


# GENDER ASSESSMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SYSTEMS



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 **UN  
WOMEN**  
United Nations Entity for Gender Equality  
and the Empowerment of Women

This study was undertaken by ACT with technical and financial support of UN Women, the Swiss Cooperation Office for the South Caucasus (SCO) and the Austrian Development Cooperation (ADC). The study was updated in June 2018 by UN Women consultant Nato Alhazishvili within the framework of the inception phase of the project “Women’s Economic Empowerment in the South Caucasus”, funded by SCO.

*The views expressed in this publication are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the views of UN Women, the United Nations or any of its affiliated organizations or that of SCO or ADC.*

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# ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

<b>ACT</b>	Analysis and Consulting Team
<b>ADC</b>	Austrian Development Cooperation
<b>ALCP</b>	Alliances Lesser Caucasus Programme
<b>CBO</b>	Community Based Organizations
<b>CEDAW</b>	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
<b>CENN</b>	Caucasus Environmental NGO Network
<b>CiDA</b>	Civil Development Agency
<b>CSS</b>	Center for Social Sciences
<b>ECMI</b>	European Centre for Minority Issues
<b>ENPARD</b>	European Neighborhood Programme for Agriculture and Rural Development
<b>FAO</b>	Food and Agriculture Organization
<b>FGD</b>	Focus group discussions
<b>FTF</b>	Face-to-face interviews
<b>GEL</b>	Georgian Lari
<b>GPFI</b>	Global Partnership for Financial Inclusion
<b>GRB</b>	Gender responsive budgeting
<b>ICCN</b>	International Center for Conflict and Negotiation
<b>IDI</b>	In-depth interviews
<b>IDP</b>	Internally Displaced Person
<b>IFC</b>	International Finance Corporation
<b>MoA</b>	Ministry of Agriculture
<b>MRDI</b>	Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure
<b>NAP</b>	National Action Plan
<b>NGO</b>	Non-governmental organization
<b>SCO</b>	Swiss Cooperation Office for the South Caucasus
<b>SHG</b>	Self-help group
<b>SME</b>	Small and medium sized enterprises
<b>TVET</b>	Technical vocational education and training
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>UN Women</b>	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Programme
<b>USAID</b>	United States Agency for International Development
<b>VET</b>	Vocational Education and Training
<b>WIC</b>	Women's Information Centre

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The **Gender Assessment of Agriculture and Local Development Systems** was conducted by ACT with the technical and financial support of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), the Swiss Cooperation Office (SCO) for the South Caucasus, and the Austrian Development Cooperation (ADC). The study was updated through a desk review in June 2018 by UN Women consultant Natalia Alhazishvili within the framework of the inception phase of the project “Women’s Economic Empowerment in the South Caucasus”, funded by SCO. No new data was collected to update the original survey data.

This study provides an up-to-date analysis from a gender perspective of the existing policies, programmes and systems related to agriculture and local development implemented by national and local governments as well as key development partners. The study covers the Autonomous Republic of Adjara and five regions of Georgia: Kakheti, Samtskhe-Javakheti, Kvemo Kartli, Shida Kartli, and Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti. These are regions where SCO, ADC and UN Women have implemented development initiatives.

The findings and recommendations are based on an analysis of data collected using a mixture of qualitative and quantitative approaches, including the review of relevant research and literature, 30 key informant and 16 focus group interviews, as well as a survey reaching 2,400 respondents (53% female and 47% male) in the target regions. For the study update, an additional 16 interviews were conducted with key informants between December 2017 and May 2018. The study presents key findings and recommendations for policymaking, institutional and operational improvements for relevant ministries and local governments, as well as recommendations for development partners’ programmatic interventions. The key findings are as follows:

Gender equality is not mainstreamed or is insufficiently mainstreamed in relevant regional and village

level policies: the different needs, interests and perspectives of men, women, boys, and girls are not systematically taken into consideration. There is a clear lack of synergy between gender equality policies and the sectorial agricultural and regional development policies. Ministries lack gender-sensitive outreach strategies and often do not collect gender disaggregated data, which could allow for an analysis of the different needs of women and men or of the impact of policies and programmes on women and men respectively. Some employees of central bodies lack an understanding of gender equality and gender mainstreaming. On 2 July 2017 the Inter-Agency Commission on Gender Equality, Violence against Women and Domestic Violence was created by Governmental Decree No. 286. It unites representatives of all respective ministries as well as the Public Defender’s Office, the Legal Aid Service, the Public Broadcaster, the Gender Equality Council of the Parliament and the Supreme Court. The Commission’s mandate covers gender equality, violence against women and domestic violence, as well as other issues on the implementation of the UN Security Council resolutions on Women, Peace and Security. The establishment of such a national-level institutional mechanism for gender equality and the empowerment of women in the Executive Branch of the Government was identified as a recommendation in the original version of the study.

**Context-specific social and cultural barriers and unpaid work prevent women from going beyond subsistence farming to active, income generating involvement in an agricultural business.** Due to prevailing traditional gender stereotypes, women are rarely engaged in activities outside the household. This situation is nearly the same in all target regions, with increased exclusion (due to language and cultural barriers) for women in areas populated by ethnic minorities in Kvemo Kartli and Samtskhe-Javakheti. Gender stereotypes, however, do not prevent women from participating in subsistence agricultural activities. On average, women engage in agricultural work 80 days more than men do, yet their involve-

ment in this mostly unpaid labor is not recognized as the prevailing attitudes are that women should stay at home and take care of the children. Women also remain the primary caregivers and perform the majority of domestic chores.

**Existing gender stereotypes prevent women from participating in planning and decision-making processes at all levels of public life.** Women are less informed than men and rarely participate in public, local community meetings or trainings carried out by local governments, extension services, TVETs and/or development organizations. There is a certain discrepancy, however, between the results obtained from the surveys and focus groups on the one hand and existing data and key informant interviews on the other: according to the surveys and focus group findings, there is little to no difference between women's and men's access to certain services, decision-making power or division of certain types of labor. These conflicting pictures might be caused by a **lack of understanding of what gender equality means among the surveyed respondents/focus groups, prevalent gender stereotypes** among the rural population, or general agreement with the status quo. These paradoxes must be considered by local authorities and NGOs that work in these regions.

**A large part of the surveyed population experiences financial difficulties: this may be influenced or worsened by restricted access to productive resources, knowledge and expertise.** A vast majority of the population produces small quantities of agricultural products; just enough for household consumption, or even less. Access to irrigation water, and to a smaller extent, access to agricultural land are the key challenges in most regions. Access to land cultivation equipment, fertilizers, herbicides, fungicides, and insecticides is also highly restricted in most regions, mainly due to relatively high costs. About 30% of the population has additional income from non-agricultural activities, however, it is small, and women earn half of what men earn. Many survey respondents indicated a wish to have a permanent job outside of the agricultural sector, as the latter is less stable. They do not plan to expand farming nor improve their agricultural/farming knowledge and/or skills. Only 1.4% of the surveyed population has used

extension services, and a limited number of TVETs offer agricultural education. Gender stereotypes may further prevent women from getting agricultural training, and fewer women than men are aware of what the extension services offer. While agricultural cooperatives may be a path to increased production, very few respondents are currently involved in cooperatives, and women constitute only 25% of the membership base.

**Limited access to basic services and social infrastructure may further hamper income-generating activities.** More than 70% of the surveyed population lack access to a sewage system, while 30% do not have access to a garbage disposal. The latter disproportionately affects women, since they perform this task to a greater extent than men. Some 30.8% of the population does not have access to a kindergarten. Access varies greatly across regions, with the situation being the most acute in Kvemo Kartli and Samtskhe-Javakheti. Given that women are responsible for most of the unpaid care and household work, lacking access to social infrastructure and basic services may prevent them from getting a paid job and from further engagement in income-generating activities and local decision-making, as well as limit their mobility and leisure time.

The international development community, in cooperation with central and local government and NGOs, has made various efforts aimed at increasing the engagement or participation of women in decision-making processes, including planning and budgeting at the local level, however, with certain drawbacks: **there is still a lack of a long-term strategic approach to women's (economic) empowerment. Additionally, gaps in coordination among different actors exist and initiatives are not always properly planned and based on needs assessment studies. Capacities to mainstream gender in interventions (at all stages) vary, and are generally insufficient.**

The experience from the establishment of over 50 women's self-help groups (SHG) and Community Based Organizations (CBO) in four regions in Georgia shows that there is great and still under-utilized potential that can significantly contribute to local de-

velopment and income-generating agricultural and husbandry production. **The increased participation of active women in local planning, budgeting and decision-making processes, as well as the direct implementation of women-led local projects that improve social infrastructure or support women's skills and abilities to engage in income-generating agricultural production deserve further exploration and support.**

**Gender responsive budgeting (GRB) and women's participation in local planning is a promising process to follow and support in order to achieve more sustainable and gender-equitable results.**

At this stage, however, it is not possible to measure the impact of GRB local efforts, as these are still primarily at the stage of political commitments from local governments to take the needs of men and women more equally into account during the budgeting process. Minor additions to local budgets have been

made in the selected municipalities, but GRB efforts do not yet reflect a systemic approach.

**Gender Advisory Groups in municipalities also hold promise; however, the lack of power and expertise of the staff holding these positions is an obstacle to achieving more substantial results.**

The institutional mechanisms in municipalities need to possess the expertise, capacity and power necessary to promote gender mainstreaming. Amendments to the Law on Gender Equality were adopted in July 2017 and entered into force after the municipal elections in 2017. The amendments stipulate that municipality mayor can determine the civil servant responsible for gender equality issues. No provision was made in the law regarding building capacity of these civil servants. **Linking women with markets**, for example through small agencies collecting milk from local women, is another initiative which can be considered a best practice and recommended for expansion.

# INTRODUCTION

The Gender Assessment of Agriculture and Local Development Systems was conducted by ACT with technical and financial support from the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), the Swiss Cooperation Office (SCO) for the South Caucasus, and the Austrian Development Cooperation (ADC) between August 2015 and February 2016. The geographic coverage of the research includes the Autonomous Republic of Adjara and five regions: Kvemo Kartli, Samtskhe-Javakheti, Kakheti, Shida Kartli and Samegrelo. The study was later updated through a desk review in June 2018 within the framework of the inception phase of the project “Women’s Economic Empowerment in the South Caucasus”, funded by SCO. No new data was collected to update the original survey data

The study provides an up-to-date analysis of the existing policies, programmes and systems related to agriculture and local development implemented by national and local governments as well as development partners, and how these operate at the local level from a gendered perspective. Using quantitative survey data, key informant interviews, and focus group discussions, this study provides a demographic situation analysis of the population residing in the target regions. Special attention is given to the gendered division of labor in agricultural value chains as well as the cultural, social and context-specific barriers to women’s active involvement in agricultural business and local decision-making. Finally, the study provides recommendations for policymaking, institutional and operational changes to relevant ministries

and local governments, as well as recommendations for development partners for programmatic interventions aimed at assisting national partners to improve policies and service provision.

SCO has been supporting different initiatives aimed at rural and agriculture development in Adjara, Kvemo Kartli, Samtskhe Javakheti, Kakheti, Imereti, Racha-Lechkhumi and Kvemo Svaneti, Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti and Mtskheta-Mtianeti, where gender has been addressed as a crosscutting issue. ADC has contributed to regional and local decentralization in Kvemo Kartli, and also to rural and agricultural development by supporting the capacity of the development of the Ministry of Agriculture in specific components. ADC also supported the forest sector reform programme, including civil society initiatives at the local level in the Autonomous Republic of Adjara, Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti, Samtskhe-Javakheti, Racha-Lechkhumi and Kvemo Svaneti, Kvemo Kartli, Mtskheta-Mtianeti, and Kakheti. Gender equality and women’s empowerment are considered as crosscutting issues in these initiatives. UN Women has worked with grassroots IDP and conflict-affected as well as ethnic minority women’s groups towards their empowerment in Kvemo Kartli, Shida Kartli and Samegrelo. In addition to the analysis of local development systems and gendered divisions of labor in the agricultural value chains, the above-mentioned development partners, with this study, want to assess the effectiveness as well as the limitations of their approaches in the broader context of regional and local development processes and systems.



# 1. ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

Within the scope of the research project, different methods of data collection were applied. The triangulation approach implies the use of primary and secondary data collection as well as qualitative and quantitative methods. Importantly, one and the same question is addressed via a number of data collection methods, and at the same time each data collection method addresses a number of questions. Among them, and on different levels, the desk review mostly provides information on national level policies and mechanisms, while the survey and focus groups primarily address the regional level. Interviews with key informants provide information on the national as well as regional levels. Desk research

enabled the analysis of whether or not gender equality principles are considered in agriculture-related legislation and programmes. Key informant/in-depth interviews provided us with a thorough understanding of the challenges that rural populations face, while focus group discussions provided the views of the beneficiaries of programmes focused on the empowerment of women. Finally, the quantitative survey provided extensive information on the needs of local populations, as well as regional and gender differences in agricultural production, involvement in local decision-making processes, as well as access to credit, services and technologies.

**Table no. 1:**  
Gender Assessment of Agriculture and Local Development System Research Design

Method	Desk Research	Qualitative Study	Qualitative Study	Quantitative Survey
Technique	Review of relevant literature/ secondary data	In-depth interviews (IDI)	Focus group discussions (FGD)	Face-to-face interviews (FTF)
Target Group	-	Key informants	Rural women and men	Population of target regions
Sample Size	-	30 interviews <sup>1</sup>	16 FGDs	2,400 interviews
Sampling Method	-	Purposive sampling	Purposive sampling	Stratified cluster sampling
Study Area	-	Tbilisi and 6 target regions of Georgia	6 target regions of Georgia	6 target regions of Georgia
Length of IDI/ FGD	-	30-40 minutes	2-2,5 hours	40-45 minutes
Updated version		16 interviews <sup>2</sup>	-	-

1 For details, see Table 4.List of key informants

2 For details, see Table 5.List of key informants for the updated report

## 2. BACKGROUND

### Overview of key gender equality policies in Georgia

In 1994, Georgia ratified the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). Gender equality is reflected in the Georgian Constitution and numerous laws, policies, strategies and action plans. These include, but are not limited to, the Human Rights Strategy, the Gender Equality Law and its action plans, the Anti-Domestic Violence Law and its action plans, the Anti-Trafficking Law with relevant action plans, the Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security, and finally the Labor Code.

The most recent concluding observations of the CEDAW Committee to Georgia State Party (2014) place special emphasis on the needs, priorities and economic empowerment of women living in rural areas. “The Committee recommends that the State Party ensure that rural women have adequate access to social, health-care and other basic services and economic opportunities, in addition to equal opportunities to participate in political and public life, particularly relating to the agricultural sector. The Committee also recommends that the state party ensure the availability of nurseries, in addition to shelters and other services in rural areas for victims of domestic violence. It further recommends that the state party provide sex-disaggregated data on land ownership in its next periodic report”.<sup>3</sup> Currently, the Government of Georgia is working on the sixth periodic report on the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against

Women (CEDAW) for submission to the Committee in September 2018.

Despite significant progress in terms of the legislative and policy landscape related to gender equality, challenges remain regarding implementation and impact on the ground. According to the 2017 Global Gender Gap Report, Georgia ranked 94 among 144 economies according to how well they use “their female talent pool, based on economic, educational, health-based and political indicators”.<sup>4</sup> Georgia scored 54.5 in the 2012 Women’s Economic Opportunity Index, where a score of 100 represents a favorable environment. Georgia holds the 59<sup>th</sup> position among 128 countries included in this index.<sup>5</sup> “Women’s economic opportunity is defined as a set of laws, regulations, practices, customs and attitudes that allow women to participate in the workforce under conditions equal to those of men, as employees or as business owners. The index is composed of the following determinants: General Business Environment, Women’s Legal and Social Status, Education and Training, Access to Finance, Labour Policy and Practice”.<sup>6</sup> Georgia is ranked 76 out of 159 countries in the Gender Inequality Index (GII), published annually by UNDP. The GII is a composite index that measures gender inequalities in reproductive health, empowerment and economic status.<sup>7</sup> The Global Gender Gap Index, the Women’s Economic Opportunity Index and the Gender Inequality Index all suggest that women’s economic opportunities in Georgia are limited.

Despite the existence of numerous policies and laws with gender equality provisions, the reality shows that (a) commitments to gender equality lack time-

3 CEDAW Conclusive comments on the fourth and fifth joint periodical reports, CEDAW/C/GEO/CO/4-5, paragraph 33, July 2014.

4 World Economic Forum. The Global Gender Gap Report, 2017. Available at [http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF\\_GGGR\\_2017.pdf](http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GGGR_2017.pdf).

5 Women’s Economic Opportunity, A global index and ranking from the Economist Intelligence Unit. 2012.

6 Gender Equality in Georgia on the Bases of International Indices and Ratings. Nani Bendeliani, CSS, 2012.

7 UNDP. Gender Inequality Index, 2016. Available at <http://hdr.undp.org/en/composite/GII>.

bound targets, baselines and indicators to measure progress, although it should be noted that these details have been significantly improved in the new National Action Plans on gender equality issues;<sup>8</sup> (b) commitments lack budget allocations, with an over-reliance on the financial support of donors; and (c) sex-disaggregated data is not collected and/or not analyzed in many areas, despite some improvements in recent years.

In a previous study conducted in Georgia, a representative of a women's organization claimed that the Government of Georgia adopts laws and other related documents, however, does not provide funds for their realization. "There is no political will in our country. [...] They adopted a law, but the state does not allot funds for its implementation, which means that this is not a priority for it. However [...] the state will be glad if its implementation is funded by SIDA, for example".<sup>9</sup>

At the national level, the Inter-Agency Commission on Gender Equality, Violence against Women and Domestic Violence is the institutional mechanism for gender equality and the empowerment of women in the Executive Branch of the Government. It was created by Governmental Decree No. 286 on 2 July 2017. It unites representatives of all respective ministries as well as the Public Defender's Office, the Legal Aid Service, the Public Broadcaster, the **Gender Equality Council** of the Parliament and the Supreme Court.

The Commission's mandate covers gender equality, violence against women and domestic violence, as well as other issues on the implementation of the UN Security Council resolutions on Women, Peace and Security. The Gender Equality Council of the Parliament of Georgia, the body authorized to ensure the coordination and monitoring of the implementation of the Gender Equality Law and Action Plan for Gender Equality, has been tasked with performing an analysis of the legislation from a gendered perspective. Parliament should also suggest amendments and actions to accelerate the achievement of gender equality, as well as monitor and evaluate progress towards achieving gender equality.<sup>10</sup> The **Ombudsman/Public Defender**<sup>11</sup> and local self-government bodies are obliged to take measures to prevent and eliminate discrimination.<sup>12</sup> Amendments to the Gender Equality Law approved in 2017 oblige municipalities to create Municipal Gender Equality Councils. Mayors are obliged to appoint a civil servant who will be responsible for the issues of gender equality.<sup>13</sup>

There has not been a systematized approach by the Government of Georgia towards the localization of the National Action Plans, i.e. implementing them at the local level, in partnership with the local authorities. The Inter-Agency Commission on Gender Equality, Violence against Women and Domestic Violence is working on adopting a structured, system-wide approach to this process.

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8 These include the National Action Plan on the Implementation of the UN Security Council resolutions on Women, Peace and Security; the National Action Plan on the Measures to be Implemented for Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence and Protection of Victims/Survivors; and the Gender Equality Action Plan (part of the Human Rights Action Plan) – all covering the 2018-2020 period.

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9 Assessment of the Gender Equality Policy in Georgia by Women's Organizations, CSS, 2012.

10 Law of Georgia on Gender Equality, Article 12, 2010.

11 Ibid, Article 14, 2010.

12 Ibid, Article 13, 2010.

13 Available at <https://matsne.gov.ge/ka/document/view/3276687>.

# 3. KEY FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

## Gender Equality Principles in Agricultural Policies

Gender equality principles stated in the laws are under-considered in agricultural and local development policies. This finding is based on a review of legislation, key informant interviews and corresponding literature.

**The Strategy of Agricultural Development of Georgia 2015-2020** provides a vision for the development of the agricultural sector in Georgia and considers seven main directions of development.<sup>14</sup> Many themes within the seven directions are discussed in the current report, such as: increasing the knowledge of farmers; improving the quality of higher and VET education in the agricultural field; supporting the development of cooperatives; developing the credit system; strengthening coordination between the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA), donor organizations and other stakeholders; improving irrigation systems; and supporting crops value chains and veterinary services. The strategy mentions gender in two out of seven directions: *Direction 1 – increasing the competitiveness of those employed in the agrarian sector, and Direction 2 – institutional development*. The development of cooperatives is planned under the first direction, which states that the development of cooperatives improves the involvement of women in social and economic activities. As we shall see below, however, gender stereotypes prevent women's involvement in cooperatives, and if the gender imbalance of the membership base of cooperatives is not addressed, this strategy will not significantly impact the social and economic activities of women. The development of information databases and gender disaggregated data collection is planned under the second direction.

The 2018-2020 National Action Plan on Gender Equality (part of the Human Rights Action Plan of the Government of Georgia) contains provisions on knowledge and increasing the qualifications of women involved in or interested in agriculture, as well as attracting more women into cooperatives and supporting more women in agribusiness activities. The Strategy of Agricultural Development echoes these provisions only in the part of attracting more women into cooperatives. Thus, it is partially harmonized with the Gender Equality NAP, according to which the MoA is responsible for these provisions.<sup>15</sup>

FAO experts worked out a number of recommendations to mainstream gender equality in the corresponding NAP of the Strategy of Agricultural Development 2015-2020, as the strategy itself could not be amended anymore; however, only two recommendations are spelled out in the NAP. One is a general recommendation on gender disaggregated data collection in provision 2.2.1 on development of market information system and one is a special recommendation on efforts to involve more women in cooperatives (provision 1.6.6). The general recommendations provided by FAO experts are as follows:<sup>16</sup>

- Ensure that all needs assessments that are conducted are gender-sensitive
- Ensure that women have de facto access to information and to activities
- Ensure that measures on registration of tenure do not deny women's rights over their property
- Ensure that the data collected and the indicators of success reflect the situation of all members of the community before and after the interventions
- Increase the presence of women experts in the MoA, especially in managerial positions

14 The creation of this document was initiated by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in the framework of the ENPARD -Capacity Development of the Ministry of Agriculture - project, financed by the European Union (EU) and Austrian Development Cooperation (ADC). Many stakeholders were involved in its finalization, and it can be regarded as the result of a collective work.

15 OXFAM Recommendations for Gender Mainstreaming in Agriculture Development Strategy, 2015.

16 Recommendations for Mainstreaming Gender in the Strategy for Agricultural Development in Georgia 2015-2020 and its related National Action Plan, FAO regional office for Europe and Central Asia, Dono Abdurazakova, Aroa Santiago Bautista. 2015.

Interviews with representatives of ministries (Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure) and organizations that provide technical assistance to ministries (FAO, UN Women) showed that **gender equality legislative provisions are still not considered when developing policies related to regional, agricultural or economic development.** The regional development strategies of Kakheti, Kvemo Kartli, Samegrelo, Samtskhe-Javakheti and Shida Kartli for the years 2014-2021 present thorough descriptions of local problems such as improvement of road and irrigation systems and include concrete actions to tackle these problems. However, gender equality issues or dimensions are almost completely absent. Samtskhe-Javakheti and Shida Kartli strategies do not consider the different needs and roles of men and women in regional development at all, while the Kakheti Regional Development Strategy document mentions gender equality challenges to be addressed in two spheres: the gender wage gap and the feminization of migration. Kvemo Kartli and Samegrelo strategies provide data on women in decision-making bodies and contain a goal 14 on “planning and implementing gender equality supporting activities”, however, the activities to be undertaken to reach the goal are not specified. According to a key informant interview, the regional development plans are based on the inputs prepared by local governments. There has not been any supervision (by the Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure) to ensure that gender would be mainstreamed in the local plans. The corresponding action plans are very much alike: containing plans to improve infrastructure (road construction, irrigation and water supply in Kakheti, for example). None of the plans include collection of sex-disaggregated data.

The 2018-2019 National Strategy for Agricultural Extension presents a thought-out plan to provide more knowledge to farmers in order to improve their knowledge base. It should be noted that this paper does not mention women, even in the section discussing the provision of differentiated services to customers.

It is also important to look at the level of gender awareness of those who are responsible for harmo-

nizing and implementing gender equality laws and regulations. Some of the central bodies’ employees lack understanding of gender equality and gender mainstreaming. A representative of the Ministry of Agriculture highlighted examples of women heads of some of the services as an illustration/proof for gender equality mainstreaming in these services. The same example was used to substantiate the perception that the gender equality law and corresponding action plans are taken into consideration by their ministry. However, the number of women presented in the ministry and extension services is an insufficient evidence of gender mainstreaming, especially if these women are not knowledgeable on gender equality issues or do not hold top positions in the ministry and correspondingly do not participate in decision making processes.

## Rural Development Strategy 2017-2020

Georgia’s Rural Development Strategy was developed with the assistance of ENPARD, UNDP and FAO and includes the improvement of social conditions and living standards as one of its three priorities. Objective #3 of this priority area highlights the increasing involvement of the local population (especially youth and women) in identifying local needs and determining the solutions for said needs. This objective is to be implemented by the LEPL Public Services Development Agency by holding at least six events related to women’s rights and gender equality as well as 10 information meetings.<sup>17</sup>

## Small and Medium Business Development Strategy 2016-2020

The Small and Medium Business Development Strategy was adopted in 2015 and aims to create a favorable environment for SMEs, enhance their competitiveness and innovate their existing capacities, which will lead to income generation and job creation resulting in inclusive and sustainable economic growth. The strategy includes five strategic directions to improve legislation, improve access to finances, develop SME skills and promote entrepreneurship as well as promote export and encourage innovation. The strategy explicitly mentions the encouragement of

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17 Rural Development Strategy of Georgia 2017-2020. Available at <http://gov.ge/ruraldevelopment/>.

female entrepreneurship under priority 3.9. Some of the activities under this priority would include a gap assessment and needs analysis on women's involvement in entrepreneurial activities, with the intention to develop a specific approach, based on the results. In addition, the strategy will create a platform for co-operation for women in business. The Government has not yet undertaken substantive steps to implement this section of the strategy.

## Gender Equality Principles in Local Policies and Programmes

Local development programmes and budgets are often "gender blind", not taking into consideration the potentially different needs of men and women. The finding is based on the review of literature and the survey data:

At the local level, policies are best reflected in local budgets as well as special programmes such as the Village Support Program created by the Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure; the Small Landowner Support Program and Produce in Georgia Program created by the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development; and the Preferential Agro Credit Program created by the Ministry of Agriculture. It should be noted that the Village Support Program, which has been implemented in Georgia since 2009, was suspended by the Government in 2017 with assurances that an improved version of the programme will resume in 2019. The **Village Support Program** used to provide financial support

for infrastructure development. However, according to the survey conducted as part of the original study, the population in general was still not well informed about the programme: about half (51.8%) of the surveyed population had not heard of it, and only one-third (35.5%) of the respondents were informed.<sup>18</sup> Of those who were informed, two-thirds (67.7%) did not participate in the meetings held in the framework of this programme; no statistically significant differences in responses of men and women were found. Unfortunately, no sex-disaggregated data was recorded on participation at the meetings in which decisions on how to use the programme funds were made. Key informant interviews, however, revealed that the majority of the meeting participants were men. "A woman happened to enter such a meeting unexpectedly. The room was full of men. They asked her to leave" (Female, age 36, Tbilisi).

As the programme was discontinued, the updated version of the study has no focus on the programme. In addition, 60.4% of the respondents have never heard about programmes implemented in the region that target development activities, such as infrastructure rehabilitation and agribusiness support. Out of the around 30% who have heard about these programmes, only 6.5% report to have received support from them. No gender difference was found in regards to the beneficiaries of such development programmes. Regional differences were found, however, with Shida Kartli lagging behind the other regions regarding both awareness of and access to support:

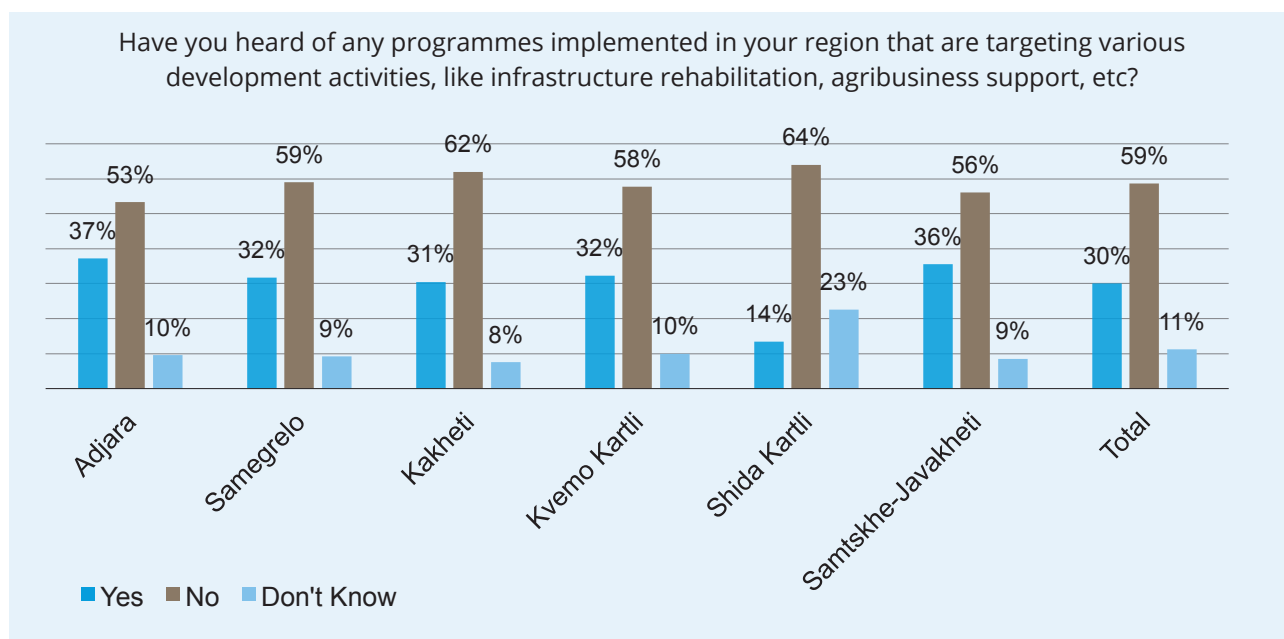
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18 The remaining 15% did not have an answer.



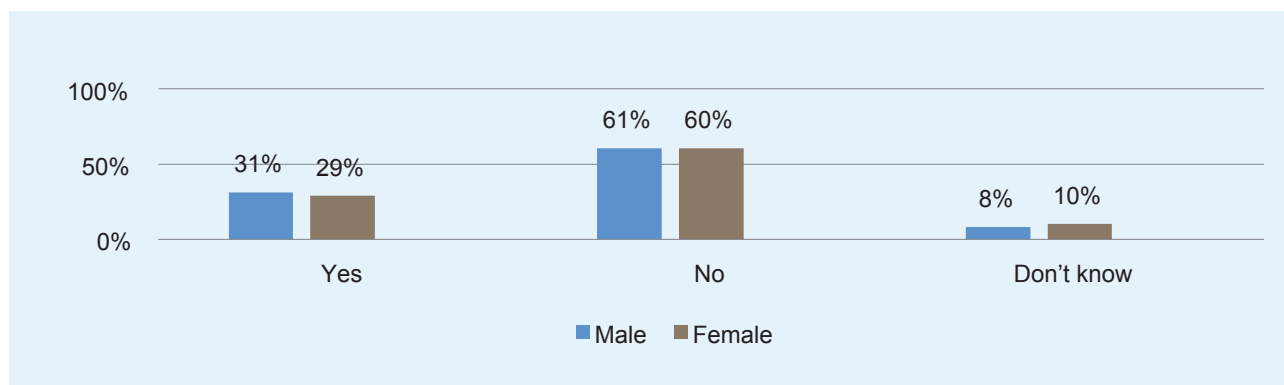
**Chart no. 1:**

Level of awareness of various development programmes implemented, by region



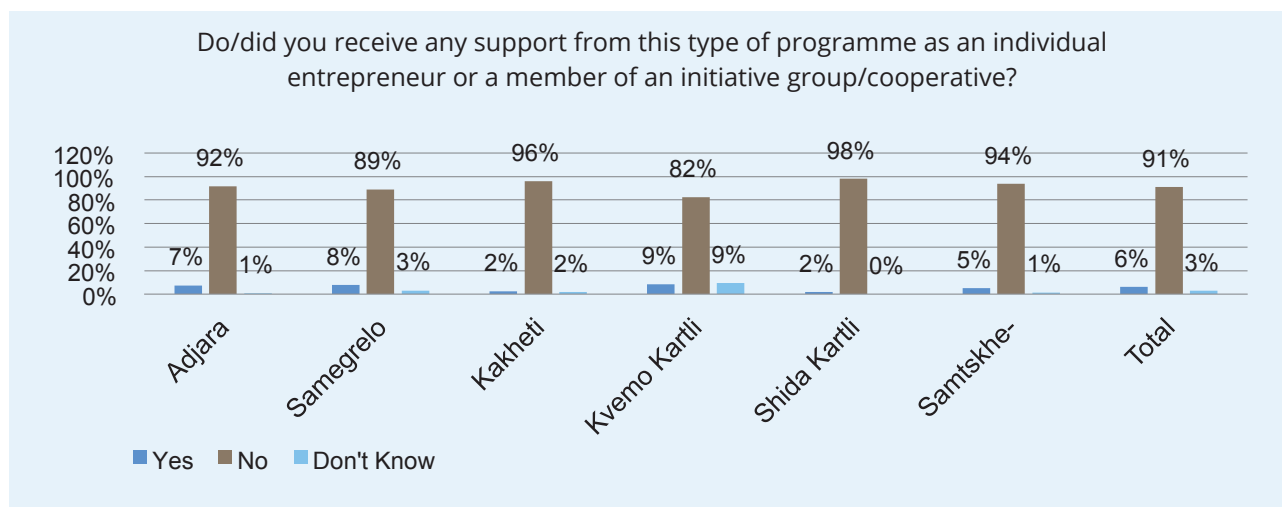
**Chart no. 2:**

Level of awareness of various development programmes implemented, by gender



**Chart no. 3:**

Percentage of the population receiving support from various development programmes, by region



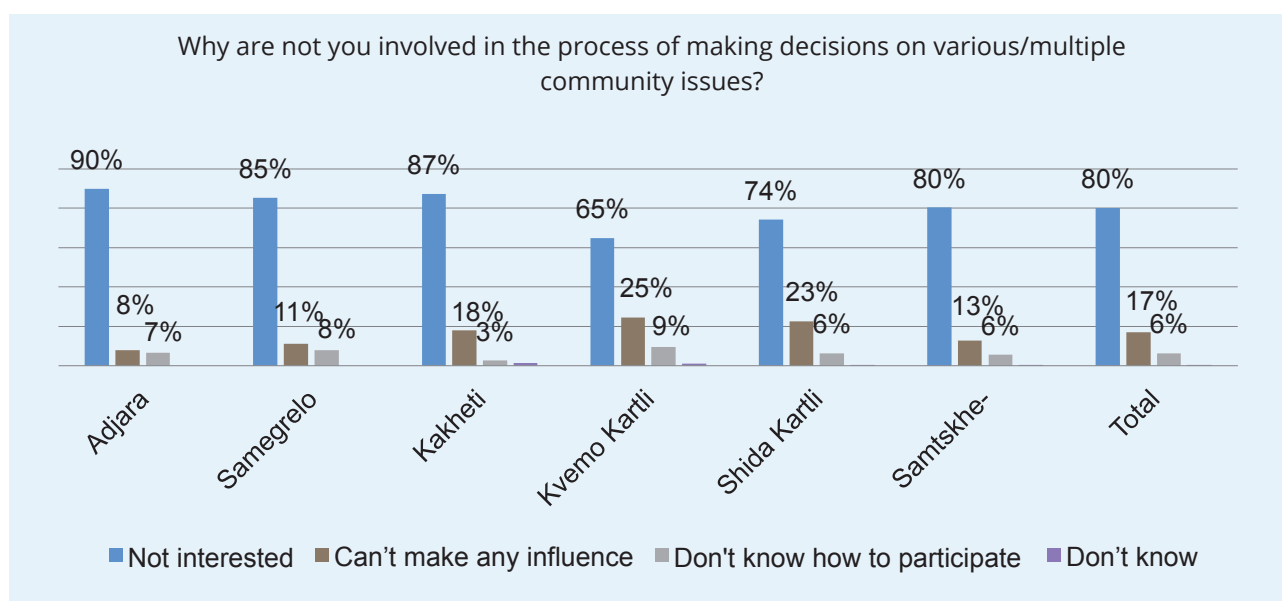
## Gender Equality in Decision-Making Processes in Villages and Municipalities

Women are very rarely involved in decision-making processes in villages and municipalities. This finding is based on the survey and on focus group data:

A small number of women is involved in decision-making processes. According to 87.8% of the survey respondents, they are not involved in community decision-making processes. Most of them (78.4%) are not interested, and 15.1% think that their involvement would not change anything as their voice does not matter or cannot influence decisions. No gender differences were found in these answers, meaning that equal numbers of men and women report not taking part in decision-making processes locally.

**Chart no. 4:**

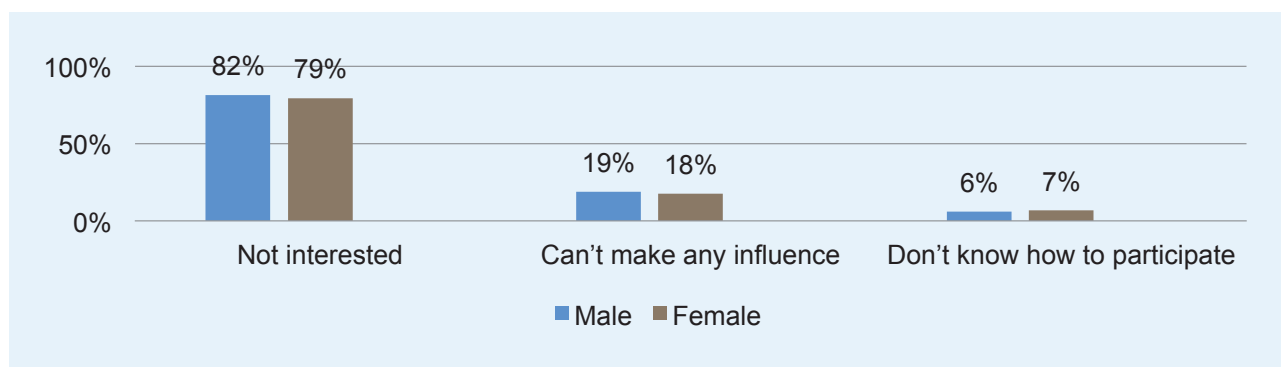
Reasons for not being involved in the decision-making process on various/multiple community issues, by region





**Chart no. 5:**

Reasons for not being involved in the decision-making process on various/multiple community issues, by gender

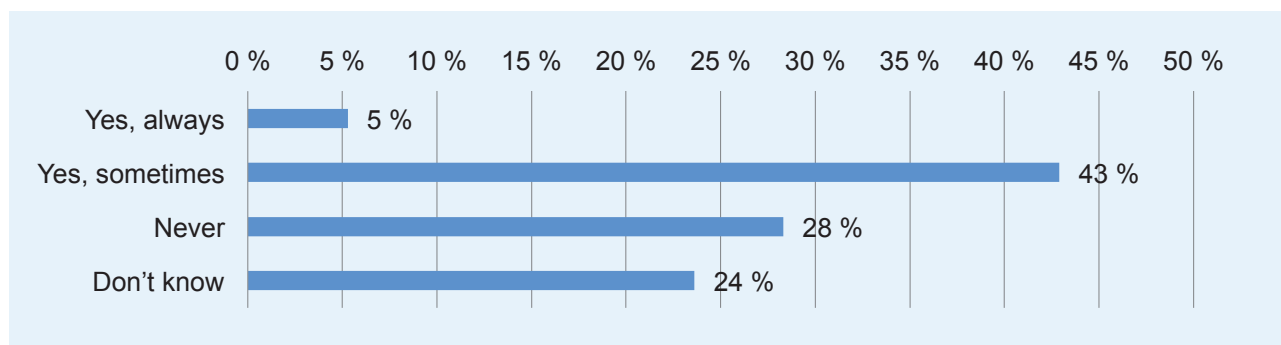


Given that only about 12% of the population is involved in community decision-making processes, it can be seen as surprising that 47.1% of respondents think that the local population's opinions are sometimes considered while making decisions. Those who

think that the local population's opinions are always considered while making decisions totals 5.6%, and 25.7% think that their voice is not considered at all. Views on women's influence in local decision-making are similar:

**Chart no. 6:**

Do you think that the opinion of local women is considered while making decisions on community issues?



On one hand, around 50% of the respondents say their opinion is considered, and on the other hand, they say that they do not participate in decision-making processes. These contradictions could potentially result from some answers being influenced by social desirability, when respondents try to give the answers that they believe will be welcomed by the interviewers. It may well be that the respondents are not informed about the decisions and do not have clear opinions.

### Causes of Women's Underrepresentation in Decision-Making Processes

Traditional gender stereotypes can be considered as one of the causes for women's underrepresentation in decision making processes. This finding is based on focus group data and key informant interviews:

Focus group participants are aware that decision-makers at the local level are mostly men; in their estimation, men constitute 80% of the representatives of local governments. However, neither men nor women see the uneven gender distribution among representatives as a problem. Male participants in the focus groups agree that women should be involved in decision-making processes, however, in their view, the main responsibilities of women are looking after children and performing household tasks. This gives them less time for other activities. As expressed by one focus group participant:

*Gender equality now is in the front. Who will raise children, then? We should not lose Georgian traditions; this does not mean that women should not be involved in community activities. For some reason this situation [women's subordinate position in the society] is presented in a dramatic way. It is aggravated - [they say] a woman is oppressed and we need to bring her to the front. (Focus group discussion, Batumi)*

Also, male participants of the focus groups believe that there is no difference in relation to who presents family problems to decision-making-bodies: a female or male family member. But because women are occupied by domestic tasks, it is better if men do this, as they “move outside of the household anyway”. Female focus group participants who are not involved in decision-making processes and do not express an interest in such matters agree with this position. The positions of female focus group participants who took part in the implementation of various programmes and policy discussions are different. They consider their role as important and influential and recall specific cases in this regard. The number of women with such experience, however, was small in the focus groups.

Focus group discussions clearly showed that women are mostly passive regarding community decision-making, based on their understanding of women's roles, which fully coincide with widespread gender stereotypes: Women should stay at home and look after their children, while their husbands should represent the family outside of the household. Because of these stereotypes, women refrain from initiating activities outside of their own household, thus, gender stereotypes limit women's agency – their power to act.

One of the non-governmental organization's representatives that was interviewed as part of the study perceived gender balance requirements in their own activities as “artificial”. The opinion expressed was that work should be done on a societal level to spread gender equality awareness to every member of society. Trying to maintain an equal distribution of business support grants to men and women was perceived as (a) very difficult, as the existing gender distribution of business activities is uneven, with many more men involved than women; and (b) inefficient, as it would improve the gender equality situation “only by 1%” at the expense of the quality of activities. This reasoning shows a limited understanding of affirmative action and gender mainstreaming. Similar views were found among some representatives of donor organizations (key informant interviews).

## Local Initiatives to Overcome Women's Underrepresentation in Decision-Making Processes

There are a number of local initiatives that aim to overcome the underrepresentation of women in decision-making processes. This finding is based on a literature review and key informant interviews:

### 1. Self-help groups and gender budgeting

One of the grassroots initiatives to create **self-help groups** organized by the local NGO TASO Foundation and supported by UN Women was directed to overcoming the underrepresentation of women in decision-making processes. A total of 52 groups were created: 13 groups in Shida Kartli, 20 groups in Kvemo Kartli, and 19 groups in Samegrelo. The members of these groups are mostly women. They carry out different activities such as vaccinating livestock, providing access to drinking water, infrastructure activities such as renovating kindergartens and education center facilities, as well as leisure time activities such as holding poetry gatherings. These groups were provided with working space or equipment such as an office, a computer and internet access. Besides these tangible results, other outcomes of this initiative are that beneficiaries became active in community development and united their efforts. Moreover, some members of these groups developed community groups that apply for and receive funds from other sources to implement small-scale projects. For example, in the village Orsantia, located in Samegrelo

(key informant interviews), the process of self-help groups' establishment went on from the year 2010 to the year 2015 in two phases. Currently, there are 340 members in these groups. Members of self-help, community and local government groups underwent trainings of various types. The women became knowledgeable about issues of local governance and budgeting, and actively defend their position in the community. These women could not have imagined that they "could leave their orchard and start to express their views publicly" (key informant interview). Also, some members of the self-help groups united into community committees fulfilling the functions of mediators between the local/village population and the local government. These committees collect information on the needs and initiatives of the local population, bring the information to local decision-makers and advocate for these needs. As a result, local women become involved in the decision-making processes.

The TASO Foundation, with the support of UN Women, went further by establishing working groups consisting of members of local councils and directorates/*gamgeoba* with the aim of implementing **gender responsive budgeting**. This initiative supported the enactment of a municipal decree in five municipalities of Georgia, creating the legal grounds for the establishment of GRB Working Groups in these municipalities. The municipal Working Groups and the Community Committees jointly work on gender mainstreaming of the local budgets.

Gender responsive budgeting entails planning, programming and budgeting in order to promote gender equality and the fulfilment of women's rights. It entails identifying gender gaps and addressing them through planning and budgeting for specific programmes that address women's needs, through taking the different needs of women and men into account in general programmes, or both of these. A gendered analysis of a budget can help decision-makers identify gaps and decide upon reallocating funds within a given budget; they should be able to see what impact the budget lines will have on men and women respectively.<sup>19</sup>

The local budgets of the selected municipalities where GRB was implemented - Gori, Zugdidi, Marneuli, and Tetritskaro - contain lines for the support of vulnerable populations, including victims of domestic violence in the case of Zugdidi.<sup>20</sup> In Gori municipality, within the framework of gender budgeting, special funds ranging from GEL 400 to 700 were allocated for socially vulnerable single mothers to support their various needs (key informant interviews). The implementation of the GRB initiative is in its initial stage in four regions, and for the time being it is seen in the form of sporadic budget lines rather than as a systematic restructuring of the budget.

## 2. Women's rooms

Almost parallel to TASO Foundation's UN Women supported projects, Mercy Corps, financed by SCO and in partnership with other organizations, started implementing a rural development program with increased gender mainstreaming in Samtskhe-Javakheti and Kvemo Kartli in 2012 (with plans to continue its activities up to March 2021). Their activities aimed to address the problems of low involvement of women in decision-making processes as well as limited **access to municipality services**. Since then, 19 rooms were established in Adjara, Kvemo Kartli and Samtskhe-Javakheti. These rooms (a) are located in municipality buildings; (b) have a manager who is financed by the municipality; and (c) are equipped with computers, internet access, a library and children's corners. This way, women who come to the municipality for their business can use the facilities of these rooms and receive consultations on other municipality services. They are also intended to serve as meeting points for women who, as opposed to men, often do not have a public place to gather. Men traditionally have access to designated open air gathering space in neighborhoods, called *birzha* in colloquial language (key informant interviews). Between 2013 and 2016, these rooms hosted over 4,000 women visitors and trained 1,767 women.<sup>21</sup>

## Gender Equality in Time-Use

This study found that women work more than men in both household and agricultural tasks. This finding is based on the survey and focus group data:

19 Gender equality and its realization via Gender responsive Budgeting, Sepashvili, E. 2010.

20 GEL 200 per month is allocated for house rental expenses.

21 Alliances Lesser Caucasus Programme. Visualizing Results: The ALCP in Infographics, November 2016. Available at <http://alcp.ge/pdfs/1c255e93504a50c732fb28f202c227c9.pdf>.

Time budgeting, or tracking how much time an individual spends on different tasks during a day, is considered to be an effective tool for detecting gender equality problems in a population (Sepashvili, 2008). Two such studies have been conducted in Georgia so far. According to one of the studies, men had twice as much free time as women (Woman and Man in Georgia, 2006). According to the other study, 77% of employed women spend more than two hours on house chores each day. Women's unpaid work exceeds that of men's by 13 times (Sepashvili, 2008).

Time distribution charts filled out separately by female and male participants of focus groups provided interesting information on how men and women perceive their own and their partners' **time distribution**. Across all regions, women are engaged in household tasks that men are not engaged in. Additionally, women look after cattle. Men also have some specific tasks that women are not involved in, such as collecting wood for winter or repairing damaged things at home. The time-use charts completed during focus group meetings show that women work more than men, mostly because of unpaid household tasks. The estimation of hours spent on work on a daily basis varies across regions. In Samegrelo, the gap between women and men is 2.5 hours. In Kvemo Kartli, the gap is 3 hours; in Adjara 3.5 hours; in Samtskhe-Javakheti 4 hours; and in Kakheti the gap is 8 hours. Only in Shida Kartli do men work more than women, where the gap between women and men is 2 hours (see appendix#2). It should be stressed that it is not possible to generalize these estimations as they are based on one or two focus groups in each region.

The survey data, on the other hand, enables us to extrapolate the findings: men spend slightly more days per year performing work related to the crops value chain (98.15) than women (84.29). However, the ratios vary across regions: in Adjara, women perform tasks in the crops value chain more days (92.2) than men (85.5). In other regions, men and women engage on an almost equal amount of days. In Kakheti, men engage in the crops value chain on significantly more days (91.34) than women (54.76). The gap is the largest in Shida Kartli, where men perform tasks in the crops value chain during 146.86 days per year compared to 88.45 days per year for women. Working days of seasonal laborers do not change the picture as there are very few: 17.00 working days per year for male and 15.90 days per year for female seasonal laborers.

The mean annual number of days that women are engaged in the animal husbandry value chain is 259.96. For men, the number is significantly smaller: 165.77. Across all regions, women spend more days engaging in animal husbandry than men. The largest gap, 130 days is noted in Kakheti, while about 30 days is the smallest gap in Samtskhe-Javakheti.

When analyzing the daily engagements in animal husbandry and crop cultivation value chains combined, **women are engaged in agriculture more days than men across all regions**. Men engage in agriculture 263.92 days per year, while women do so 344.25 days per year; a gap of 80.33 days per year. On top of that, women do multiple household tasks that increases the gap even more. The gap is largest in Kvemo Kartli, followed by Adjara. The smallest gap is found in Shida Kartli.

**Table no. 2:**

Frequency of engagement in the animal husbandry and crop cultivation value chains throughout the year (x/365 days)

	Adjara		Kakheti		Shida Kartli		Kvemo Kartli		Samtskhe-Javakheti		Samegrelo - Zemo Svaneti	
	Crops	Animal husbandry	Crops	Animal husbandry	Crops	Animal husbandry	Crops	Animal husbandry	Crops	Animal husbandry	Crops	Animal husbandry
Men	85.5	162.96	91.34	166.82	146.86	198.22	106.31	187.02	118.13	237.37	69.17	94.31
Women	92.2	279.56	54.76	294.54	88.45	262.61	111.78	323.50	114.86	323.50	65.07	144.97

Household chores, like cooking, doing laundry, washing dishes and ironing are considered to be women's tasks. In the regions targeted in the current study, there are almost no dishwashers (according to focus group participants), and women express that they have to wash dishes and iron constantly; they call this a "never ending task". The same can be said about cooking, however, many women find greater joy in this task as it gives pleasure to family members and to themselves. About 5% of those surveyed still do not have a drinking water supply within the household, and about 14.5% report not having non-potable water within the household. The average percentage, however, is not representative of all regions because of the large number of households lacking a water supply in Kvemo Kartli, where 73.3% of respondents report not having access to water within the household at all. In other regions, the numbers are very small except for Samegrelo, where 9.5% of respondents do not have water within the premises of their household.

**Garbage disposal**, according to a literature review and focus groups, is also traditionally considered to be a woman's responsibility; men only get involved if the garbage cans are far away from the house and car transport is needed. However, this is only partially confirmed by the survey data, as only 35.6% of the respondents state that garbage is thrown out by them personally and most of these are women. Among the population, 28.3% think that garbage is thrown out by all family members equally and 20.0% think that garbage is thrown out by both the wife and

husband. There is a gender difference in these answers:

- Of those (28.3%) who think that garbage is disposed by all family members equally, about 60% are women and 40% are men.
- Of those (20%) who think that garbage is disposed by both the wife and husband, about 55.1% are women and 44.9% are men.
- Of those (35.6%) who think that garbage is thrown out by them personally, 71.1% are women and 28.9% are men. This difference can be interpreted as a real difference in the actual behaviors of men and women, and proves that garbage disposal is mainly a woman's task.

To summarize, **women work more than men in agricultural as well as household tasks**, which gives them less free time. However, according to the vast majority of focus group participants, women have the **same amount of free time** as men do. At the same time, focus group participant men believe that women should raise children and follow "Georgian traditions", understood as traditional gender role divisions.

Similar findings on gender, time, and role distribution in agricultural activities are shown in a number of documents based on the data obtained via surveys and focus groups conducted in 2008 and 2009 (ALCP, Mercy Corps, 2011; Gender Analysis of the SDC, 2011). Productive roles of men and women are more or less equally distributed; however, most of



the housework is completed by women. The same results were obtained in the ALCP 2015 study of women in Adjara.<sup>22</sup>

The present study has added value in the way that it clearly shows gender differences in time distribution across agricultural and household work. Women engage more frequently in the animal husbandry value chain than men, as well as in the crops value chain in some regions. The overall number of days with engagements in both value chains is unbalanced in all regions, giving women less time for community or leisure activities. When providing their assessments, focus group member men showed a limited understanding of women's labor, efforts, and time spent. For example, in their understanding, household machinery such as washing machines and vacuum cleaners free women completely, as if the chores are completed without human involvement. This example illustrates well that people tend to misjudge the things they are not involved in personally, and correspondingly serves as an argument for the involvement of women in decision-making processes, as men cannot fully represent them. Men's increased involvement in unpaid household and care work is another target/task advocated by non-governmental organizations worldwide, including in Georgia.

## Gendered Division of Labor in Agricultural Activities

A gendered division of labor is found in agricultural activities. This finding is based on the focus group and survey data:

Productive tasks are divided between men and women. In general, women look after the cattle and poultry while men look after the vineyards and beehives.

Focus group members expressed two arguments for the gendered division of labor: men do **physically heavy jobs**; tasks that demand strong muscles (similar findings were obtained in 2011, Market Alliances against Poverty), while women do **relatively light tasks**. The other argument was that men and women do the things they are better at. Both of these can be seen as arguments that reinforce gender norms and stereotypes. The same arguments are used concerning **labor division in agricultural activities**: a

woman's nature is well suited to sorting out crops, as women are usually better at detailed work that takes patience. Respondents argue that men do not have enough "strong will" to do such routine tasks.

- *Women are good at milking, sorting out fruit, women do it faster; for women it is a more accessible activity.*
- *Women are better at washing.*
- *Women know better how to dry/hang laundry (focus group discussions).*

To support the heavy work of women, a number of small milk collection centers were opened in Adjara within the framework of the Mercy Corps projects implemented with the support of SCO. This way, women do not need to make cheese or other dairy products but can sell fresh milk immediately. They neither need to go to the market nor spend a lot of time on travel and the sale of products. This freed their time, reduced their workload, and as one of the key informants noted, donors received very positive feedback from the women involved in the project (*key informant interview, ALCP website*).

The gendered division of labor along value chains supported in the agricultural sector follows traditional gender roles in households and is based on deeply rooted stereotypes. Women are perceived as physically weak and men as strong, and it is claimed that women and men are fit for/better at different tasks. This argument, however, is not supported by our findings: women work more than men in almost all regions and an average of 80 more days per year than men. Even though women are seen as weaker than men, they do more work than men in all regions.

## Gender Differences in Access to Productive Resources

Women and men are differently affected by difficulties in access to resources. This finding is based on the survey and focus group data:

According to the survey data, about 90% of the population in the target regions - Kvemo Kartli, Shida Kartli, Kakheti, Samtskhe-Javakheti, Adjara, and Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti - experience financial difficulties. Among respondents, 43.9% can hardly buy food;

22 ALCP Gender Analysis, 2015

about 25% do not have problems with food, however, they have challenges in affording clothing. Another 25% of those surveyed can only afford cheap food and clothes but cannot buy home appliances or more expensive items. Women are the main breadwinners in 35% of all households surveyed. Differences between male and female-headed households were found in these answers: 54.2% of those households in which the main breadwinner is a woman report that they can hardly buy food, compared to 39.3% of the households in which the main breadwinner is a man. Among female-headed households, 25.8% have challenges affording clothing as opposed to 30.7% of male-headed households. Additionally, 15.9% of households with women as the main breadwinners and 23.1% of households with men as the main breadwinners can afford cheap food and clothes but cannot buy home appliances or more expensive items. These differences show that the households supported by women suffer the most from poverty.

Most of the population surveyed produces **agricultural products for household consumption**. Only a small percentage of the population produces a quantity above the amount needed for family/household consumption (for sale). The indicated quantities beyond household consumption needs are as follows:

- Potatoes: 5.6% across five regions and 37.1% in Samtskhe-Javakheti
- Fruit: cherries, plums, peaches at 5.2% across five regions and 15.5% in Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti
- Fruit: apples at 3.7% across five regions and 11.4% in Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti
- Walnuts, almonds: 3.2% across five regions and 13.5% in Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti

Most of the population surveyed produces **animal husbandry products for their own consumption**. Only a small percentage of the population, between 1-2%, produces some products for sale. Minor exceptions exist for milk and dairy products, which are traded by 7.6% of the population in all regions (in Samtskhe-Javakheti by 18.3%).

About 15% of the population owns farm buildings and 5.9% own a tractor, with minor differences between men and women: 15.2% of women and 14% of men report owning farm buildings; 5.7% of women and 6% of men report owning a tractor.

80% of the surveyed women are involved in farming activities (farmers). Some 63% of them have access to various facilities (buildings, storage) and machinery (tractor). Out of that 21% of women farmers own various facilities, and 79% rent or use *facilities for free*.

Women experience problems with access to land: "While access to land and all other agricultural inputs are in theory open to men and women equally, in practice, women are less likely to have the legal protection of property being registered in their name, and there are issues of control associated with traditional roles and power relations".<sup>23</sup> The UN Women-commissioned study of ethnic minority women also revealed that all ethnic minority representative women report problems with access to land.<sup>24</sup> According to another study, men own 70% of farms, while women own 30% of farms in Georgia.<sup>25</sup>

According to the focus group discussions, access to productive resources that would allow production at levels needed for sale on the market is generally a problem: a lack of pasture lands, fertilizers and corresponding knowledge on how to use them, as well as a lack of machinery or outdated machinery are the challenges that were identified. A lack of irrigation systems and irrigation water is also reported in the focus group discussions, partially because it is not affordable.

As the survey data shows, respondents in all regions identify challenges in relation to land cultivation, however the main challenges reported vary across regions. Overall, access to irrigation water, and to a smaller extent access to agricultural land appear to be key challenges in most regions. The shortage of agricultural land is especially problematic in Adjara, Samegrelo and Kvemo Kartli, where around 20% of respondents report a lack of access to land. This index is lowest in Kakheti, where only 2.4% of respondents report a shortage of agricultural land. Access

23 Country Gender Assessment. Agriculture and Rural Development in Georgia, FAO, p.43, 2013.

24 Needs Assessment of Ethnic Minority Women in Georgia. Prepared by the European Centre for Minority Issues (ECMI) for UN Women / EU Project (Innovative Action for Gender Equality), 2014.

25 A Gender Guidance Note on Agriculture and Rural development in the Eastern Neighborhood, 2014.

to land cultivation equipment is also a challenge in all regions, primarily due to high costs (especially noted in Shida Kartli and Kakheti, followed by Samtskhe-Javakheti and Adjara), but also due to waiting periods for accessing the equipment (especially noted in Kakheti and Samtskhe-Javakheti). Few respondents report that the land cultivation equipment available is outdated, however, in Adjara and Shida Kartli, 10-15% of respondents report that this equipment is not available at all. Access to fertilizers, herbicides, fungicides, insecticides, and other chemicals is also restricted due to high costs in all regions. Kvemo Kartli respondents identify this problem to the lowest extent (5.1%), while around half of the respondents in Adjara and Shida Kartli report having this problem. In the latter region, almost 20% also report that these

products are not of the desired quality, compared to much lower rates in other regions. Access to qualified agronomist consultations and the availability of a labor force are reported as challenges only by very few respondents, while access to markets is identified as a problem primarily in Adjara (by 16.6% of respondents). Access to markets is complicated because of (a) bad roads (although the main roads are in a good condition, secondary roads in villages are underdeveloped); and (b) a lack of money for transport and for renting stalls to sell products in the markets. Finally, access to irrigation water is reported by 35% to almost 50% in Samtskhe-Javakheti, Kvemo Kartli, Kakheti and Shida Kartli. This problem seems to be much smaller in Adjara and Samegrelo.

**Table no. 3:**  
Problems related to Land Cultivation (percentages above 15% are highlighted)

	Adjara	Samegrelo	Kakheti	Kvemo Kartli	Shida Kartli	Samtskhe-Javakheti
None	35.2%	45.8%	15.0%	33.2%	9.0%	25.6%
Agricultural land shortage	17.9%	18.5%	2.4%	20.1%	12.5%	11.4%
Land cultivation equipment is not available in our region	11.4%	4.0%	0.0%	1.3%	15.4%	5.8%
There is not enough land cultivation equipment available in our region/need to wait	4.7%	14.3%	17.4%	8.9%	13.5%	15.2%
Land cultivation equipment is outdated (modern equipment is not available)	1.1%	5.1%	1.7%	1.4%	1.6%	1.8%
Rental of land cultivation equipment is too expensive	16.7%	10.3%	32.0%	11.0%	41.4%	23.6%
Fertilizers, herbicides, fungicides, insecticides, and other chemicals are not available in the region	3.8%	1.8%	4.0%	1.4%	11.6%	9.7%
Fertilizers, herbicides, fungicides, insecticides, and other chemicals are too expensive	48.9%	35.2%	42.4%	5.1%	56.1%	25.1%
Available fertilizers, herbicides, fungicides, insecticides, and other chemicals are not of the desired quality	7.2%	3.6%	4.1%	0.4%	18.5%	1.8%
Qualified agronomists consultation is not available in the region	0.7%	2.7%	0.8%	0.9%	0.5%	5.0%
Limited access to irrigation water	8.0%	4.2%	46.7%	43.8%	47.2%	35.2%
Access to the market	16.6%	0.0%	2.2%	4.6%	0.0%	6.3%
Unavailability of the labor force	1.5%	1.3%	0.0%	4.0%	0.5%	1.6%



No statistically significant differences were found between men and women in terms of facing these problems.

The data presented in the table is also reflected in the needs of the surveyed population, and includes those who are willing to engage in income-generating agricultural activities in the future:

1. More land:

- Samegrelo - 23.2%
- Shida Kartli - 22.5%
- Kvemo Kartli - 20.6%
- Samtskhe-Javakheti - 17.6%
- Adjara - 17.3%
- Kakheti - 3.3%

2. Better access to land cultivation equipment:

- Shida Kartli - 48.6%
- Samtskhe-Javakheti - 34.3%
- Kakheti - 32.1%
- Adjara - 23.8%
- Samegrelo - 23.2%
- Kvemo Kartli - 14.5%

3. Availability of fertilizers, herbicides, fungicides, insecticides and other chemicals:

- Shida Kartli - 63.7%
- Adjara - 41.9%
- Kakheti - 37.8%
- Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti - 33.9%
- Samtskhe-Javakheti - 19.1%
- Kvemo Kartli - 3.9%

4. Availability of irrigation:

- Shida Kartli - 58.3%
- Kvemo Kartli - 46.9%
- Kakheti - 45.3%
- Samtskhe-Javakheti - 38.6%
- Adjara - 16.0%
- Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti - 5.3%

About 20% of the surveyed population reports receiving non-agricultural income via wages and about 10% via self-employment. The data shows a clear gender wage gap: the median annual wage for men is GEL 4,000, while for women it is GEL 3,000. The median annual self-employment income for men is GEL 4,000, while for women it is half of that: GEL 2,000.

According to experts (key informant interviews), addressing poverty in rural regions and creating a sus-

tainable livelihood as well as income-generating activities are complex issues. Among other things, this will require a change in behavior and a willingness to take certain risks so that production can be increased for sales purposes, for establishing an agribusiness and/or for joining or establishing a cooperative. However, only 20.9% of those surveyed plan to engage in some kind of income-generating agricultural activities. Out of those who think about expanding land cultivation activities, 40.3% are women and 59.7% are men. Some 5.5% plan to take a loan to address their needs.

Generally, loans are more difficult to access for women than for men, as women to a lesser extent possess land or a house that would function as collateral for the bank.<sup>26</sup> In Georgia, women are more often co-owners of property (for example, as shareholders of their parents' property or in the case of divorce) than owners.<sup>27</sup>

Only 9.3% of the survey respondents report taking a loan to finance farming activities, and no statistically significant difference between women and men was found. Forty-nine percent of these loans were taken for purchasing equipment; 20.9% for purchasing livestock; 17% for operational/running costs; and the remaining 13% was divided among other expenses. Among respondents, 5.3% think that agricultural credits are not equally available for men and women. No statistically significant gender difference is found in this answer.

Key informant interviews show that most of the population is not primarily interested in agriculture or farm development; they wish to have permanent jobs in, for example, construction, education, or medicine as a main or more sustainable source of income. This finding is supported by another study, which shows that women in rural areas would rather work for salaries. As noted, *"women want paid jobs, they do not want to be mainly preoccupied by livestock, which is difficult and costly"*.<sup>28</sup>

26 Women's economic opportunities and challenges, 2014; Empowerment Access to Finance for Women-Owned SMEs in Developing Countries, 2011.

27 Accessibility of Microfinance Institution Services for Women: Existing Barriers and Opportunities, UN Women, Nina Dadalauri 2013.

28 ALCP Gender Analysis, p.16, 2015.

The key informants also note that, unfortunately, the rural population does not express a special interest in learning new or other ways of land cultivation or animal husbandry. Many of those who attend meetings at colleges or extension services are skeptical of the presentations of Georgian and international specialists. One of the key informants summarized her experience in these words: “[...]It is very important that we reach the population, make them understand that they need new knowledge [...] People are stubborn, do not like change, and think that everything should stay the same because it has been done like this for ages”.

Focus group meetings showed that those farmers who are actively engaged in income-generating activities are also interested in receiving deeper and more advanced knowledge as well as practical skills in their respective areas of interest. Those who are not engaged in income generating activities are not interested in expanding their knowledge, as they do not see a tangible outcome of such development, are scared of innovations, and/or may also lack the finances needed to invest in business development.

## Gender Equality in Decision-Making along Value Chains

Decision-making along value chains is reported to be done equally by men and women. Still, some gender imbalance is found in relation to certain decisions. This finding is based on the focus group and survey data.

The ability to make financial decisions is one of the most important indicators showing access to resources. One-third (31.8%) of survey respondents think that all household members make such decisions equally. Almost as many (27.1%) think that both the husband and wife make decisions, and another 30.0% think that only they make financial decisions. No gender difference was found in the answers.

The following segments of the **crops value chains** are more or less equally distributed among family members: decide where and what crops to cultivate; prepare the soil; seed; monitor the growing process; as well as harvest and post-harvest activities (storage, packaging, transportation). About one-third of those surveyed report that decisions are made by all family members. Another one-third of respondents report that decisions are made by the wife and husband to-

gether, and the remaining one-third of respondents think that decisions are made by them. No gender difference was found in these answers.

The decision on what animals to own is more or less equally distributed among family members in the **animal husbandry value chain**. About one-third of those surveyed report that decisions are made by all family members. Another one-third of respondents report that decisions are made by the wife and husband together, and 20% think that decisions are made by them. No gender difference was found in these answers. The focus group data confirms these findings with no gender differences found - both men and women say that they jointly make decisions.

However, the situation is different in other segments of the animal husbandry value chain, as mostly women take care of animal housing and health conditions, feed the animals, milk the animals, and process dairy products. Some 20% of respondents report that only they make decisions in relation to these tasks, and out of those 70% are women.

Also, a gender difference is found in the answer to the question of who decides how agricultural income should be spent: out of those respondents who state that the decision is made only by themselves, 57.8% are men and 42.2% are women.

## Problems in Access to Services

Populations residing in rural areas experience problems with access to some basic services. This finding is based on the survey and focus group data, as well as on key informant interviews:

- 30.9% of the population does not have access to disposal collection
- 72.4% of the population does not have access to a sewage system

The Government of Georgia has developed a Waste Management Strategy (2016-2030) and a relevant action plan for the 2016-2010 period. The work is ongoing to construct new regional landfills.

In addition, 28% of the population in Samtskhe-Javakheti reports not having access to public transportation, while in other regions this problem is identified by only small percentages starting from 0.4% in Adjara to 5.7% in Kvemo Kartli.

Other services like banks, hospitals, schools, food markets, etc. are available within a reasonable distance. The population assesses their access as good. No difference between women and men was found in the answers.

No access to a kindergarten is reported by 30.8% of respondents. Out of these respondents, 52.7% are women and 47.3% are men. The percentages vary across regions, with a shortage of kindergartens appearing to be especially acute in Kvemo Kartli and Samtskhe-Javakheti:

- 62.1% in Kvemo Kartli
- 57.1% in Samtskhe-Javakheti
- 34.1% in Adjara
- 22.1% in Shida Kartli
- 12.7% in Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti
- 7.2% in Kakheti

The situation in almost all target regions is alarming, especially if it is taken into account that the construction of kindergartens is minimally present in village budgets and/or village support programs. According to the 2014 village support programs, the construction or rehabilitation of kindergartens and schools amounted to 7.18% of all planned investments. As we have shown above, women are rarely represented in decision-making bodies or in meetings during which activities for the village budgets and Village Support Program is planned. This might explain why kindergartens are not prioritized. Moreover, 96.9% of those surveyed report that the kindergartens that are present have been in existence for more than five years, indicating that almost no kindergartens have been established in the last five years. According to research, a lack of kindergartens limits the time that women can devote to paid labor outside of the household.<sup>29</sup> The limited access to social infrastructure, and especially kindergartens, might be seen not only as a social issue, but also as an economic one, as it potentially restricts women's abilities to generate income and provide for themselves and their households.

## Access to Veterinary Services

There is a lack of veterinarians with contemporary skills, but also a limited request for their services

among the respondents. This finding is based on the survey and focus group data, as well as on key informant interviews.

Many key informants, as well as respondents from other studies (Adjara, Samtskhe-Javakheti reports, 2015), identify problems with the **services of veterinarians**:

1. There is a lack of professionals in general, and a lack of professionals with up-to-date knowledge and skills in particular.
2. Quite a large part of the population cannot afford to pay for these services.

The first problem is connected to education opportunity. Most of the existing veterinarians underwent education many years back and lack contemporary knowledge and innovative skills. At the same time, despite few veterinary programmes, there is a certain number of new/young veterinarians. However, despite a lack of veterinarians, only 40% of those who graduate within this specialization start to work in the same field. Veterinarians often work on farms and in drugstores. A possible reason for this situation might be the problem noted above: the population does not realize the role of veterinarians and the demand on their services is low. Also, according to veterinarians, they have a difficult and under-paid job.

The second problem is partially connected to a lack of awareness among farmers about the importance of veterinary services. In addition, parts of the population have limited resources to pay for veterinary services. One respondent noted that "even when I tell the farmers that their animals would die without treatment, they refused to pay" (key informant interviews, Adjara, Samtskhe-Javakheti reports, 2015). This problem is reflected in the survey data as well: veterinary consultation costs are the smallest among all spending units related to animal husbandry – an average of GEL 2.38 is spent per year, while other expenditures start from GEL 10 and go up to GEL 316 for fodder for animals. The population in Kakheti spends the smallest amount for veterinary consultations, at GEL 0.62 annually.

Despite the problem of access to veterinary services, neither the survey nor focus group discussion data

29 Women's Economic Opportunities and Challenges, 2014.

revealed that the local population worries about this shortage. **Nevertheless, a lack of qualified veterinarians and the costs of their services should be considered as a problem, especially for women** since they are the primary care providers for cattle, poultry, and other domestic animals. *“Women milk cows, so they witness their symptoms; women know everything about them”* (key informant interview).

## Limited Access to Agricultural Education

Access to agricultural education is limited. In addition, girls encounter obstacles because of the stereotypical understanding of which occupations are fit for women. This finding is based on the survey and focus group data, a literature review, and key informant interviews.

Despite delays in adopting the Law on VET, important steps have been taken to improve the situation. Investments have been made by international donors (SDC, MCA, EU) not only to develop an infrastructure for VETs but also to design new programs in various fields, including agriculture. VET programs have been initiated in the modular system on animal husbandry, veterinary services, viticulture, fruit-processing and bio-agriculture.

Agricultural programmes constitute about 5% of all programmes in private sector TVETs in our target regions, and 8% in the public sector (see appendix #3). According to the key informants, there are around three to four public colleges in the country with a main focus on agriculture.

About 30% of the population evaluates **access to TVET education services** as good, and another 28.7% find access to be satisfactory. About 8% think that access to TVET education services is poor. The population of Kakheti is the least content: almost half of respondents in this region rates access as unsatisfactory. Despite the fact that Kakheti is the region with the most colleges focusing on agriculture, their services are still considered to be non-exhaustive. Among the population, 30.7% think that access to TVET education has improved over the last five years; slightly less (26.4%) think that it has not changed, and according to about 4%, access has decreased. There are some differences by region regarding the perception that access to TVET education has improved: 43.0% of the population in Adjara agrees, followed

by 28% of the population in Shida Kartli, 26.4% in Samegrelo, and 24% in Kvemo Kartli. No gender differences were found in these answers.

The colleges that offer agricultural programmes do try to attract students, however, they often encounter difficulties. Those parts of the population that carry out agricultural activities in their household or do small-scale farming are interested to learn but do not have time. Those who are not involved in small-scale agricultural activities and may have time, on the other hand, are not interested. Some colleges started to provide short-term courses for those who are interested but lack time. With the support of donor organizations, colleges started to implement a new type of teaching with an increased practical component, for example, for veterinarians. As one of the components of learning, the future specialists learn how to take and analyze blood tests. This is considered as a very useful approach, but difficult to realize as it requires special study farms, equipment, etc. Another difficulty is the transportation of students, who may come from far away. These findings indicate a need for more practical and short-term agricultural courses, as well as extension services that provide hands-on knowledge and consultations close to the location of the target population.

The interview with college representatives shows that veterinary study is a popular specialty among students. This is promising information. About 30% of those who study to become veterinarians are women, while fewer women study to become farmers. Gender stereotypes play a negative role in education for girls. As noted by one respondent, *“we had a very promising girl who studied to work in a catering service, but as soon as she had to start practice in a restaurant, her father rebelled. He said: my girl should not be doing anything in a restaurant!”* Also, college teachers possess the same stereotypes and consider certain specializations fit for either women or men. *Male veterinarians consider their work heavy and dirty, and therefore unfit for women* (key informant interviews).

The National Action Plan for Strategy of Agriculture Development of Georgia 2015-2020 also envisages increasing student motivation and the development of innovative teaching through practice and new syllabi.<sup>30</sup>

30 National Action Plan of Agriculture Development of Georgia, 2015-2020.



## Gender Equality in Extension Service Outreach

A vast majority of respondents are not aware of the extension services that are available, and fewer women than men are informed about them. This finding is based on a literature review, survey data and key informant interviews.

According to the survey, 12.7% of the population thinks that the services of extension centers are not equally available for men and women. Also, more men than women report being informed about extension services. Out of the 10.2% who have heard about the centers, almost six out of ten (57.8%) were men and four out of ten (42.2%) were women. Only 1.4% (33 persons) of those surveyed reported using their consultations, mostly on crop cultivation.

**Extension services**, also called Information-Consultation Service Centers, were established in 2013 by the Ministry of Agriculture and are active in all regions of Georgia. Each of the offices should be equipped with four different specialists: an agronomist, a veterinarian, a mechanic, an information officer, and their manager/group leader. However, this is not always the case; the offices lack specialists, especially veterinarians. Other specialists assume these tasks, but they lack the relevant expertise. Sometimes they contact a central research center that is located in Tbilisi, however, this delays consultation and assistance. The staff is responsible for providing consultations and trainings, as well as for collecting information from the local population on their agricultural activities. However, some focus group members did not have information about the extension centers. According to the survey, neither did the majority (84.6%) of the population in the target regions.

Out of those who heard of but did not attend the presentations of the extension services, almost 40% (38.4%) were not interested, and approximately the same number (37.3%) did not have time to attend. Out of those who were not interested, the majority (60.5%) were women. Out of those who did not have time, the majority were men (68.7%). Those who went to trainings attended programmes focused on crop cultivation and animal husbandry. The providers of consultations were almost equally represented by agronomists and veterinarians (49.8% and 36.7%, respectively). With almost no exception, attendees assess the trainings as useful or very useful.

The new National Strategy for Agricultural Extension was approved at the end of December 2017, with the aim of improving the service all over Georgia.

## Gender Equality in Involvement in Cooperatives

Few people are involved in cooperatives, and a lower number of women are members than men. This finding is based on the focus group and survey data as well as on key informant interviews.

The Ministry of Agriculture, with the support of various development partners, should support special programmes to develop cooperatives. Cooperatives are seen as one of the best ways to develop local agriculture and farming. As a result, more and more cooperatives are being established in Georgia, however, the idea is still often met with resistance. Our focus group participants can be divided into two groups regarding their involvement and attitudes towards cooperatives: (a) those that are involved in a cooperative and see its positive sides; and (b) those that are not involved and see its negative sides. The discussions revealed that those who are not involved are scared of the idea of putting their own property into a cooperative, as they are not sure they can get their property back if they decide to quit. In reality, according to the regulations of cooperatives, members can withhold their property as soon as they decide to exit. It has to be noted that we were able to receive this information from focus groups because women, who are active in various ways in local development issues, were especially recruited to participate in the discussions. These women are involved in various activities through NGO projects (TASO, CENN, etc.) as well as in cooperatives.

Despite the positive effect of cooperatives' development for women's social and economic involvement mentioned in the Strategy for Regional Development, gender is not mainstreamed in the Law on Cooperatives, and it is clear that the establishment process is not involving women to the same extent as men. According to the Agency of Cooperatives, there are 1,291 cooperatives registered in Georgia, with women accounting for about 30% of all members (as reported at the interviews). Focus group members as well as key informants admit that fewer women are involved in cooperatives; this probably has the same underlying cause as the lack of women in decision-making bodies. It is strongly believed that women

should stay home and look after the children, which gives them less time for other things. Moreover, in some parts of the target regions, traditional gender roles restrict women from open and free communication with men outside of the family. For example, in Akhalkalaki, with ethnic Armenian enclaves, women are allowed to communicate with other men only if they are with male family members. Such restrictions make it almost impossible for women to take part in public processes. Freedom of mobility, as one of the indicators of gender equality, is breached. The survey data about differences in spending on transportation in households with male breadwinners and female breadwinners might be considered as additional evidence of the fact that women move less than men. The approximate share of transportation

from total expenditures is 6.52% for households with male breadwinners and 4.96% for households with female breadwinners.

The survey data, however, does not show any gender difference regarding involvement in cooperatives, since a very small percentage of the population reports membership in a cooperative. The amount of the population, both men and women that is not a member of a cooperative equals 95.8%. Among those who entered into a cooperative, 2.3% state that it does not function anymore and only 0.8% of those surveyed are members of a functioning cooperative. This small number does not allow for any reliable conclusions to be drawn regarding the difference between the rate of women's and men's involvement.

## 4. RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations below are addressed to various stakeholders and grouped under subtopics:

### Gender Mainstreaming at the National and Local Levels

1. Ministries should consider conducting a **gender analysis/self-assessment of internal policies and operations, including internal gender capacities**. The goal of the self-assessment is to identify gaps and take concrete steps towards mainstreaming gender in policies and operations.
2. It is further recommended that **the ministries** institutionalize the concepts of gender equality and gender mainstreaming in the training of their personnel, including personnel in extension services.
3. **Ministries** should collect and analyze sex-disaggregated data on all activities they initiate or administer.
4. **Municipal and village authorities** should support the work of existing and future gender advisors, as well as encourage them to promote new initiatives aimed at reaching gender equality. They should strive to raise awareness and promote women's participation in locally executed programmes, gender sensitive budgeting, priority setting for the village, etc.

### Donor/Development Partners' Coordination

5. There is a need to **improve the overall coordination** of different stakeholders to avoid duplication or the overlap of interventions. It is recommended to utilize existing coordination mechanisms to improve the exchange of information about interventions aimed at mainstreaming gender in the agricultural sector and rural development, such as the Gender Theme Group (chaired by UN Women) and the Donor Coordination Unit (chaired by the Government of Georgia). The Donor Coordination Unit could be instrumental also for identifying gaps (technical support and funds needed) in the implementation of national and local strategies, as well as plans related to agricul-

tural and regional development. In 2017, a task force of the Gender Theme Group dedicated to women's economic empowerment was created. The Task Force on Women's Economic Empowerment (TF WEE) is co-chaired by UNDP and UN Women. The goal of the TF WEE is to support the Government of Georgia to achieve gender equality, focusing on women's economic empowerment – in line with the nationalized SDGs (especially SDGs 1, 4, 5 and 8), relevant international human rights frameworks (e.g. CEDAW, Beijing Platform for Action, CSW Agreed Conclusions, etc.), and corresponding national strategies, plans and policies. The purpose is to enhance effective exchange of information and strengthen coordination among development partners providing advocacy and support to the Government of Georgia to achieve the above goals. The TF WEE holds regular meetings.

6. **Strengthen the internal capacities of donor/development organizations as well as other organizations that execute programmes at local levels** through trainings on gender equality and gender mainstreaming. Trainings will ensure that the initiatives that are funded or implemented are empowering women and strengthening gender equality results.

### Addressing Gender Stereotypes

7. Government and development partners, including local non-governmental organizations should prioritize **awareness-raising initiatives** (national campaigns as well as initiatives tailored to address specific regions) communicating the benefits of gender equality for both men and women. They should also promote women's active engagement in the public domain, their roles in decision-making, and their contributions to the development of local/rural communities, etc.
8. It is important to **promote women's and girls' education in the agricultural sector** and to support initiatives that remove various barriers

for girls to enter this type of educational programme, from addressing gender stereotypes to offering financial support or student loans.

## Designing and Implementing Targeted Initiatives to Promote the More Equal and Active Participation of Men and Women in Local Development

9. Relevant ministries, with the support of development partners, should **promote agricultural development**. This action will require increasing the qualification of farmers through tailored trainings or college education, improved quality of and access to extension services, as well as access to resources. Such activities are envisaged in the National Action Plan for Agriculture Development of Georgia 2015-2020, however, this plan does not include a gender mainstreaming approach.
10. To address existing gender equality gaps and gender stereotypes in the division of labor as well as the disproportionately heavy burden of women in reproductive and productive work, development organizations and other actors implementing projects should design their **projects with very clear gender targets and indicators, and also design special initiatives that promote the engagement of women in non-traditional/typically male income-generating activities**. Men's increased responsibilities for unpaid care and household work should also be promoted. Special educational/awareness-raising campaigns can be designed by various stakeholders, such as the Ministry of Education of Georgia and developmental organizations that promote the role of women in agricultural business activities (nuts value chain, for example) and the role of men within the household.
11. Extension services should aim to provide **advisory services in animal husbandry and crops value chains so that neither men nor women are significantly under-represented in any specific type of advice**. The Ministry of Agriculture, in cooperation with extension services and other relevant development partners, should **promote the use of extension services, specifically advisory services, among women**.
12. The Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development, which is involved with the **small land-owners' support program, should target more women in animal husbandry value chains**. By this action, they will support women by providing machinery and especially a water supply in order to make their work for cattle cleaning easier. This could entail setting specific targets, as well as promoting the small land-owners' programme among women.
13. **Information about legal pre-requisites, membership and the potential benefits of sustainable cooperatives** for income generation/business in rural areas should reach women. Needs assessments for women interested in joining should form a basis for required capacity development initiatives. This action would strengthen the relevant knowledge and skills of planning, production, managing and trading.
14. **Access to loans for women should be improved through governmental support**. Special programmes designed to create a favorable environment for women to receive credits that, in turn, increase self-employment opportunities. Given that collateral is often required to access loans, land and property registration processes should ensure that women get equal access to these important resources.
15. **Access to social infrastructure**, especially kindergartens, should be improved in order to ease the burden of women's unpaid labor. Access to services would also give women more free time to become involved in income-generating activities and paid jobs. For example, the Village Support Programs implemented by the Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure of Georgia could be used for this purpose.
16. Grassroots development interventions aimed at empowering women (and men), such as social mobilization, and resulting in the formation of **self-help groups** should continue. Support for SHGs to **empower women economically** through targeted capacity development and skills-strengthening, as well as link women to

## Initiatives Targeting/Supporting Women

16. Grassroots development interventions aimed at empowering women (and men), such as social mobilization, and resulting in the formation of **self-help groups** should continue. Support for SHGs to **empower women economically** through targeted capacity development and skills-strengthening, as well as link women to



agricultural extension services, financial services and markets should be explored. Such efforts are aimed at sustainable income-generation for and by women.

17. Provide support to involved women (SHGs, CBOs, and local NGOs) in order to strengthen their knowledge about **GRB and advocacy skills to influence local planning and budgeting**. A reflection of women's needs in local budgets may significantly improve the conditions and quality of agricultural products, as well as improve access to markets.
18. **GRB** is considered to be an effective tool for gender mainstreaming. It is necessary to properly map all GRB initiatives, both at the national and local levels, and also to make an effort to institutionalize this practice throughout all ministries, including the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure. In addition, special budget allocations for women to support their active involvement in the agriculture sector should be considered by the respective ministries and local authorities.

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**Table no. 4:**  
List of key informants

#	Key Informant	Organization	Location	Relevant persons	Number of interviews conducted
1	NGO	Women's Fund and Memory Research Center "TASO"	Tbilisi	Marina Tabukashvili - General Director Tsisana Goderdzishvili - Project Manager	2 interviews
2	NGO	Farmers Association	Tbilisi	Tamuna Toria - Executive Director	1 interview
3	Gov	State Agency for Development of Agricultural Cooperatives	Tbilisi	Giorgi Mishveladze - Head of State Agency for Development of Agricultural Cooperatives	1 interview
4	Gov	Local Government Representative	Zugdidi	Giorgi Gasashvili - Chief Specialist at the Department for Economic Strategy and Investment Policy of Economics and Infrastructure Office of Zugdidi City Gangeoba	1 interview
5	Gov	Local Government Representative (Samtskhe-Javakheti)	Samtskhe-Javakheti	Ilia Zardiashvili - Head of Akhaltsikhe Municipality District Administration	1 interview
6	Gov	Local Government Representative (Shida Kartli)	Gori	Giorgi Tsverava - Deputy Governor of the Gori Municipality Lali Gigashvili - Head of Gori Municipality City Hall Financial Services Accounting Department	2 interviews
7	Int. Org	UN FAO	Tbilisi	Rati Shavgulidze - FAO Representation in Georgia, national Policy Advisor Iamze Mirazanashvili - FAO Representation in Georgia, Programme Assistant	2 interviews
8	Int. Org	SCO	Tbilisi	Sofia Svanadze - Gender and Governance Adviser/ National Program Officer Beka Tagauri - Head of Program, Technical Cooperation, Georgia Tamuna Tsivtsivadze - Senior Programme Officer	2 interviews
9	Int. Org	UN Women	Tbilisi	Tamar Sabedashvili - National Programme Officer	1 interview
10	Gov	Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure	Tbilisi	Nino Giguashvili - Gender Focal Point	1 interview
11	NGO	Women Information Centre	Tbilisi	Maia Rusetski - Director	1 interview

#	Key Informant	Organization	Location	Relevant persons	Number of interviews conducted
12	NGO	ICCN	Tbilisi	Maia Sharvashidze - Women's Rooms Coordinator Nana Berekashvili - invited professor at GIPA and ISU, former ICNN representative	1 interview
13	Extension Services	Information Consultation Service	Tbilisi	Shalva Kereselidze – Head of Department of Regional Coordination	1 interview
14	Extension Services	Information Consultation Service (ICCs) in the regions	Samegrelo Samtshe-Javakheti	Iana Emukhvari - Senior Specialist of Ministry of Agriculture Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti Regional Division Merab Naskidashvili - Senior Specialist of Ministry of Agriculture Samtskhe-Javakheti Regional Division	2 interviews
15	VET	Ministry of Education and Science	Tbilisi	Irina Tserodze – Head of VET Department	1 interview
16	VET	VET Colleges in the regions	Kakheti Samtskhe-Javakheti Samegrelo	Bela Avalishvili - Director of VET College Teona Khupenia - Rector of VET College Natela Papunashvili - Director of VET College	3 interviews
17	Extension Services	Veterinaries and/or agronomists in the regions	Kakheti Samtskhe-Javakheti	Zurab Naskidashvili - Vet Zurab Okruashvili - Vet	2 interviews
18	Alliances Lesser Caucasus Programme	Mercy Corps	Tbilisi	Helen Bradbury - Team Leader	1 interview
19	Market Opportunities for Livelihood Improvement in Kakheti (MOLI Project)	HEKS/EPER	Kakheti	Stefan Joss - Team Leader	presentation
20	Rebuilding Returnees' Housing and Livelihoods in Ergneti (Shida Kartli)	DRC	Tbilisi	Guy Hovey - Program Manager	1 interview
21	DRC Gender Focal Point	DRC	Tbilisi	Tamar Bolkvadze - Monitoring and Evaluation Officer/GMS Focal Point	1 interview
22	Vulnerable Households' Accommodation and Community Infrastructure Rehabilitation Project in Samegrelo (West Georgia)	DRC	Zugdidi	Mzevinar Jojua - Livelihood Manager	1 interview

Total Number of Interviews

30

#	Key Informant	Organization	Location	Relevant persons	Number of interviews conducted
1	NGO	Women's Fund and Memory Research Center "TASO"	Tbilisi	Marina Tabukashvili - General Director Tsisana Goderdzishvili - Project Manager	1 interview
2	NGO	Farmers Association	Tbilisi	Nino Zambakhidze – Founder Tamuna Toria – Executive Director	1 interview
3	Gov	State Agency for Development of Agricultural Cooperatives	Tbilisi	Giorgi Misheladze - Head of State Agency for Development of Agricultural Cooperatives	1 interview
4	Int. Org	UN Women	Tbilisi	Tamar Sabedashvili - National Programme Officer	1 interview
5	Int. Org	UNDP	Tbilisi	Natia Natsvlishvili – Assistance Resident Representative for Programme	1 interview
6	NGO	RCDA	Tbilisi	Rostom Gamisonia - Director	1 interview
7	Int. Org	OXFAM	Tbilisi	Keti Getiashvili - Representative	1 interviews
8	VET	UNDP	Tbilisi	Konstantine Kobakhidze, Project Manager	1 interview
9	Alliances Lesser Caucasus Programme	Mercy Corps	Tbilisi	Irakli Kasrashvili, Director	1 interview
10	Int. Org	HEKS/EPER	Tbilisi	Nana Topuridze	1 interview
11	Int. Org	EVOLUXER	Tbilisi	Tina Gabelia - Representative	1 interview
12	Int. Org	CARE	Tbilisi	Khatuna Madurashvili - Representative	1 interview
13	NGO	ELKANA	Tbilisi	Maka Jorjadze – Director	1 interview
14	Int. Org	Action Against Hunger		Marcella Maxfield – Regional Director	1 interview
15	Int. Org	People in Need		Nana Kurashvili – Project Coordinator	1 interview
16	NGO	CENN	Tbilisi	Nino Tevzadze - Representative	1 interview
Total Number of Interviews					16

