across three Georgian regions: Guria (Ozurgeti and Chokhatauri), Kvemo Kartli (Bolnis and Tetrtskaro), and Kakheti (Telavi and Lagodekhi). The LESCs provide a comprehensive suite of services tailored for local job seekers, ranging from career counseling to professional knowledge and skill development. By establishing potential employer liaisons and exploring remote job opportunities, the centers foster innovative and inclusive employment via cross-sector collaboration.

The LESCs offer specialized training across four domains: Entrepreneurial Skills Course for business enthusiasts, Skills for Jobs Course for those in job search, MS Office Programme Course, and a course for those interested in freelancing or remote work.

Throughout the past year, the LESCs have made notable progress in equipping job seekers with skills aligned to market demands and linking them to potential employers. Their efforts have yielded significant outcomes as reflected by several [success stories](#).

Key outcomes of LESC's by the end of 2022:

- Services delivered to 1,200 individuals.
- Over 500 participants attended the training sessions.
- 191 individuals secured employment.
- 31 comprehensive courses were executed.
- In collaboration with Beka's School, more than 35 individuals were enrolled in English courses.
- Goethe Institute generously offered complimentary slots for German language courses to four of our beneficiaries.

Work Integration Social Enterprise (WISE):

To foster employment opportunities for vulnerable groups within the target regions, a grant competition led to the financing of six Social Enterprises (SE). These enterprises collectively received funding of 14,000 euros. Below are SEs financed in 2022:

“Redo” - Located in the Ozurgeti municipality, "Redo" focuses on the resocialization and reintegration of persons in conflict with the law. SE produces 16 distinct types of decorative tiles for yards. The primary objective is to amplify high-tech production capacity, employ and integrate vulnerable groups into economic activities. This not only reduces the likelihood of repeated crimes but also showcases success stories.

“Orbis Bude” - Based in the village of Samshvilde, SE "Orbis Bude" aims to support the local population, enlighten tourists, offer a range of services, and cultivate a respect for nature. They run an outdoor cafe and camping site. Over the past year, renovations took place, the kitchen was set up, and efforts were made to establish tourist routes and packages.

“Profesio” - This social cafe in Rustavi is dedicated to nurturing professional skills and facilitating the employment of members from large families. Envisioned as a hub for local youth, it offers a space for socializing, engaging in diverse activities, and initiating projects. During the reporting year, the focus was on equipping and setting up the cafe's kitchen.

In the reporting year, these SEs employed a combined total of nine individuals. Among those financed in 2022, "Orbis Bude", and "Profesio" are deep into preparatory stages and are expected to commence their operations in the upcoming year.

Grant Competition for Business Companies

During this reporting period, CSR DG persistently sought new and innovative partnerships with business companies. To encourage and bolster intersectoral collaboration, a grant competition was rolled out, aimed at fostering new employment opportunities. Two business projects, SoftLab and Language Laboratory, were awarded financial support, receiving 7,000 euros.

SoftLab - implemented by "Softgen", a Tbilisi-based software development firm, the SoftLab initiative strives to cultivate IT specialists in Guria who can effectively compete in both local and international markets. Collaborating closely with the Ozurgeti Municipality, suitable venues were secured for SoftLab's assessment and training sessions. Additionally, a workspace in the Technopark was technologically upgraded, catering to students lacking the required infrastructure for home-based learning. Out of the 64 enrolled participants, SoftLab provides a select group with a year-long programming course. Among them, a minimum of eight will secure positions within the SoftGen team, while other high-performing students will receive employment recommendations for partner organizations.

Language Laboratory is a modern-standard foreign language center. Set in Rustavi, Kvemo Kartli, the project's mission is to introduce a cutting-edge educational environment, granting local inhabitants access to quality education. Central to the project is the enhancement of employability, economic empowerment, and career growth. Complementing this, under the banner of corporate social responsibility, the Language Laboratory pledges to offer complimentary retraining for vulnerable groups. This includes orphans, neglected children, female victims of violence, and socioeconomically disadvantaged minors. As the initiative progresses, it's expected that the Language Laboratory will employ between six to eight individuals.

Idea and Entrepreneurship Lab (IEL)

To fulfill the project's objectives, entrepreneurship and career development clubs have been established in target region schools. These clubs introduce students to entrepreneurial skill-building programs. As part of this initiative, 29 schools have launched the IEL, with 11 of these schools joining in 2022. Engaging students as young as 12, the lab focuses on enhancing their knowledge and aptitudes, ensuring they make informed decisions about their future professions and fostering successful career paths.

During the reporting period, administration representatives and teachers from the selected schools received specialized training across various disciplines. In addition, School Initiatives Competition was held, culminating in **9 project ideas** from Guria, Kvemo Kartli, and Kakheti receiving micro-grants for implementation.

7 training sessions on "Entrepreneurial Skills Development and Project-Based Learning in General Education" were conducted. A total of **560 individuals** participated in the sessions, which included 89 administrators, 471 teachers, 268 from the project's first phase, and 203 from its second. As part of the school clubs' sustainability strategy, 84 individuals participated in planned activities. Additionally, **68 facilitators** received specialized training for the labs.

A total of **737 students** were actively involved in the clubs. The distribution includes 395 from the project's initial phase and 342 from its second. The school clubs hosted numerous events, resulting in

the identification and support of **79 independent initiatives**. To provide students with practical exposure, **58 meetings** with professionals from various fields were organized, and students had opportunities to explore successful entrepreneurial ventures.

During the reporting year, **a summer camp** dedicated to entrepreneurship and career development was organized, benefiting 43 enthusiastic teenagers.

VET

Active collaboration with 5 VETs in the target regions is ongoing to bolster their organizational development. The goal is to foster the creation of programs that align with the needs of the local labor market.

Needs Assessment for 3 VETs was conducted: **Modusi** (Kvemo Kartli); **Marneuli Community College** (Kvemo Kartli); **Horizonti** (Guria). Based on these evaluations, tailored action plans are being formulated. Additionally, with CSRDG's support, the College Modusi in Rustavi, Kvemo Kartli, introduced a short-term vocational training program titled "**Elevator Mechanic**".

Success Stories

The Miller Girl from Guria Crafting a Tourist Destination in Likhauri

Eka Salukvadze, a 32-year-old woman from Likhauri village in Ozurgeti, is a single mother to three children. She's transformed a 150-year-old water mill, aiming to establish a tourism hub in its vicinity. After participating in an entrepreneurial skills course at the Ozurgeti LESC, Eka transitioned her aspirations into a tangible business project. With the continuous guidance of career planning consultants, she secured funding and is optimistic about their continued support during the operational and developmental phases of her venture. Presently, Eka operates a family farm, the mill, and "Dolabi", welcoming guests with eco-friendly products.

Social Enterprise "Aisi" (a grant of 14,000 euros and consulting support was issued)

The primary objective of "Aisi" is to economically uplift women and the youth, fostering sustainability in Pshaveli and its neighboring villages. The enterprise offers sweets and healthy fast food made from local agricultural products to both tourists and locals. Featuring modern culinary facilities, it also houses a cozy cafe with three tables. The initiative has provided employment to eight women. Through a state-backed internship program, three women received training in confectionery and cafe management. After only eight months in operation, "Aisi" generated revenues exceeding 10,000 GEL.

Ia Tavdishvili, a resident of Tsikhisperdi village in Ozurgeti, is a 34-year-old single mother with three children and a high school education. Solely responsible for her family's well-being, Ia struggled to meet even basic financial requirements due to limited job prospects in her village. Guided by career planning consultants, she enrolled in the "How to Become a Freelancer and Start Working Remotely"

course at the Ozurgeti LESC. This experience has equipped her with new capabilities, and today, thanks to the consultants, she has secured multiple employment opportunities.

IEL - Rustavi N21 Public School

As part of the project, the school received funding for two initiatives: the "Emergency Aid Bracelet" and the "Cinema Club". The former, a collaboration with Ilia State University, resulted in the prototype of an electronic wristband designed to store vital personal information for emergency situations. Given Rustavi's lack of movie theaters, the student-established "Cinema Club" has garnered considerable attention and popularity.

Consumer Rights Protection Program

The Strategic Research and Development Center of Georgia initiated efforts towards consumer rights protection in 2009. The primary objective of this program is to establish an effective system for protecting consumer rights in Georgia.

Main Activities of the Department:

- 1. Raising Public Awareness*
- 2. Monitoring of State Structures and Consumer Market*
- 3. Advocacy of Legislative Reforms*
- 4. Consumer Consulting and Legal Assistance*

Raising Public Awareness Regarding consumer Rights

The program has prepared and published seven articles on its website, momxmarebeli.ge, addressing various issues. These articles include an overview of the newly adopted law on the protection of consumer rights and the practical application possibilities for citizens, antimicrobial resistance and its relation to food, dangers arising from melamine tableware, and others.

The momxmarebeli.ge program has also released 21 news articles on its website and Facebook page, highlighting instances of user rights violations. These violations were identified by the program itself and other reputable organizations, including cases involving harmful consumer products.

As part of the campaign to check for residues of antimicrobial drugs in eggs (for more information, refer to "Monitoring of state structures and consumer market" below), the program conducted five seminars in the following cities: Akhaltsikhe, Gori, Kutaisi, Lagodekhi, and Rustavi. These seminars focused on the dangers of using antimicrobial drugs, particularly in agriculture, and provided insights into the current situation in Georgia. A total of 133 participants from non-governmental and

community organizations, initiative groups, media, commercial organizations, local authorities, and educational institutions attended these seminars.

The program consistently attracts media attention, with its activities frequently covered, and program staff are often sought for comments on various issues related to consumer rights. In the year 2022, a total of 39 such coverages were documented across television, radio, online, and print media outlets operating in both Tbilisi and the regions of Georgia.

Monitoring of State Structures and Consumer Market

For several years, the program has raised concerns about the National Food Agency failing to meet the legal requirement of promptly informing the public about harmful products, posing a threat to public health and significantly undermining the effectiveness of food safety control.

Furthermore, starting in 2021, National Food Agency has been concealing the identification data of entrepreneurs and individuals in the control results it publishes, citing reasons related to the protection of personal information. However, this practice limits citizens' access to essential information about the food they consume.

In response to both of the aforementioned issues, the program, in collaboration with the Institute for the Development of Freedom of Information, submitted administrative complaints to the National Food Agency. Following the unsatisfactory resolution of the complaints, they pursued legal action and appealed to the court. As of 2022, no trial date has been scheduled.

The program persisted in monitoring the activities of the market surveillance agency and observed that the agency's jurisdiction for product safety control is considerably limited.

In early 2022, the program successfully concluded a crowdfunding campaign, where citizens generously donated funds for testing various food products for the presence of "Sudan Group" technical dyes. With over 2000 GEL collected, six samples were tested, revealing no violations.

During the fall of 2022, the program initiated another crowdfunding campaign to assess antimicrobial drug residues in eggs. By the end of December, more than 2000 GEL had been collected, and the campaign extended into 2023.

Major Achievements

The State Audit Service stands out as the first public agency to officially acknowledge the issue of timely and appropriate dissemination of information about harmful products identified by the State Audit Office, presenting corresponding recommendations. The evaluation and recommendations of the State Audit Service are detailed in the "Audit Report of Measures Implemented by the State to Ensure Food Safety," published in early 2022. Throughout the report's preparation, the State Audit Service engaged in prolonged communication with the Consumer Rights Protection Program, particularly concerning the highlighted issue.

While the State Audit Office has not yet rectified the mentioned shortcoming, the findings of the State Audit Service serve as a crucial step toward addressing the problem.

Advocacy for Legislative Reforms in Consumer Rights Protection

The program actively participated in discussions regarding the draft law on consumer rights protection and submitted ten proposed amendments to the Parliament of Georgia.

Furthermore, the program crafted a public appeal addressed to the Government of Georgia, expressing concern over the delay in implementing the "Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points" (HACCP) system - an internationally recognized safety control mechanism in the food sector initiated by National Food Agency. This delay was deemed detrimental to ongoing reforms in food safety and the alignment with European Union standards. Six additional organizations joined the appeal, which was developed on behalf of the Strategic Research and Development Center of Georgia.

Major Achievements:

- Since 2013, the program has been actively involved in the development of the draft law on consumer rights protection. The previous law, canceled in 2012, left a legal vacuum, exacerbating the challenges faced by consumers in Georgia. The country fell behind modern global practices, struggling to address internal issues. This led to an anomalous situation where entrepreneurs had an advantage over consumers.

- In 2013, the program became part of the working group established by the European Integration Committee of the Parliament of Georgia to draft the new consumer rights protection law. It made substantial contributions to the preparation of the draft and consistently advocated for its approval over the years. The law was finally adopted in 2022, aligning Georgia with key normative acts of the European Union in consumer rights protection. This achievement has enhanced the legal status of consumers, improved protection mechanisms, and provided greater incentives for the development of a modern, globally competitive business environment in the country.

During the final stages of the draft law consideration, at parliamentary hearings, the program successfully advocated for the inclusion of four recommendations in the approved law, with one receiving partial acknowledgment. Among these, a crucial change was made to prevent the deterioration of consumer rights as defined by the law through other normative acts. This modification addressed a concern raised by the program, eliminating ambiguity that could have undermined the law's effectiveness.

In response to the program's appeal to the Government of Georgia opposing the postponement of the introduction of the "Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points" (HACCP) system, the Ministry of Environment Protection and Agriculture did not approve the postponement. Consequently, HACCP became mandatory for nearly all types of entrepreneurs in the food sector from June 1, 2023. This represents a significant stride towards enhancing food safety in the country.

Consumer Counseling and Legal Assistance

The program extended 136 consultations to citizens, covering a range of legal and non-legal issues, and provided lawyer services in three cases.

Major Achievements:

- A notable success arising from the program's consultations was a case where a citizen successfully reclaimed a significant amount of money paid for substandard furniture from a store.
- Through the legal services offered by the program, consumers were able to recover rightfully demanded sums from entrepreneurs in two instances.

Despite offering free legal services for years, it wasn't until 2021 that individuals seeking to address violations of consumer rights through legal means emerged. Out of three such cases, two were successfully concluded, while one remains ongoing. In doing so, the program has established legal precedents for consumer rights protection through the courts, setting examples for both consumers and entrepreneurs.

Success Case: The Court Satisfied the Customer's Request

In April 2021, a group of tourists from the United Arab Emirates arrived in Georgia and rented a car from Mimino LLC. Along with the rental fee, the tourists were charged a \$200 deposit in case of potential damage to the vehicle.

Unfortunately, the tourists were involved in an accident during their trip. Although no one was injured, the patrol determined that the driver of the second car was at fault. Despite this, Mimino LLC refused to refund the \$200 deposit to the tourists. Negotiations with the company proved fruitless, leading the tourists to seek assistance from our organization. Subsequently, we prepared a lawsuit on behalf of one of the tourists and filed it with the court.

During the court session, the representative of Mimino LLC failed to appear. Consequently, the court ruled in favor of the tourist, ordering the return of the \$200 deposit.

It is noteworthy that the refunded amount was generously donated by the tourists to our organization, and it was utilized for laboratory research on consumer products.

This case highlights that the primary objective for the foreign citizens was the restoration of justice. We hope this example serves as an inspiration for other individuals to assert their rights, contributing to the cultivation of a culture of consumer respect in Georgia.

Promoting Open Governance direction is targeted at supporting cooperation between government and civil sector to introduce open and needs-based governance in Georgia. In order to achieve program objectives, we operate within two programs – Local Government Development Program, and Promoting European Integration Program.

Local Government Development Program – to introduce transparency, accountability and sustainable development principles into the governance process by local authorities.

Promoting the European Integration - to build CSO capacity to better identify, monitor and advocate for social, economic and cultural rights of citizens.

Local Government Development Program

One of the main motivators of founding our organization was to develop local democracy and to form civic culture by supporting groups of local activists. Since 1998, we have been actively working on decentralization issues of governance systems. Years of work and many implemented initiatives made a significant contribution to the local self-government development. Therefore, Good Governance Program emerged as one of the leading directions of our organization.

Program activities

Practical studies and assessment reports prepared by our experts cover issues such as introduction and implementation of activities to promote fiscal transparency and program expenditure administration of self-governing units, introduction of possibilities to consider citizens' interests in the process of formation and disposing of the municipal property, introduction of innovative systems for democratic governance, promotion and further development of activities considered under Georgia's Decentralization Strategy Action, increasing citizen participation in the decision-making process by authorities, etc. Through studies and recommendations elaborated within the Program, we help central and local institutions in finding solution to problems.

In addition, we actively participate in ongoing reform initiatives and projects, both locally and internationally.

A combination of monitoring and consultation process is a significant feature of CSRDG's approach in working with self-governance bodies. Publicizing the main flaws and problems of local self-governments, that were identified through monitoring process, help them focusing on and addressing these problems. Provision of existing recommendations, technical assistance that considers consultations and active work with local self-governments, represents a solid foundation for their improvement.

In 2022, the main activities of the Program were targeted at monitoring transparency and accountability frameworks under two main blocks: Monitoring the effectiveness of municipalities in the view of their expanding responsibilities and resources and Monitoring the implementation of some of the EU-Georgia AA related reforms at the local level.

The data collection process includes obtaining public information from the target local authorities, on the one hand, and compliancy monitoring of transparency norms provided by law.

The analysis was based on the system developed by the Budget Monitoring Network in previous years, which reflects the transparency procedures and the timiframes of the current legislation.

The program is still focused on eight criteria elaborated for the previous Program:

- Existence of the Public Advisory Council in the municipality;
- Number of public hearings regarding issues of a high public interest;
- Organization of off-site sessions of the municipality’s representative body;
- Informing the public about the upcoming meetings of the representative body in advance;
- Informing the public about committee meetings of the representative body in advance;
- Accountability of the members and officials of the representative body;
- Usefulness of the information available of the municipality’s web site;
- Informing the public about decisions made prior to approving the Action Plan.

CSRDG experts were collecting/ analyzing the information and assessing the effectiveness of 5 target municipalities (Ozurgeti, Chokhatauri, Lanchkhuti, Telavi, Lagodekhi) within two target regions (Guria and Kakheti). Requested materials mainly related to the: minutes of the Sakrebulo sittings and Sakrebulo’s standing committee meetings held in 2022; materials of administrative proceedings; information regarding meetings of Sakrebulo members with citizens and electorate held in 2022; information regarding expenditure incurred by Sakrebulo members under “Expenditure of the functioning Sakrebulo member” budget line, of the same period, etc. In addition, the information posted on Sakrebulo’s web sites and other publicly available information was periodically checked and further analyzed.

In order to support proper institutionalization of basic administrative procedures at local municipalities, 93 recommendations were submitted to target LG representatives by program experts. To support the efficient ways of implementing submitted recommendations and provide consultations and expert advice 36 separate special consultation meetings were held with the representatives of local authorities of the target regions.

The mentioned recommendations mainly concerned the following topics:

- Increase the transparency and accountability of activities held by authorities;
- Fulfillment of obligations to proactively disclose public information;

- Elaboration of a strategy with accompanying action plan, in order to increase transparency and good faith of authorities;
- Creation and implementation of guarantees of citizen engagement forms;
- Procedures for co-funding of projects with social mission and allocation of specific funds for that matter in LG budgets;
- Municipal waste management.

59 submitted recommendations were accepted / taken in account by target municipalities during the reporting period. Based on these recommendations, Sakrebulo has approved 12 significant types of regulations/normative acts.

CSRDG experts continued to monitor fulfillment of two obligations under the EU Association Agreement: to ensure the participation of civil society in the public decision-making process, and to enhance the involvement of civil society in the public policy-making process. In particular, active monitoring of activities of Public Chambers (so called “Sazogadoebrivi Darbazi”) at Sakrebulo as well as Civil Advisory Councils at City Halls in target municipalities was conducted. 7 trainings on role of budget applications and SE support during LG budgeting processes were conducted in Ozurgeti and Lagodekhi Municipalities. CSRDG experts were conducted monitoring of implementation of OGP action plan in Ozurgeti Municipality and based on results special monitoring report was prepared and discussed with LG representatives.

Program experts also worked on municipal waste management issues in terms of addressing the identified problems. 6 months monitoring reports of implementation of waste management municipal plans with special recommendations for each three target municipalities - Ozurgeti, Telavi and Lagodekhi were widely discussed with LG representatives and relevant stakeholders. The monitoring field focused on the municipality's waste management plan for the period 2018-2022. On this matter, 15 recommendations out of submitted 39 were accepted. The recommendations primarily addressed issues related to the implementation of mandates outlined in the waste management plan. Furthermore, careful consideration was given to the transition to a source-separated system for plastic waste. This encompassed aspects such as: To expand the geographical area of municipal waste collection services for all settlements within the administrative units; To significantly increase in the number of waste bins allocated to these administrative units, in order to increase the efficiency of the municipal waste collection service; To allocate the adequate number of waste bins; To improve the frequency of household waste disposal from waste bins; To make an inventory of spontaneous waste disposal sites in settlements of the administrative units (identification of location, volume, composition), and to ensure cleaning of these sites and restoration of the area; To plan and implement an effective information campaign on local issues related to municipal waste management to raise public awareness, including the ability to identify waste types or develop habits of their separate collection.

Program team also conducted analytical research on practices and opportunities of SE support by LGs and prepared special recommendations for target LGs. In order to present monitoring reports / study results 10 discussions were arranged with relevant stakeholders.

Promoting the European Integration Program

Since the signing of the EU-Georgia Association Agreement (EUAA) in 2014, CSRDG has been promoting the multifaceted engagement of Georgia's regional public organizations in monitoring and advocating for the timely and proper implementation of the agreement.

The purpose of this program is to inform the public about the obligations outlined in the Association Agreement. As it is crucial for civil society to oversee the implementation of the association agreement and call upon the authorities to fulfill it properly, it is imperative to involve more civil society organizations in the country's European integration efforts.

There is why we perform and support explaining and popularization of the obligations envisaged in the Association Agreement, as well as monitoring and advocacy of EU-Georgia Association Agreement timely and proper implementation.

We conduct trainings and competitions for media, non-governmental organizations and high school students. In order to encourage engagement of non-governmental sector in monitoring EU-Georgia AA implementation, we award grants and have established effective cooperation network of active organizations.

In order to promote Georgia's European integration, we created an educational web site www.asocireba.ge. The web site is available for everyone, and contains the following:

1. Educational vide lessons, which allow oneself to get an quick understanding of what Europe is and what its values are, what the Association Agreement means and what obligations it envisages and what is the state of their implementation;
2. Quizzes, which allow oneself to test his/her knowledge of certain topics in Europe and the EU Association Agreement;
3. Publications elaborated by us and our partners, on the monitoring results of the implementation of obligations under the EU-Georgia Association Agreement;
4. Graphic presentation of implementation of the EU-Georgia Association Agreement in various fields (see www.asocireba/timeline), accompanied by the detailed methodology of assessment, list of relevant legislation and responsible bodies, as well as links to available publications and research papers.

Main activities:

1. Preparation of expert assessments regarding the fulfillment of obligations outlined in the association agreement and visual representation of the progress made based on the obtained results.

2. Conducting training sessions for representatives of public organizations on matters related to the association agreement.
3. Providing open access to concise explanatory videos and addressing questions related to the association agreement.
4. Offering small grants (ranging from €5,000 to €10,000) to support monitoring and advocacy efforts at the local and regional levels for the fulfillment of obligations outlined in the association agreement.

Trainings for representatives of public organizations on association agreement issues

We conduct training sessions on various topics within the scope of the association to empower public organizations and advance the country's European integration.

During the reporting period, we organized two online training sessions on consumer rights and approaches to civil monitoring of the fulfillment of obligations outlined within the framework of the Association Agreement, specifically in the areas of food safety. These sessions had a total of 35 participants. Additionally, we hosted two online workshops to discuss the progress in implementing the 12 recommendations prepared by the European Commission and the relevant processes in response to Georgia's application for membership in the European Union. These workshops had a total of 44 participants.

Open access to affiliate agreement short explanation videos and related questions

The Georgia-EU Association Agreement encompasses over 30 different fields, making it a voluminous and technically intricate document. To ensure that the public can easily access information about the commitments made within the framework of the Association Agreement in a user-friendly manner, we create short, engaging videos covering various aspects of the agreement's agenda. These videos are accompanied by explanatory materials and quiz questions to assess your understanding. You can visit the Associreba page at <http://asocireba.ge>.

During the reporting period, we prepared and published four explanatory animations addressing the issues outlined in the Association Agreement on the asocireba.ge website:

o International environmental agreements

<https://www.asocireba.ge/learn/?card=142>

o Principles of environmental protection <https://www.asocireba.ge/learn/?card=145>

o Biodiversity protection according to the association agreement

<https://www.asocireba.ge/learn/?card=147>

o Protection of user rights <https://www.asocireba.ge/learn/?card=149>

Small grants (€5,000–€10,000) for monitoring and advocacy at the local/regional level for the implementation of the obligation under the association agreement

To actively engage public organizations in advancing the country's European integration, we announce grant competitions to support monitoring and advocacy efforts aimed at fulfilling the obligations outlined in the Association Agreement.

During the reporting period, we organized three grant competitions and awarded a total of 24 small grants. In six instances, the grant commission referred the applications to CSRDG's "Grants Laboratory" for further enhancement, and they were approved for funding only after significant improvements. Furthermore, following the allocation of funds, we selected three mentor organizations to guide six relatively inexperienced grantees, and mentorship micro-grants were provided to support their efforts.

Preparation of expert assessments on the fulfillment of the obligations imposed by the association agreement and visualization of the state of fulfillment of the obligations imposed by the results obtained

In 2021-2022, the grantors prepared ten reports assessing the fulfillment of obligations outlined in the Association Agreement. These reports were subsequently posted on the asocireba.ge website in 2022:

o Monitoring and evaluation of the introduction of the corporate reporting system:

Part 1: Analysis of legislation <https://www.asocireba.ge/files/YoungEconomists-part1c.pdf>

Part. 2: Evaluation of the quality of preparation of reports

<https://www.asocireba.ge/files/YoungEconomists-part2.pdf>

o Monitoring of activities of child rights protection and support departments in Kharagauli, Zestafoni, Sachkhere and Chiatura municipalities

https://www.asocireba.ge/files/Step_Kharagauli_Child_Rights_2022.pdf

o Waste recycling-composting report by Imereti municipalities

https://www.asocireba.ge/files/Spectri_Waste_Management_Imereti_2022.pdf

- o The process of making environmental decisions in the Guria region - monitoring results and recommendations https://www.asocireba.ge/files/EIA_Monitoring_Guria_2022.pdf
- o Monitoring the implementation of EU directives in the field of labor in the Imereti region https://www.asocireba.ge/files/RCI_Bright_Future_Labor_Law_2022.pdf
- o Monitoring of labor rights and safe work in public institutions of Imereti <https://www.asocireba.ge/files/Bright-Future-Labour-Rights-in-Public-Bodies-in-Imereti-2022.pdf>
- o Monitoring the awareness of honey producers in Racha https://www.asocireba.ge/files/Racha_Honey_Producers_Awareness_Monitoring_2022.pdf
- o Waste management monitoring in Khashuri municipality https://www.asocireba.ge/files/Qartlosi_Waste_Managment_Khashuri_2022.pdf
- o Research on the effectiveness of food safety control in public catering establishments https://www.asocireba.ge/files/YFA_monitoring_of_catering_services_2022c.pdf
and recommendations for improving the situation https://www.asocireba.ge/files/YFA_recommendations_for_catering_services_2022c.pdf
- o Compliance of the activities of vocational educational institutions in the Kakheti region with the obligations under the Association Agreement with the European Union https://www.asocireba.ge/files/Social_Umbrella_TVET_Kakheti_2022.p

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