



GEORGIAN CENTER FOR STRATEGY AND DEVELOPMENT

REPORT ON ORGANISATIONAL ACTIVITIES

2022

2022 Report on Organisational Activities

SENTINEL CONCEPTS

03.

Introduction

05.

Enhancing Security

13.

Strengthening the Economic Situation of Ethnic Minorities

18.

Advancing Georgia's Integration into NATO and the EU

20.

Strategic Communications and Public Awareness

22.

Donor and Partner Organisations of GCSD

ANNUAL REPORT

Georgian Center for Strategy and Development (GCSD) is a non-profit organization that aims to promote stable and democratic growth in Georgia and beyond.

2022 was a successful and busy year for GCSD. The organization started 12 new projects, expanding its work into new fields and increasing the total number of projects to 19.

One of the new areas of focus is cybersecurity. GCSD established a new unit called the Cyber Resilience Center (CRC). The center is run similarly to the Terrorism Research Center (TRC) and the Black Sea Cooperation Center (BSCC). CRC aims to improve cyber security in society and create educational materials by sharing knowledge. CRC will also research information security and related topics.

Because of the new directions and increased work, GCSD's team has grown. The organization now has 18 employees, a prerequisite for GCSD's future success and growth. Six of the new staff are former GCSD interns. The organization has an internship program to help young professionals with career growth.

GCSD has also made new partnerships with successful organizations, including academic institutions, private companies, and public organizations. The organization signed agreements with the American University of Central Asia, the Institute for Development and Diplomacy of Azerbaijan at the ADA University, the Business and Technology University in Tbilisi, the School of Economics and Management at the University of Minio in Portugal, the Norwegian production company Fuuse, and more. GCSD has also become a member of the American Chamber of Commerce.

During 2022:



48 training/simulation training were conducted (939 people participated)



3 thematic handbook were developed



6 sub-grants were issued



3 training program/online training module was developed



29 research paper/publications were prepared



17 discussions were held



46 experts were contracted



296 information meetings/consultations were held

The Review of GCSD's 2022 Activities:

Enhancing Security:

GCSD has focused on enhancing security in Georgia since its foundation. A high level of security is crucial for the nation's prosperity and sustainable development. Security is a multi-faceted concept that involves several elements. Therefore, GCSD's approach to security is comprehensive and encompasses various strategies. During 2022, GCSD worked on issues such as countering violent extremism and radicalisation, building trust between the public and police, preventing the spread of advanced conventional weapons, cybersecurity, and other areas, thus contributing to the country's security environment.

Violent Extremism and Radicalisation

The prevention of violent extremism and radicalisation is vital for maintaining security in Georgia. These challenges pose a threat to the stability and sustainable growth of the country.

The Georgian Center for Strategy and Development (GCSD) made significant progress in this area in 2022. The project "Enhancing the Capacity of Georgia in Preventing Violent Extremism and Radicalisation," supported by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Norway, helped increase the state's capacity and reinforce the sustainability of society.

Key activities carried out within the project include:

- **Study of Violent Extremist Narratives** - GCSD conducted extensive [research](#) and delivered a



document about the narratives spread in Georgia by far-right and jihadist groups/organisations. The study was presented to relevant government officials and civil society representatives.

- **Private-Public Dialogue Platform** - Two meetings were held to discuss issues related to terrorism and violent extremism,



with the participation of 19 state institutions and NGOs. During the meetings, GCSD presented an annual report on terrorism and violent extremism and discussed the main challenges facing the country and region.

- **Violent Extremism Risk Assessment Training** - GCSD organized a three-day training program for representatives of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the penitentiary service, and government administration to assess the risk of violent extremism.



- **Strengthening Parliamentary Capacity** - A three-day workshop was held for members of Parliament, focusing on the challenges and ways to address violent extremism and radicalisation. 16 parliamentary committee members attended the event.



- **Capacity Building for Local Government** - Three pieces of training were held for local government representatives in Kakheti, Samtskhe-Javakheti, and Adjara regions to combat radicalisation and extremism. 80 participants were trained in total.

Samtskhe-Javakheti, and Adjara regions to combat radicalisation and extremism. 80 participants were trained in total.

- **Empowering Civil Society** - GCSD and the Civic Education Teachers Forum conducted 2 online training sessions for school teachers on radical and extremist narratives. 56 teachers from across Georgia were trained.
- **Collaboration with Universities** - GCSD created relevant curriculums for violent extremism prevention and radicalisation and shared them with five universities - Ivane Javakishvili Tbilisi State



University, Batumi Shota Rustaveli State University, Akaki Tsereteli State University, Shota Meskhia State Teaching University of Zugdidi, Caucasus University).

- **Supporting Civil Society Organisations** - GEL 200,000 was provided as grants to NGOs registered in Georgia to combat violent extremism and radicalisation and advocate for policy changes at the national level.

It's worth mentioning that the Terrorism Research Center (TRC) within GCSD remains active, publishing 8 research documents in 2022, including an annual report on terrorism and violent extremism. The report is a summary of information available on local, regional, and international media platforms and is based on the weekly news digest by the Terrorism Research Center.

In addition, within the framework of the David Chochua Fellowship, TRC published four papers in the 3rd edition of the David Chochua Terrorism Research Journal. The authors were awarded David Chochua Scholarship.

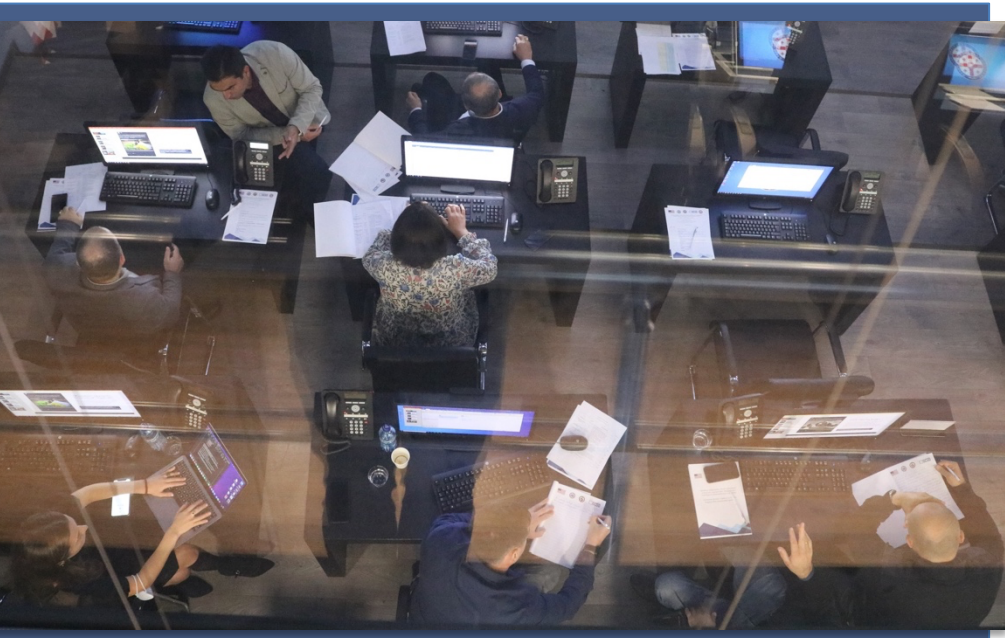
Enhancing Georgia's Capacity in Countering Targeted WMD Assassination Attempts

An important focus of GCSD's work is to enhance Georgia's ability to prevent or stop political killings using weapons of mass destruction (WMD). To achieve this, the organisation is implementing a

project with support from the U.S. Department of State's Office for Cooperative Threat Reduction (CTR). The project aims to improve Georgia's capabilities, enhance its security and protection, and detect and respond to chemical, biological, radiation, and nuclear threats.



The project enhances the technical and tactical skills of partners, prepares them for relevant scenarios, and improves their strategic communication abilities to address the information aspect of



the challenge. The project involves relevant units (agencies) from all state agencies participating in the CBRN Interagency Coordination Council, and primary responders and representatives from the department of strategic communication.

In 2021-2022, the following activities were carried out:

- A baseline study was conducted to identify the capabilities and needs of the agencies involved in the project. Based on the results, GCSD conducted training for the CBRN Council.
- A two-day exercise was held about disinformation and WMD targeted attacks. The goal was to provide CBRN Commission members with fundamental knowledge about the non-proliferation field, the increasing threat of using WMD for political killings, and related disinformation.
- A two-day training was held on the methods and tactics of investigating killings using WMD for members, specialists, and primary responders of the CBRN Interagency Coordination Council.
- A final interagency simulation training was carried out to assess the progress of the agencies involved in the project, their ability to respond quickly to a crisis, and the level of interagency coordination. The event was attended by members of the CBRN Interagency Coordination Council, specialists from relevant agencies, and primary responders.
- A three-day training was held for journalists about CBRN Safety Challenges and the Georgian experience.
- An online training course – Addressing WMD Terrorist Attacks and Targeted Assassination Attempts was created.



Fostering Increased Trust between the Public and Law Enforcement

One key aspect of GCSD's mission is to enhance trust between the community and the police. With support from the Embassy of the Netherlands in Georgia, the organisation is implementing a project focused on community policing. This project aims to promote closer cooperation between law enforcement and the public by supporting community policing. The project also involves raising awareness of the Ministry of Internal Affairs' law enforcement service, providing officers with the necessary knowledge and skills, and assessing the institutional needs of this service.



In 2022, several activities were carried out as part of the project:

- 45 law enforcement officers received training on human rights issues such as domestic violence, personal data protection, and sexual harassment;
- A methodology guide for working with youth was developed and 15 officers received trainer training to assist in this process. The manual and accompanying presentation materials were created;



- Training was held on communication with persons with disabilities to increase awareness of the challenges faced by this population. The officers learned about the unique aspects of interacting with people with different types of disabilities;
- A paralympic sports tournament was held in Bocha, with participants including law enforcement officers from all Tbilisi divisions and local persons with disabilities;

- Law enforcement officers held meetings with schoolchildren and gave presentations about their activities and had discussions on security issues;
- A board game was created to introduce young people to the activities of law enforcement officers and promote preventative thinking about safety;
- Officers received training on "Community Police Service in the Netherlands," led by Dutch expert Mihiel Holtakers, who shared his expertise in community policing with the participants.

Preventing the Spread of Advanced Conventional Weapons

GCSD is focused on preventing the proliferation of advanced conventional weapons (ACW) in the region. With support from the U.S. Department of State, the organisation is carrying out a project to inform on the dangers posed by ACW in Georgia and block Russia from acquiring ACW components that are under sanctions.

The project involves collaborating with both public and private sector entities, such as financial institutions, government agencies, business groups, the National Bank, security services, logistics firms, educational institutions, media outlets, and civil society organisations. Local and international experts will work alongside the GCSD team.

The project's activities involve creating a manual on financial and operational compliance for the prevention of ACW spread and sanctions enforcement, offering training to both public and private sectors, drafting a policy document on ACW risks, and hosting a regional conference.

Stakeholders have been informed, and work on the manual covering ACW risks and sanctions enforcement is ongoing.

Enhancing Cybersecurity in Georgia

The cyber defense has become a critical aspect of security in the digital age. It is a challenge for government agencies and the private and civil sectors. To enhance cybersecurity, GCSD is implementing the project "Informed Communities for A Resilient Society" under the U.S. Embassy's Democracy Commission Small Grants Program. The project aims to increase the resilience of communities in Georgia with ethnic minorities and internally displaced persons in the regions of Samegrelo, Samtskhe-Javakheti, Kvemo Kartli, and Shida Kartli against cyber and disinformation threats.

In 2022, the following activities were carried out under the project:

- Focus groups and interviews were conducted in the target areas, resulting in a report on cybersecurity and disinformation vulnerability in Georgian and English;
- A cybersecurity guide was developed by the project partner GITAC;
- As part of the project's information campaign, three discussions were hosted on the Facebook pages of GCSO and CRC, covering topics such as the security of electronic elections, critical infrastructure of commercial banks, and academic cybersecurity training programs.

Cyber Consultations with Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine

A three-day event called "Cyber Consultations with Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine" took place on July 4-6, 2022 to improve understanding of the cybersecurity environment in the region and to promote common interests and cyber sustainability. The event was organized by the European Union Institute for Security Studies (EUISS) and the GCSO.

Key topics discussed during the event included: (1) Understanding the cyber diplomacy crisis, including a review of policies and tools; 2) Balancing growth, security, and geo-policies during digital transformation; 3) The role of cyber



diplomacy in strengthening state and social cyber sustainability; 4) Protecting critical infrastructure and responding to cascading effects; 5) Lessons from the war in Ukraine about cyber conflict; 6) Dealing with foreign interference and information manipulation; 7) Improving defense through cyber diplomacy.



55 participants attended the event, including representatives from EU institutions and the public and civil sectors of Eastern Partnership countries.

Improving Security Surveillance

Effective surveillance is crucial for the proper functioning of the security system, promoting accountability of security agencies, and exposing and addressing systemic violations.

GCSD, as a member of the consortium, is working with B&S Europe and Policy and Management Consulting Group to improve security sector surveillance in Georgia. The project is funded by the European Union and aims to increase human safety in the country by improving the accountability of security sector actors. The project focuses on strengthening the capacity of the Public Defender's Office, State Audit, Parliament, and other relevant agencies.

The project started in August 2021 and has already carried out several important activities. For example, an assessment of the mandate and monitoring tools of the Public Defender's Office and the institutional capabilities was conducted. This involved both literature research and interviews with representatives of the Public Defender's Office and the Ministry of Internal Affairs. The final report included recommendations from an expert in the field.

To enhance the supervisory function of Parliament and reinforce its institutional capacity, research was conducted to analyze the educational needs of Parliament. This included interviews with Parliament members and staff, and the final report came with recommendations and a curriculum for future training and measures.

The project also organized a roundtable meeting with civil society organisations to discuss the governance of the security sector, the role of NGOs, and the cooperation between various institutions and organisations. The meeting generated significant interest among NGOs and the need for further cooperation was emphasized.

Promoting Integration and Economic Development of Ethnic Minorities and Other Vulnerable Groups

For the sustainable development and prosperity of the country, it is crucial to empower vulnerable groups, increase their resilience and integrate them into the general public. One of the tasks of GCSD is to support various vulnerable groups and strengthen their resilience, which the organisation has been implementing various initiatives for many years.

Strengthening the Economic Situation of Ethnic Minorities

The difficulties faced by ethnic minorities in the country pose a significant challenge. To address this issue, the Georgian Center for Strategy and Development (GCSD) organisation, with the assistance of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and SwissContact, launched the project "Enhancing Access to Financial Resources for Ethnic Minorities." The objective of the project was to empower ethnic minorities in Samtskhe-Javakheti and Kvemo-Kartli by expanding their access to financial resources. Specifically, it aided representatives of ethnic minorities in taking advantage of the "Enterprise Georgia" program.

The following actions were carried out within the project:

- The project team, along with representatives from Enterprise Georgia, provided training for local coordinators to gain a deeper understanding of the "Enterprise Georgia" grants scheme's priorities.
- Information sessions were conducted with local business owners, non-governmental organisations, media outlets, and self-governments from the 6 municipalities of Samtskhe-Javakheti and Kvemo Kartli, namely Akhaltsikhe, Akhalkalaki, Ninotsminda, Marneuli, Dmanisi, and Gardabani. These meetings were covered by local media, and seven regional media platforms in Samtskhe-Javakheti and Kvemo Kartli prepared video, audio, and written content in Georgian, Armenian, Azerbaijani, and Russian languages for use on TV, radio, and social networks. A comprehensive communication/media plan for "Enterprise Georgia" was also developed to enhance the involvement of ethnic minorities in the program.
- Based on the information gathered during the meetings, the project team created a desk review working document that outlines the main challenges faced by ethnic Azerbaijani and Armenian entrepreneurs from Kvemo Kartli and Samtskhe-Javakheti in participating in the Micro and Small Business Support Program of "Enterprise Georgia."
- The GCSD team, in close collaboration with stakeholders in the Kvemo Kartli and Samtskhe-Javakheti regions, devised an action plan to improve the quality of program applications.
- The project team conducted preparatory training for applicants from Kvemo Kartli and Samtskhe-Javakheti moving on to the second stage.

Apart from those mentioned, GCSD promotes ethnic minorities by financing their individual projects. Among them, in 2022, the "Digitize Future" and "Visual Education Center in Pankisi Gorge: Alternative Education for Civil Society Development" projects were implemented with the support of GCSD.



The "Digitize Future" project was implemented by the organisation Democracy Lab. The goal of the project was to raise awareness among Pankisi youth, provide training on digital professions, improve their skills and opportunities by increasing digital activity. Sixty young people from Pankisi Gorge, selected through an open competition, participated in the project and were distributed among groups of interest based on cover letters received during the competition:

- Writing and narration
- Graphic design;
- Social media management and digital marketing;
- Data analysis and visualization;
- Management/entrepreneurship/activism and advocacy;
- Digital and media literacy



After completing the comprehensive theoretical course, 18 people were selected by trainers who then had the opportunity to participate in paid internships in partner organisations. Each of the chosen participants was given a laptop along with certificates, so they could work remotely with full functionality.

The "Visual Education Center in Pankisi Gorge: Alternative Education for Civil Society Development" project was implemented by the organisation Tbilisi Photo Festival. The aim of the project was to strengthen ethnic and religious groups living in Pankisi Gorge by using innovative and alternative educational methods. In Jokolo, a village in Pankisi Gorge, a visual education center (Pankisi Media Center) was created. It features

Georgian, regional, and international multimedia projects. Pankisi Media Center has hosted "Photo Factory" sessions, public lectures, and masterclasses for local youth.

Enhancing Multicultural Education in Georgian Schools

The integration of ethnic minorities in Georgia is a crucial challenge, and GCSD places great importance on addressing this issue. In 2022, with the support of the Open Society Foundation, the organisation launched the "Enhancing Multicultural Education in Georgian Schools" project. The project aims to increase knowledge and understanding of ethnic and religious minorities by creating training resources and improving teaching methods for teachers.

As part of the project, materials highlighting the narratives of ethnic and religious minorities will be developed, including animated training videos and radio-television stories. These materials will be integrated into the school curriculum, and accompanying seminars for teachers and public lectures on different ethnic and religious groups will also be held.



A competition was organized to identify a group of experts to create the narrative materials, and Tbilisi State University Institute for Cultural Research was selected as the winning group, tasked with leading the initiative.

Supporting the Economic Empowerment of Socially Vulnerable Individuals

Socially vulnerable individuals (SVIs) are among the most disadvantaged groups in the country. Improving their circumstances requires addressing their challenges. To this end, GCSD initiated the "Facilitation support to increase participation of socially vulnerable groups in the EG Micro Grants program" project in 2022, which was funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation.

The project involved conducting in-depth interviews with 51 municipalities and identifying over 100 local potential partners for Enterprise Georgia (EG), including local media, civil society organisations, and previous grant competition winners. A research report on the challenges faced by SVIs in applying for the program was created, and an expert was hired to develop a communication protocol as a guide for the "Enterprise Georgia" program to increase SVI involvement. The project team also held preparatory consultations for interviews for SVI representatives who progressed to the second stage of the program. Additionally, the expert provided phone consultations to 150 registered applicants.

Gender equality and Women Assistance

GCSD places great importance on promoting gender equality and advancing women's rights. It is a critical matter for overall well-being and sustainable development.

In this pursuit, GCSD is implementing several significant projects, including the IREX-led global initiative "SHE's GREAT!", which focuses on gender equality and civic engagement.



In 2022, the first phase of SHE's GREAT! saw participants from Kyrgyzstan, Jordan, and Georgia share their perspectives on gender equality, gender-based violence, and stereotypes. GCSD, in collaboration with IREX, also worked on developing the design and updated concept for future phases of the initiative.

In August 2022, GCSD started the second phase, which includes both local and international activities. Domestically, eight schools were selected from various regions to form "gender and my environment" clubs, where participants received eight weeks of training on gender stereotypes, gender norms, and their transformation. After the training, students will have the opportunity to develop and implement eight youth initiatives in their schools and communities.



Internationally, GCSD is leading the global efforts of SHE's GREAT!, which involves five countries: Kyrgyzstan, Jordan, Georgia, Saint Lucia, and Guatemala. During this phase, project ambassadors and friendly experts were selected, and a coordination meeting was held to discuss plans. In 2023, ambassadors and experts will work on creating a youth document to promote gender equality, and a STEAM camp and educational visit are also planned for participants.



In addition, GCSD also launched the project "Introduce the Future" in 2022, as part of the Rural Development Agency program, with the support of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation. Through interviews with representatives of the Rural Development Agency and analysis of the data gathered, five target municipalities were identified to promote women's engagement.

Advancing Georgia's Integration into NATO and the EU

Georgia's integration into the Euro-Atlantic structures is a key aspect of its foreign and security policy and plays a crucial role in the country's stability and prosperity. GCSD has been a steadfast supporter of various initiatives and projects aimed at promoting Georgia's integration into these organisations.



In 2022, with funding from the NATO Public Diplomacy Division, GCSD carried out a project titled "Getting to Know NATO Better". The purpose of this project was to raise awareness among Georgia's youth and the general public about NATO's recent advancements, particularly the new Strategic Concept adopted in June 2022, the Alliance's response to current security challenges, and the impact of the NATO-Georgia partnership on Georgia's defense capabilities and security.

As part of the project, GCSD organized the NATO Youth Academy, which provided an opportunity for students to learn and engage with NATO's work. In addition, informational visits to regions were conducted, online discussions on NATO-related topics were held, a student competition was

organized, and a publication featuring contributions from eight authors was produced.



Parallel to this, the project "Facility for the implementation of the EU-Georgia Association Agreement - II" is being implemented. The project, which is supported by the European Union, commenced in 2019 and will end in 2024. The project supports the commitments made in the bilateral agreements signed

between the European Union and Georgia, and cooperates with government institutions, parliament, representatives of civil society, media and business associations. Support is provided in three main directions: 1) Support to coordination, monitoring, reporting of implementation of EU-Georgia

Bilateral Agreements and EU-Georgia cooperation; 2) Support to Implementation of sector-related reforms required by the EU-Georgia Agreements; 3) Effective Public Communication and Outreach.

During the reporting period, the activities carried out were aimed at implementing the main components of the project, including strengthening the capacity of public institutions in policy development, planning, coordination, monitoring, reporting and evaluation in order to accelerate the more effective implementation of EU-Georgia bilateral agreements. As previously, a specific focus was made at supporting the implementation of the sector-related reforms, promoting the law approximation process and assisting various entities in conducting the regulatory impact assessments. A significant emphasis was also placed on enhancing strategic communication and engagement on the AA/DCFTA implementation process and on purposefully improving communication with various stakeholders and the general public. Additionally, activities were also implemented during the reporting period based on the needs identified and expressed by various beneficiaries and the availability of project funds.

Ambassador Talks

In 2022, GCSO initiated a new program, the "Ambassador Talks," to foster discourse and comprehension of foreign policy issues. Under this initiative, ambassadors from various nations present their country's perspective on the most pressing global or regional topics on the agenda. The meetings follow the



"Chatham House Rules" and are attended by a select group of invited specialists and academics,

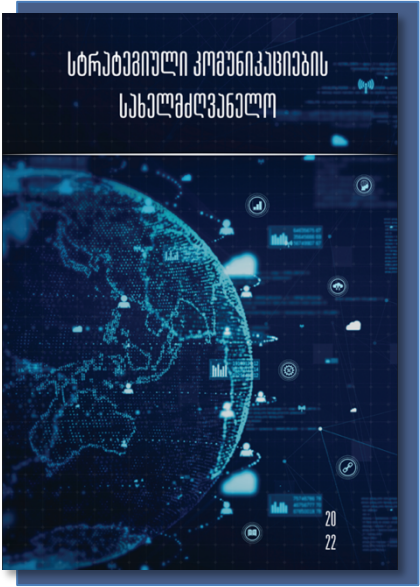
comprising about 15 individuals. The small-group format encourages open and in-depth interaction and dialogue. Last year, GCSO hosted ambassadors from Turkey, Britain, Israel, and the United States for four such discussions.



Strategic Communications and Public Awareness

In light of the complex and rapidly changing information environment, the significance of strategic communications continues to grow. GCSD has been actively pursuing the development of effective and sustainable strategic communications in the country through various initiatives and projects. One such program, the "Strategic Communication for Better Future," was carried out in 2022 with the support of the U.S. Embassy. The following were among its key activities:

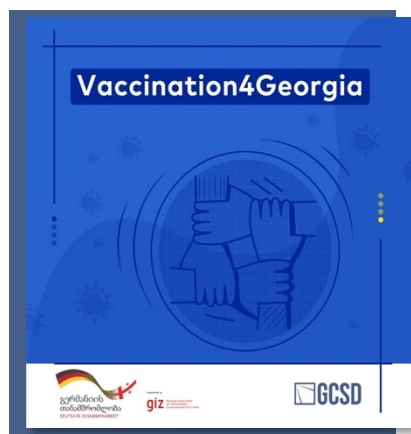
- Creation of the first Georgian-language strategic communications manual, which outlines best practices and international experience in strategic communication, tailored to the local context.
- Launch of an online certification course in strategic communications, featuring video lectures, reading materials, post-tests, and other relevant resources, accessible through Stratcom.org.ge
- Training of 65 diplomats from different countries in the art of strategic communications to enhance the abilities of Georgian diplomatic missions abroad.



- Conduct a survey in two regions of Georgia to assess the information environment, public attitudes, and sources of information. Recommendations for the Government of Georgia were developed based on the survey results.

- Workshops with the Interagency Working Group on Strategic Communications to support the improvement of the strategic communications system in the country, featuring consultations with leading international experts and government representatives, taking into account the needs of various government ministries.

Vaccination and Healthcare



To ensure the health and stability of the population, large-scale vaccination against common diseases, including COVID-19, is crucial. In pursuit of this goal, GCSD, with support from the German Society for International Cooperation (GIZ), launched the project "Vaccination4Georgia" in 2022. The objective of the project was to improve access to accurate information about vaccination and to shift skeptical attitudes among the population to support widespread vaccination. Addressing the issue of vaccine-related misinformation and infodemics was a top priority, as this would greatly enhance the public's resilience and promote informed, fact-based decision-making regarding

vaccination.

Through collaboration with community representatives and their active participation, the project carried out a range of activities, including conducting preliminary qualitative and quantitative studies to gauge local attitudes towards vaccination, organizing training for key stakeholders on combating disinformation and promoting vaccination, executing a multifaceted media campaign in local media, conducting door-to-door training, and holding information meetings in target communities.

The project was carried out in areas of Georgia densely populated by ethnic minorities and recorded low vaccination rates, such as Kakheti, Kvemo Kartli, and Samtskhe-Javakheti. All project materials were produced in Georgian, Armenian, and Azerbaijani languages.



List of donor and partner organisations of GCSD in 2022

The effective implementation of GCSD's activities and the achieved goals and results were made possible by close cooperation with donor and partner organisations:

Donor organisations:



Partner organisations:





2022 Report on Organisational Activities



🌐 www.gcsd.org.ge
✉ gcsd@gcsd.org.ge
☎ 032 2 22 26 67
📍 #48/50, Mtskheta str.