International Institute for Education Policy,
Planning and Management

EDUCATION ACCESS AND EQUITY IN THE CAUCASUS REGION

Georgia

Research Team:
George Machabeli
Tamuna Bregvadze
Natia Andguladze
Revaz Apkhazava
David Makashvili

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Foreword

Over the past decade Georgia's educational system has undergone significant changes. An internal reorganization of the system occurred against a background of transformation and turbulence in the larger political, social, and economic contexts.

In an effort to make the best use of limited resources, policymakers often have to make difficult choices between competing priorities, finding a balance between the values of access and quality, competition and equity. These choices lead to different outcomes for specific groups of stakeholders. Therefore, analysis of the reform from different perspectives is crucial for a deeper understanding of the dynamics and outcomes of change in the system.

This report of the International Institute for Education Policy Planning and Management reviews education policy outcomes for children with special education needs. Particular focus is placed on students with internally displaced (IDP) status and disabilities.

A brief glance at the framework normative documents indicates the importance of inclusive education in the Georgian educational system. A general commitment to inclusive education is reflected in the government's "Goals of General Education" and in the logic of the new national curriculum. An important challenge remains, however, in ensuring that this general commitment to inclusive education is reflected in real-life classroom activities and student experiences.

The main emphasis of this report, therefore, is on the outcomes of the education reform for vulnerable groups of students in Georgia. Conclusions are based on analysis of secondary data and interviews with different stakeholders: policy-makers, teachers, students, non-governmental organizations, and education experts.

The International Institute for Education Policy Planning and Management would like to thank all participating individuals and organizations for their valuable contributions. The authors hope that our findings provide additional ideas and insights for policy-makers and practitioners in the ongoing process of building the integrity of inclusive education in Georgia.

Executive Summary

Inclusive education is an important issue in the education policy agenda of Georgia. However, there is still little empirical evidence on how certain policy goals are translated into practical processes and actions. This report of the International Institute for Education Policy Planning and Management is an effort to review the reform of the educational system initiated in Georgia in 2004 from the standpoint of children with special education needs: Do children with special needs receive the same outcomes as other children? Are there any differences in access or quality of education? Are inputs into the system sufficient to generate the desired outputs? What has already been done and what are the next important steps in the implementation of an inclusive education agenda?

In order to find answers to these questions, EPPM compiled existing literature and reports, reviewed current legislation and framework documents, and gathered data from primary sources through interviews with different stakeholders: decision-makers, school administrators, education experts, and representatives of non-governmental organizations and donor agencies. The data were gathered and analyzed June-September 2011.

Certain findings in the report are also based on statistical analysis of the National Household Survey Data and various datasets provided by the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia.

An important additional input came from the analysis of transcripts of 20 focus groups of IDP children, parents, and teachers that were kindly provided by the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC). The focus groups were part of the research conducted by NRC in 2010 on the educational needs of IDP children.

The report is divided into four main parts. The first part describes education reform in Georgia. The second provides a general overview of conditions for children with special education needs (SEN), the third analyses the outcomes of the reform for children with SEN in terms of access to quality education, equity, vertical mobility, and availability of teaching and learning resources. The current situation with regard to children with disabilities (CWD) cannot be understood in isolation from the larger context of the educational system, thus particular findings in this chapter are derived from comparison of indicators with country-wide parameters. The last part describes the progress of the inclusive education initiative in Georgia as seen by different stakeholders.

Our findings illustrate that during the recent decade Georgia has made many effective steps towards increasing access for children with SEN to general education, that reform is moving in the right direction, and that the future of inclusive education in Georgia is promising. However, in order to effectively plan subsequent steps, policy-makers need evidence. The unavailability of accurate statistics or reliable data was an important limitation of the current study. EPPM is concerned by the fact that in many cases it was very difficult to get public information from state agencies.

We hope that our report helps policy-makers in analyzing they system’s progress towards its stated goals, as well as generates interest and motivation for gathering additional information for evidence-based planning and evaluation of inclusive education initiatives.

Context

Located between Western Asia and Eastern Europe, Georgia shares its borders with Russia to the north, Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Turkey to the south, and the Black Sea to the west. Its *de jure* territory is 69,700 square meters. The country's population was approximately 4.5 million as of 2011, with over a million living in the capital city Tbilisi, 194,000 in Kutaisi, 124,000 in Batumi, and another 25% of the populating living in other urban areas. 84% of the population is ethnic Georgian. Other major ethnic groups are Abkhazians, Ossetians, Armenians, Azerbaijanis, Russians, Kurds, and Greeks. Over 300,000 citizens are displaced from Abkhazia and South Ossetia.

Soviet rule shaped the recent history of the country. After gaining independence from tsarist Russia's 200-year occupation in 1918, Georgia existed as the Democratic Republic of Georgia for three years. Soviet annexation in 1921 was followed by the nationalization of private property, wholesale executions and deportations of hundreds of thousands of farmers and intelligentsia, and isolation from the rest of the world. After 30 years of terror, central power began to gradually weaken, resulting in the rampant spread of corruption in virtually all areas of social and economic activity, but also the revitalization of cultural life. Georgia enjoyed one of the highest standards of living in the Soviet Union, and the economy was traditionally based on Black Sea tourism, viticulture, agriculture, and some mining, principally manganese and copper.

Georgia gained its independence from the Soviet Union in 1991. The following decade was marked by a severe economic crisis and a civil war. Decoupling from the Soviet economic system, combined with rapid introduction of a market economy, left the country in a state of economic collapse marked by a 75% decrease in GDP. In 1994 the Georgian government developed a crisis management program with the help of international institutions followed by financial support in 1995 from the World Bank and credit from the International Monetary Fund. The next three years were marked by improvement in macro-economic stability, increased economic activity with an average annual GDP growth of 10% in 1996-1997, and growth of tax revenue collection to 11.1% of GDP in 1996. But Russia's economic crisis in 1998 resulted in the deterioration of Georgia's macro-economic situation. The rate of GDP growth in 1999 fell to 2.9% from 10.5% in 1997, with a subsequent decrease to 1.8% in 2000. The decline in economic conditions combined with widespread corruption and a series of failed reforms to lay the groundwork for a change in government, which occurred in 2003 after a series of peaceful protests against falsified election results. The so-called "Rose Revolution" marked the beginning of major transformations in the country.

Today Georgia is a semi-presidential republic with legislative and executive powers vested in the parliament and the cabinet of ministers, respectively. The president is elected via direct elections for five years. The executive branch comprises the president and a cabinet of ministers appointed by, and directly accountable to, the president. The legislative branch consists of a unicameral parliament with 150 seats (since 2008). Members of parliament are elected for a five-year term either by proportional representation from party lists, or through 75 single-seat constituencies. The judicial branch consists of the Supreme Court, the judges of which are elected by the parliament on the recommendation of the Supreme Court chair or the president, and the Constitutional Court. Georgia is sub-divided into 67 electoral districts (rayons), including those within the two autonomous regions of Abkhazia and Adjara and five independent cities. In addition, Georgia is divided into administrative territorial units, called regions. There are nine regions in Georgia and several self-governing towns, including Tbilisi, the capital, with a municipal government independent from the national authorities.

The new government that came into power in November 2003 made a series of decisive steps towards eliminating corruption, privatization, deregulation, and reform of public agencies, taxation, and social services. The years after the Rose Revolution were marked with increases in budget revenues and per capita foreign direct investment at twice the average for CIS countries. In the 2009 Global Corruption Report,[1] Georgia scored 3.9, one of the best scores for countries of the former Soviet Union and a significant improvement from the score of 1.8 before the Rose Revolution (Transparency International 2009). In 2008, the twin shocks of the global financial crisis and war with Russia resulted in a sharp decline in the country's GDP growth. However, except for 2008, Georgia's GDP grew at a faster pace than the average for the CIS or CEE countries—or, in 2009, fell less. The country's GDP is projected to grow at a steady pace from 2011 through 2013. Given the substantial uncertainty in the global economy, these growth projections have to be treated cautiously. However, at present Georgia's economy is not expected to contract in ways that could translate into cuts for the educational sector.

Despite its ongoing development, Georgia is still a poor country. The country's GDP per capita is one of the lowest in the region at $4,774 in 2009. Poverty and unemployment remain the country's biggest challenges. According to official figures, the incidence of poverty was 21.3% in 2007. More than half the population considers themselves poor, with 44.5% describing their material status as poor and 6% as extremely poor.[2] In the Caucasus Research Resource Center's 2010 survey, 25% of respondents said their household did not have enough money for food and 42% said they could afford food but not clothes.[3] Rural poverty is a particular challenge for the country. The 2007 Living Standards Measurement Survey (LSMS) of the World Bank found that relative to their proportion of the population, residents of rural areas were significantly over-represented among the poor, accounting in 2007 for almost 60% of the poor and over 60% of the extremely poor.

Lack of employment or income-earning opportunities has been consistently highlighted as the number one concern in Georgia, as repeatedly demonstrated by independently run public opinion polls over the past years. In the latest poll from March 2011 conducted by the National Democratic Institute, 81% of respondents listed employment as the most important issue in Georgia (compared to 59% a year earlier) and 73% of them stated that they were unemployed. These results are consistent with 2010 Caucasus Barometer survey results, where 70% of survey participants stated they were unemployed.[4] Official figures, however, show significantly lower unemployment rates with 16.9% in 2009 and 16.3% in 2010.[5] GeoStat's definition of employment uses the International Labor Organization's definition of employment where a person with one hour of paid activity is considered employed.[6] The Georgian definition also includes persons working without pay. Given the high proportion of the population working in agriculture, the share of persons in subsistence farming might be one explanation for the gap between public perception of employment and official figures.

[1] Christensen and Karosanidze, 2008.
[2] Team estimates based on the Geostat National Integrated Household Survey of 2009 available from http://geostat.ge/index.php?action=0&lang=eng.
[3] Caucasus Research Resource Centers, Caucasus Barometer, 2010.
[4] Ibid.
[5] National Statistics Office data retrieved from whttp://geostat.ge/index.php?action=page&p_id=146&lang=eng.
[6] A person of 15 and older who within the week of the survey period has worked at least for an hour for a revenue (for a wage, in kind, profit, etc) or for free in a family company or a farm, or for some reason was not at work but was formally registered as an employee.

The Educational System in Georgia

Reform Process

The educational system in Georgia emerged from Soviet rule with a centrally planned curriculum and tightly controlled educational processes, but also universal free access to education, with illiteracy negligible and good standards of entry and performance in higher education. Following independence, the development of the educational system in Georgia can be divided into three main phases.

The first phase, the period from the early years of independence to 2003, was characterized by an unprecedented decrease in education spending (the state budget for education in 1996 was only 5% -- in real terms -- of what it had been in 1989[7]), the emergence of private educational institutions often of questionable quality, introduction of cost-sharing, and corruption throughout the system. All of these factors resulted in the overall deterioration of educational quality. In addition, the decrease in the state's role in the educational system both in financial and regulatory terms coupled with the changing socioeconomic structure of the population generated concern over access to education for multiple social groups.

In 1997, the Ministry of Education developed an ambitious program, endorsed by that year's Education Law. The program had a strong focus on improving the quality and efficiency of primary and general secondary education, strengthening institutional capacity, and mobilizing public and private resources. Through this program the Government aimed to address (1) the misalignment of primary and general **secondary** educational system objectives, and the quality and relevance of student learning outcomes, (2) inefficiencies in the use of financial, physical, and human resources, (3) growing inequities, and (4) weak governance and management capacity. The capacity to carry out these ambitious reforms as well as to introduce the changes required to have a more efficient, effective, and equitable system depended on access to additional financial and technical resources that could provide a long-term strategic framework for the government's efforts. In 2001, after nearly two years of preparation, the Education System Realignment and Strengthening Program was introduced, funded by a World Bank loan of USD 45 million to be allocated in 12 years and three phases. The key areas of intervention were professional development of teachers, educational standards, and a national assessment infrastructure

In 2004, **a second phase** of major education reform began under the new government. The changes implemented in Georgia from 2004 through 2009 are reflected in the Georgian government program approved in 2004. Expansion of this program and detailed identification of the next priorities on the basis of progress achieved and new challenges encountered were presented in "The Basic Data and Directions of the Government of Georgia" for 2007-2010, 2008-2011, and 2009-2012. For three consecutive years, these documents focused on the following long-term objectives in the sphere of education: (1) Social inclusion: development of the educational system to ensure full involvement of all Georgian citizens in the educational process; (2) Civil integration: integration of ethnic minorities into society through programs for learning the state language and educational programs focused on local civil values; (3) Competitiveness: creation of a system of education and science that will ensure free choice and

[7] The World Bank, Report No: 20952-GE. Project Appraisal Document for Education System Realignment and Strengthening Program. February 22.2011. Retrieved from http://www-wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/2001/03/27/000094946_01030705343241/Rendered/INDEX/multi0page.txt.

competition; and (4) Supporting the establishment of a knowledge-based environment. To achieve these goals, the Ministry of Education and Science (MoES) of Georgia implemented the following structural and systemic changes:

> Schools and higher educational institutions (HEIs) were transformed into autonomous Legal Entities of Public Law (LEPLs) governed by elected representative bodies composed of parents, teachers, and a student, and under recent amendments, also the MoES and a local government representative in schools, and elected academic staff in HEIs. These LEPLs were vested with the power of selecting and removing school principals and university rectors, and approving and monitoring the institution's budget.
>
> A new financing model under the principle of "money follows student" was introduced both at schools and HEIs with per capita financing in schools, and student and research grants in HEIs, bringing greater transparency to the financing system.
>
> Unified entrance examinations for HEIs were introduced across a range of subjects, administered by the newly established National Assessment and Examinations Centre (NAEC).
>
> A new national curriculum for secondary schools was introduced by the National Curriculum and Assessment Centre (established in April 2006), together with special and corrective programs for students with disabilities and those in need of long-term treatment.
>
> The standards of teaching are being improved and standardized through a process of teacher training and retraining, and a system of teacher certification was developed through the Teacher Professional Development Centre.

The third phase of education reforms began in 2010 with re-centralization of the sector and greater focus on controlling processes and educational outcomes. While some earlier reforms such as the National Unified Entrance Examinations and per capita funding for schools continue to be supported by the state, the decentralization process has been reversed, with the MoES assuming greater control over educational institutions and processes. This trend towards re-centralization is demonstrated by (a) school Boards of Trustees (BoTs) losing their leading role in school decision-making and the MoES assuming power to appoint school principals without agreement from the BoT and to fire the BoT without notification; (b) centralization of textbook development and teacher development infrastructure; (c) starting school exit exams in nine subject areas; and (d) introducing school police (Mandaturi) into the school system to control implementation of MoES bylaws at the individual school level by reporting violations of rules to the head of the Mandaturi office at the Ministry. In addition, in the new phase of reforms, the government has (i1) started teacher certification exams, (ii2) invested heavily in improving English language proficiency through the Teach and Learn in Georgia program, bringing 1500 native English-speaking volunteers to teach English in Georgian schools, and (iii3) emphasized computer literacy by distributing netbooks to 3,000 first-graders.

From 2006 to 2011 the government invested USD 137 million in the rehabilitation of schools' physical infrastructure.[8]

[8] Government of Georgia. Constraints Analysis, 2011.

Structure

The educational system in Georgia is comprised of preschool, general, and tertiary education, as well as secondary vocational education and training. General education is offered in three levels: primary education (grades 1 to 6: children aged 6 to 11 years); basic education (grades 7 to 9: aged 12 to 14+ years) and secondary education (grades 10 to 12: aged 15 to 17+). There are 2,451 schools in Georgia, with 527,414 students in public schools and 42,381 in 275 private schools. Once compulsory basic education is completed, pupils can either continue into secondary education (for those wishing to go into higher education or fourth and fifth levels of professional education), enter into first, second, or third levels of professional education, or leave the educational system altogether. Twenty state and 75 private vocational educational institutions as well as 17 state and five private HIEs offer vocational education programs.

Recent legislative changes have introduced a new qualification framework into the secondary and post-secondary vocational education and training system. Professional degrees are divided into five levels. Levels 1 and 2 are offered by community colleges and vocational education and training (VET) centers, while levels 3, 4 and 5 are offered at the tertiary level by community colleges as well as HIEs. In the 2010 academic year, secondary VET centers enrolled some 10,000 students, of which 50% were enrolled in private educational institutions.

The 2005 Law on Higher Education[9] introduced three levels of higher education (baccalaureate — 240 ECTS credits, Master's — 120 credits, doctorate — 180 credits). The law differentiated between three types of higher educational institutions: 1) college—a higher educational institution that offers a first-level educational program; 2) teaching university—a higher educational institution that offers B.A. and M.A., but not Ph.D., programs; and 3) university—a higher educational institution that offers programs at all three levels. HEIs offer both academic and professional programs at the undergraduate and graduate (Master's and Doctoral) levels. Accredited teaching or research universities in 2008-2009 accommodated some 75,363 undergraduate students of which 77% attend universities in Tbilisi and 20% are enrolled in private HEIs.[10] The total tertiary student population in 2008-2009 academic year was 93,600.

Table 1: Number of educational institutions and students by level of education and type of institution, 2009-2010 academic year

Level of Education	Educational Institutions			Students		
	Total	Public	Private	Total	Public	Private
Primary	4,540	2,130	2,430	285,539	258,394	27,145
Basic				161,254	150,154	11,100
Secondary				148,601	133,819	14,782
Tertiary	129	21	108	102,710	74,056	28,654

[9] Parliament of Georgia, Law on Higher Education, 2005. Retrieved from http://www.mes.gov.ge/content.php?id=131&lang=geo.
[10] Ziderman A, Andguladze N, 2011.

Note: with only a few exceptions, Georgia does not have separate schools for primary, basic, or secondary level students. Students of all levels study within general educational institutions Source: Geostat and MoES, 2011

Governance

The educational system is regulated by the parliament, the government, and the MoES. The Parliament of Georgia is responsible for developing state policy and the main directions of the sector. The government of Georgia defines national objectives, per capita funding standards, and the amount of vouchers. The Ministry of Education and Science develops indicators, designates educational institutions as legal entities of either public or private law and has the authority to reorganize or liquidate them (in the autonomous republics of Adjara and Abkhazia, some of these powers are delegated to the Ministries of Education of the autonomous republics), and is responsible for state control of public educational institutions.

The educational system in Georgia has multiple accountability mechanisms in place controlling inputs, processes, and outputs to varying degrees in all sub-sectors. These accountability mechanisms apply to both public and private institutions and are the responsibility of the agencies and centers of the MoES: (1) the National Examination Center conducts school exit exams, unified admission tests, and teacher certification exams; (2) the National Curriculum and Assessment Center develops the national curriculum for the general schools and approves the textbooks to be used in general educational schools; (3) the Teachers' Professional Development Center develops standards for teachers, implements teachers' professional development services and grants the right to be a teacher; and (4) the National Center for Educational Quality Enhancement is responsible for authorization and accreditation of both private and public institutions at all levels of education. The agency has recently assumed the responsibility of implementing international educational assessments.

Table 2: State accountability/quality regulation mechanisms by education level

<table>
<tr><th rowspan="2">Accountability</th><th colspan="3">Level of Education</th></tr>
<tr><th>General Education</th><th>VET (levels 1 and 2)</th><th>Tertiary Education</th></tr>
<tr><td>Inputs</td><td>Teacher certification is mandatory beginning in 2013, awarding the right to be a teacher through (1) professional competencies and (2) subject matter exams developed based on teacher standards.</td><td rowspan="3">None</td><td rowspan="3">National Unified Admission Tests in three subject areas and the General Aptitude Test are mandatory for students applying to private and public accredited programs.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Exams for school principals are developed based on the principals standard and are mandatory for all public school principals.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Textbook approval is a process of determining whether a textbook can be used in general secondary educational institutions. Only textbooks approved by MoES can be used either by private or public general educational institutions.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Processes</td><td colspan="3">Authorization: granting the status of an educational institution to both private and public educational institutions (beginning in 2015, mandatory for public general educational schools as well). Educational institutions are evaluated against the quality of their programs, and the human and material resources available for delivering the programs.</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>School branding: optional procedure awarding stars to general educational institutions.</td><td colspan="2">Accreditation: awarding the right to enrol students with state student grants. Mandatory for all public tertiary institutions.</td></tr>
</table>

Outputs	Exit exams are administered in nine basic subject areas. Students achieving minimum competency level in all exams are awarded a general secondary educational certificate.	None	None

Secondary educational institutions are run directly by the MoES. The original decentralization legislation established school-level Boards of Trustees (BoT) with powers to appoint and dismiss school principals, formulate school budgets, and monitor school expenditures. As a result of the legislative changes made in 2010 and 2011, however, these powers have diminished considerably. Schools are now controlled by the MoES with the power to terminate BoTs without notification and to appoint and terminate school principals. The MoES has also introduced a new component in the school system, the "Mandaturi," or School Police, which is responsible for monitoring the implementation of MoES bylaws at the individual school level through its employees assigned to schools and reporting violations to the MoES.

Secondary vocational educational institutions are run by central directors appointed by the Minister of Education and Science. In 2009 the Government established the National Professional Education Council as a consultative board that coordinates activities among government, employers, trade unions, and the non-governmental sector. The legislation defined the Prime Minister of Georgia as chairman of the council. The council was to be composed of ministries' representatives, a Parliamentary representative, a representative of the employers' association, a VET center representative and an independent expert. The council is currently chaired by the Minister of Education and Science.

All public higher educational institutions are independent legal entities of public law and are run by a rector elected by the academic council representing the university academic staff and the student body. Recent amendments to the Law on Higher Education introduced a new legal status as an alternative to public HEIs. These institutions are regulated under private law as non-commercial entities and assume a higher degree of autonomy, while still placing a government-nominated Board of Regents at the top of the management hierarchy.

Financing

Education funding has been substantially increased during the last few years. Nonetheless, at approximately 2.7% of GDP in 2011, public expenditure on education in Georgia remains significantly below the 5.2% average for Eastern Europe and CIS countries in 2010[11] and the 5.5% average for Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries in the same year.[12] Low public investment in education is partially being compensated for by high private expenditure on education. Almost 30% of education funding[13] and 0.8% percent of the country's GDP comes from households, exceeding the private share for most European countries.[14] Three former Soviet Baltic states show significantly lower shares of private expenditures in the sector with 0.3% for Estonia, 0.52% for Lithuania, and 0.6% for Latvia as of 2008.[15]

[11] Transmonee, 2011.
[12] OECD, Education at a Glance, 2010.
[13] Team estimates based on Geostat NHS 2009 data.
[14] Private (households and other private entities) expenditures on education as a share of GDP.
[15] Eurostat. Education and Training. Private Expenditure on Education. Retrieved from http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/education/data/main_tables.

The education-funding scheme was changed in line with the reforms launched in 2004 through introduction of voucher funding at the general education level and per capita funding at the tertiary level. Voucher funding allocated an equal amount of money to students in public and private institutions and the size of the voucher varied according to estimated population density. But this arrangement resulted in an extremely unequal distribution of public resources, due to a very large share of small schools in rural and remote areas being placed at a disadvantage compared to large schools mainly in urban areas favored through economy of scale. The new funding formula introduced in 2010 is based on enrolment per grade for each school, curriculum requirements, teacher hours, teacher salary schedule pay rates, and historical average shares of non-teaching staff salaries, utility costs, and other costs. The MoES has also introduced school foundation grants into the funding system as part of the new formula funding. Each school with less than 600 students receives additional base funding that varies according to school size. Additional weight is assigned to schools or sectors with minority language instruction. The state does not apply "standard" per capita allocation to schools with less than 160 students and special schools, where MoES employs additional regulations. Private schools receive a standard amount per student without additional weighting.

For secondary level vocational education and training, the Government issues the priority list for funding for professional education levels 1-3. The VET centers conduct the entrance examination. If the student gets high scores and goes into a priority field, the MoES covers 80% of expenses, and 20% is covered by the student. If the student does not get a high score or goes into a non-priority field, he/she pays the full tuition fee. In addition, secondary VET receives lump sum funding from the MoES. The amount is negotiated between the Director of VET and MoES. According to the 2011 data of the MoES, during the last academic year 56.8% of VET students in Tbilisi VET centers received state funding, 69.3% in regional VET centers, and 63.4% nationally.

The state finances tertiary educational institutions through direct budgetary lump sum allocations, student grants, competitive research grants, and also through earmarked allocations for infrastructure development and research. All public universities are eligible for lump sum funding but no objective criteria seem to guide the allocation process; accredited private universities, in practice, receive no direct funding from government but get indirect subsidies through the state-funded grants for qualified students who enroll in these institutions. HEIs in Georgia are primarily funded through tuition fees. At public HEIs, tuition fees have increased over time and are now equivalent to 48% of GDP per capita. For HEIs in the public sector, tuition fees account for 75% of total income; only about a fifth is offset by state-funded merit and needs-based grants. Some 25% of public HEI income derives from direct state allocations (18% in the form of lump sum funding and 7% from other forms of state support). Overall, the state now funds only 42% of the costs of public HEIs. Taking the university system as a whole, cost-sharing is pervasive; in 2009, the state funded only 35% of the costs of the university system in Georgia, directly or indirectly, about half of the average OECD public expenditure (67% in 2008) on tertiary educational institutions.

High tuition fees and a weak state support system create barriers to access to tertiary education for poor students. On average, tuition fees for public universities as a percentage of per capita GDP are much higher in Georgia than in all OECD countries for which data is available. On average, full-time students in public universities in the US pay USD 6,013 per year, which is equivalent to 13.5% of GDP per capita. The proportion is about 10.6% in Australia, 13.6% in Japan, 3.1% in Spain, 10.4% in Korea, 2.1% in Austria and 1.6% in Belgium (see table 3). In contrast, tuition fees for public universities in Georgia in the 2008-2009 academic year were equivalent to 36% percent of GDP per capita, and increased to 48% in 2010.

Table 3: Tuition in Public Tertiary Educational Institutions as Share of GDP per capita in 2008-2009[16]

Country	Tuition Fees as Share of GDP per capita
Belgium	1.6%
Austria	2.1%
Spain	3.1%
Canada	9.7%
New Zealand	10.4%
Australia	10.6%
Japan	13.6%
USA	13.5%
Georgia	36.4%

[16] Calculations are based on OECD Education at a Glance 2011 figures on tuition fees at public tertiary educational institutions for 2008-2009 (table B5.1) and purchasing power parity GDP per capita for 2008. Georgia's average tuition fees are drawn from the NEQE database for the 2008-2009 academic year.

Children with Special Education Needs (SEN)

The Law on General Education defines the following groups of children as having Special Education Needs:

Children with disruptions of physical and mental development;

Children with vision and hearing impairments;

Children with speech, behavior and emotional developmental disorders;

Children who need long-term treatment/hospitalization;

Children who represent national minorities;

Children who are vulnerable;

Children who are in danger of being excluded from the educational process due to learning difficulties.

The current report reviews the state of all children with SEN in Georgia's educational system with a particular focus on IDP children and children with disabilities.

Internally displaced children (IDPs)

There are 24,498 students with IDP status in Georgian schools. Children with IDP status include internally displaced children, i.e. those who experienced displacement themselves, as well as the children of internally displaced persons. During the last two decades, two waves of displacement in Georgia left 258,000 people internally displaced in the country. The first occurred in 1992 in Abkhazia and in 1993 in South Ossetia. The people displaced at that time are often referred as "old" IDPs, and their number is around 222,000. People who remain displaced from South Ossetia following the war in August 2008 and are unable to return to their homes are described as "new" IDPs and amount to 26,000 people.

Responsibility for regulating and providing education for children with IDP status lies with the Parliament and the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia. The Ministry of Education and Culture of the Autonomous Republic of Abkhazia (MES-AAR)[17] is also present but its power is limited to 13 Abkhaz public schools.[18] These schools are formally under the control of MES-AAR, but they are financed by MoES of Georgia, use the nation-wide curriculum and standards, and are subject to authorization and accreditation like other schools in Georgia. They also receive additional support provided by the MES-AAR via peace and civic education programs.[19]

Mainstream schools accommodate the prevailing majority of children with IDP status, but some of the "old" IDP children attend 13 Abkhaz public schools. Students from the new wave of displacement after the

[17] This Ministry is part of a structure known officially in Georgia as the Government of the Autonomous Republic of Abkhazia and frequently referred to as the Abkhaz Government in Exile. It was originally formed by ethnic Georgians who had been in official positions in Abkhazia before the war in 1992-1993. It is based in Tbilisi and is largely concerned with IDP issues.

[18] Abkhaz public schools were established in the early 1990s for children displaced from Abkhazia by armed conflict in 1991-1992

[19] 2010 Report, MES-AAR

war with Russia in 2008 attend a school in the government-constructed settlement for IDPs from South Ossetia as well as in five other public schools in the area.[20]

Internally displaced children come from poor families. According to the National Household Survey of 2009 there are significant differences between IDPs and non-IDPs according to socio-economic indicators such as self-perceived economic status and employment. Unemployment figures are higher among IDPs, and a non-displaced person appears to be three times more likely to be employed than an internally displaced person with the same educational attainment, residence (urban versus rural), gender, marital status, and age (see table A.1). A higher share of IDPs perceives his/her material status as poor (52.5% for IDPs and 45% for general population) and extremely poor (12.3% for IDPs and 6% for general population).

Children with disabilities (CWD)

According to official statistics from the Ministry of Health, Labor and Social Affairs there are up to 4,000 CWD in Georgia. Up to 170 students with special needs currently study in so-called inclusive schools. An additional 629 students with special needs study in special schools.

The data on CWD are extremely deficient. The State Strategy on People with Disabilities states that "the information on disabled persons and disability is scarce and/or inadequate. There is no stable system for collecting/elaborating the data." The lack of reliable data can be partially attributed to a weak information management system within and across different ministries involved in the implementation of the strategy, and an inefficient system of evaluating and assigning status to disabled people.

The action plan for the state strategy on social integration of people with disabilities defines elaboration and enactment of the mechanism of identification of CWD as one of the important tasks of MoES for 2010-2012. According to the action plan, the process is to be implemented in three steps: (1) Selecting the instrument for identification of needs of disabled children; (2) Applying/piloting the instrument in the regions of Georgia; and (3) introducing the final version of the instrument. The MoES is currently engaged in implementation of the second step. A multidisciplinary team is evaluating children registered in the official database of the Ministry of Health, Labor and Social Affairs (1,084 persons). Two hundred and sixty-two of them have been already identified as having special educational needs (SEN). In addition, the MoES has recently initiated a program of voluntary registration of children with SEN throughout Georgia.

[20] These are Sveleti public school, Gori public schools numbers 1 and 4, Koda public school, and Shaumiani public school. IDPs from the Kodori Gorge are distributed across public schools in western Georgia.

State policy with regard to IDPs and CWD

Legal framework

IDPs

The Law on Forcibly Displaced Persons (1996) is the key document on internal displacement in national legislation and regulates the rights of the internally displaced population and the responsibilities of the state towards them within the country. The law grants displaced people the rights and freedoms of all other citizens of Georgia. According to the Law, the Government guarantees the constitutional right to education for IDPs in general educational schools, free of charge (Art. 5, Para. 2 (E)). IDPs are legally entitled to education in Georgia and are exempt from paying fees for secondary education ("Law of Georgia on Internally Displaced Persons – the Persecuted" Art. 5.2 (d)), provided they have the necessary documentation.

In 2007, the government adopted a "State Strategy on IDPs" recognizing the right of the displaced to local integration as a lasting solution. A further "Action Plan on Internally Displaced Persons" was developed in 2009 to respond to the new challenges after the war in 2008. The goal of the Action Plan is to provide a long-term solution to the problems faced by both "new" and "old" IDPs and to promote their socio-economic integration. The plan is limited to housing issues, however. In May 2010, after consultations with international organizations, the government revised the Action Plan by extending the objectives to improved accountability and transparency in the implementation of the Action Plan, economic and social rights for IDPs, and increased awareness of IDPs about their rights.

CWD

Before 2005 the NGO sector mostly carried out the work of promotion of inclusive education. Only special schools were available for children with SEN/CWD, and students with special needs had no access to mainstream schooling. In 2005 the responsibility for ensuring access to education for SEN/CWD was officially assumed by the state, specifically, by the MoES.

The MoES's efforts are part of a larger initiative: the "State Strategy on Social Integration of People with Disabilities," approved by the government in 2008.

Based on Salamanca Declaration principles and the constitution of Georgia, the concept of inclusive education has been included in the law on general education (article 2, paragraph u), and the state has formally assumed responsibility for introducing inclusive education as one of the means of achieving national goals in education (Article 3, paragraph 2).

An important document in the field of inclusive education is the "Strategy and Action Plan on Special Needs Education" for the years 2009-2011 (known as the Strategy and Action Plan). It was developed as a result of multilateral consultations and cooperation between the MoES, USAID, and Save the Children, based upon provisions in the Constitution of Georgia, the Law of Georgia on General Education, the Law of Georgia on Vocational Education, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the national curriculum of

Georgia for the years 2008-2009 and the UNESCO Education For All initiative.[21] The period indicated in the strategy has been defined as a transitional, preparatory stage towards achieving long-term goals of inclusive education.

The strategy is built upon the following principles and values: child-centered educational processes, access to quality education for all children, equity of access to educational opportunities for all children, and access to mainstream instruction for all children.

In December 2010, the MoES, in cooperation with the Office of the Public Defender and on the basis of reports contributed by outside experts, introduced important changes to the Law on General Education to further clarify the concept of inclusive education and underline the ministry's commitment to the issue. These changes were reflected in the national curriculum defining general principles and specific processes and methods for the teaching and learning of CWD.

[21] MoES et al, 2008.

Special programs and targeted assistance

IDPs

The scope of government support for children affected by armed conflicts in the country varies according to the time and type of displacement. Currently, there is little to no targeted assistance for IDP students in mainland Georgia. However, there is some more support available for children as well as teachers living in occupied territories. Students in Gali region (de facto Abkhazia) receive free textbooks from the government of Georgia. They also receive free university preparation courses. The state also offers tuition waivers at the tertiary level for secondary school graduates living in currently occupied territories. In 2005, 2006, 2007, and 2008, 77, 85, 68, and 244 students, respectively, from S. Ossetia and Abkhazian conflict zones received partial or full tuition waivers. In the 2008-2009 academic year, the government covered tertiary tuition fees for 757 students affected by the war with Russia in August 2008.

CWD

The biggest share of both financial and technical support to CWD in Georgia is through an ongoing GEL 1.3 million (USD 780,000) project of the MoES on inclusive education. The project started as "Introduction of Inclusive Education" in 10 schools in Tbilisi, and continued as "Developing Inclusive Education in Public Schools" in nine regions. Both projects involve collaboration between the MoES and the Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research, and aim to develop special education programs for students with SEN. Another important objective of the project is to contribute to the improvement of teacher in-service and pre-service training and development of support materials for teachers. Furthermore, the project results are expected to contribute to the development of a modern electronic system of registration for students with SEN and a standard procedure for identification of their specific needs.

The MoES project on inclusive education involves 10 municipalities in all 9 regions of Georgia and is governed by 10 coordinators and 21 members of a multi-disciplinary group. The role of the multi-disciplinary group is to assist schools in introducing an inclusive education model. The multi-disciplinary group identifies and assesses children with special needs; helps define their special needs and capacities; and provides recommendations for parents on educational issues. Another important role of the multidisciplinary team is to monitor and evaluate the academic and social development of children with SEN/CWD in mainstream education.

The MoES maintains its responsibility over financing accommodation and educational costs of students with disabilities (SWD) within specialized institutions. GEL 2.5 million (USD 1.5 million) is being spent on special schools, including accommodation, meals, medical support, etc. Apart from this, the MoES provides small grants to general schools for organizing special resource rooms and covering running costs. GEL 500,000 (USD 300,000) is currently being spent through the MoES small grants program. The MoES is also planning to introduce an inclusive education component into the current voucher funding system to finance inclusive education in the mainstream school system. The mechanisms for incorporating the cost of inclusive education into voucher-based school funding have not yet been developed.

The MoES has also started optimization of specialized boarding schools. Under this reform, the MoES is planning to facilitate enrolment of CWD in general public schools and close some of the specialized boarding schools. During the last two years, five out of 13 institutions were closed. After finalizing the optimization process, the remaining institutions will be transformed into open special education centers.

The MoES is now working to develop the enrolment procedure for children in specialized profile schools and elaboration of a new methodology and strategy for retraining teachers working at specialized schools.

Inclusive education programs are run by a small team of three staff within the MoES, including a special management team for inclusive education. The team is in charge of development, monitoring, and evaluation of the inclusive education projects as well as overseeing specialized boarding schools serving CWD.

The MoES strategy for 2010-2015 states the following strategic goals regarding inclusive education:

Reform of specialized profile schools;
Development of flexible mechanisms for funding inclusive education;
Standardization of instruments for evaluation of children with SEN;
Creation of a national pattern of inclusive education;
Increasing access to higher education institutions for children with SEN;
Introduction of inclusive education into vocational institutions.

The MoES is also planning to incorporate elements of inclusive education into all other programs implemented by the Ministry, such as "Teach for Georgia" and "Georgian as a Second Language."

Education Access, Equity, and Vertical Mobility

General provisions

Access to education is guaranteed through Georgia's constitution, as well as international laws and international conventions to which Georgia has acceded since independence. The Constitution of Georgia (1995) guarantees protection of the fundamental rights of all persons to education. The constitution recognizes basic education as a right for all children. It stipulates: "Everyone shall have the right to receive education and the right to free choice of a form of education" (Art. 35, Para. 1). Georgia is also committed to all major international agreements that govern the right to education, such as the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), to which Georgia has been a party since 1994. States that are parties to the CRC recognize their commitment to protection of the 'best interests of the child' in all actions concerning children (Art. 3, Para. 1). The UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement of 1998 also specifically refer to the right to education (Principle 23).

As a primary legal provision in the field of education, the Law of Georgia on General Education (2005) guarantees general education for all students (Chapter I, Art. 3, and Paragraph 2a). It protects all students' rights to complete general education (Chapter II, Article 9, paragraph 1); to have a free choice of educational opportunities (Chapter II, Art. 9, Para. 6); and to receive quality education in a safe environment (Chapter II, Art. 9, Paragraphs 8 & 9). Articles 22, 30, 35 and 37 guarantee the rights to social security, work, education and health care, respectively. These constitutional guarantees are further defined and articulated in greater detail in other legislative laws and bylaws.

At the level of state priorities, the Basic Data and Direction (BDD) Document is the Government's guiding document to demonstrate the state's actions being aligned to its priorities. From 2006 through 2009, equal access to education was one of three Government priorities in the educational sector. The same priority remains for 2011 as illustrated in the Ministry of Finance budget description.[22] However, it is missing from the new MoES strategy.[23] In the budget for 2011, under priorities for the sector, the government acknowledges the limitations of the system in creating educational opportunities for persons with SEN, for those in prisons and correctional institutions, and for ethnic minorities' integration into society. The growing number of socially vulnerable children is also mentioned as a challenge for the country.

The government sets its objectives as (1) developing appropriate infrastructure for general education institutions and training teachers to work with students with SEN; (2) introducing quotas for ethnic minorities in the tertiary education enrolment system; (3) expanding Georgian language houses for language minorities throughout the country; (4) offering educational services in juvenile and women's correctional institutions; and (5) providing children from socially vulnerable families with textbooks.

In 2011, the MoES allocated GEL 14 million (USD 8,400,000) in targeted assistance programs, constituting only 2.5% of the total MoES budget and 19% of the amount from the MoES budget for programs.[24]

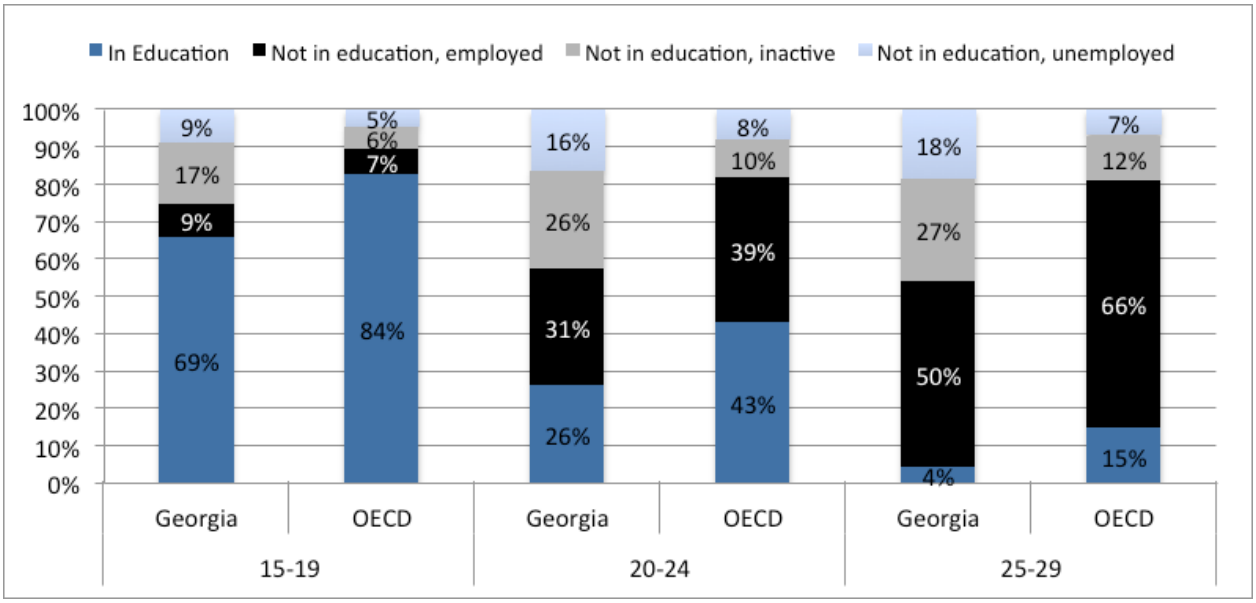
Participation in education

General data

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, decreases in state funding and measures taken by the central government to delegate responsibility to local governments and households, coupled with the overall change in the socioeconomic structure of the society, created conditions in which inequalities began to grow. Between 1990 and 1997, total enrolment dropped from 1,242,000 to 924,000. Secondary enrolment dropped from 105,000 to 70,000 and vocational education from 42,000 to 20,000.[25] Starting in 2005, enrolment rates began to grow at the secondary level, reaching 85% by 2010. However, enrolment rates drop at the post-secondary level. Across all age groups, Georgia's share of young people in education is smaller than the OECD average.

[22] The Government of Georgia, Ministry of Finance. State Budget for 2011, Chapter 8: Priorities of Expense-bearing Agencies for 2011-2014. Retrieved from http://mof.ge/4161.
[23] The Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia, MoES Strategy for 2010-2015, 2010
[24] The Government of Georgia. Ministry of Finance, State Budget for 2011, Chapter 5:Expenditures of the Georgia State Budget.
[25] The World Bank, Report No: 20952-GE, Project Appraisal Document for an Education System Realignment and Strengthening Program, February 22.2011. Retrieved from http://www-wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/2001/03/27/000094946_01030705343241/Rendered/INDEX/multi0page.txt.

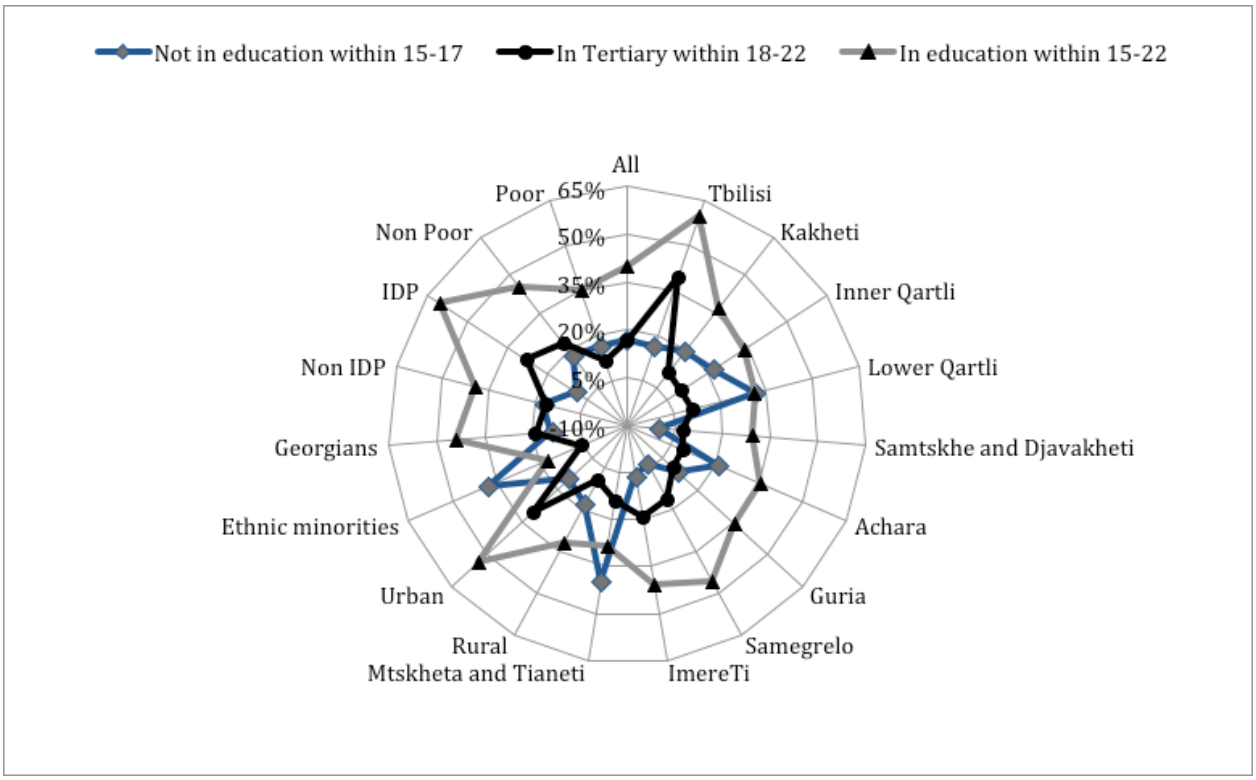
Figure 1: Education and Employment among Young People 2009



Source: Team estimates based on Geostat NHS 2009 data; OECD, Education at a Glance, 2011

At the basic education level, enrolment rates do not show significant differences between poor and non-poor populations, between rural and urban schools, or between ethnic groups. Such differences begin to appear at the secondary level and become more profound at the post-secondary level. Seventeen percent of teenagers 15-17 are not in education. This figure varies across regions and ethnic groups. Participation in education in this age group is lowest among youth in the regions of Mtskheta-Mtianeti and Lower Kartli, with 40% and 32% percent, respectively, of the 15-17 age group not enrolled in any educational institution. Eighty-five percent of ethnic Georgians 15-17 are enrolled in schools, but only 59% of the same age group among ethnic minorities are in secondary schools. Enrolment in vocational institutions is very low across all subgroups and regions, with three percent of young people aged 15 to 22 studying in a vocational institution.

Figure 2: Participation in Education by Subgroups



Source: Team estimates based on Geostat NHS 2009 data

The figure shows (1) the share not in education among the 15-17 age group across subgroups, (2) the share enrolled in tertiary education among 18-22-year-old young people, and (3) the share enrolled in an educational institution (school, secondary VET, tertiary) in the 15-22 age group.

Participation of IDP students in education

As mentioned above, there are 24,498 students with IDP status in Georgian schools. However, enrolment rates among IDP children as well as transition and completion rates cannot be measured due to the limitations in currently available data sources such as the MoES school data and the Geostat NHS data. So-called IDP schools serve 12% of the overall internally displaced school population. The rest of the students attend non-IDP schools.

Table 4: Students with IDP status at primary, basic and secondary level**s**, 2006-2009

Students with IDP status	2006/2007	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010
Primary	9,383	9,494	11,893	12,374
Basic	5,672	5,110	6,161	6,357
Secondary	3,925	4,163	6,456	5,767
Total	18,980	18,767	24,510	24,498

Source: Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia, 2011

Data on internally displaced students' enrolment rates are not available. The only comparable data on IDP participation in education can be drawn from the National Household Survey. However, the survey only covers households living outside collective centers. These IDP children and youth living in private housing show high participation in all levels of education. Ninety-one percent of IDP youth aged 15-17 are attending secondary educational institutions, which is 9% higher than the national average.

Twenty-eight percent of IDPs aged 18-22 living outside state shelters are enrolled in tertiary educational institutions and 6% are enrolled in VET centers, compared to 17% nationwide and 30% in urban population enrolled at the tertiary level, and the three percent enrolment in secondary vocational education noted above. IDPs living outside state shelters also show higher rates of educational attainment when compared to the non-IDP population (Table A6).

However, the situation is less optimistic among graduates of so-called Abkhaz schools. The share of secondary school graduates enrolled in tertiary educational institutions through the national unified exams is considerably lower among Abkhaz IDP School and Gali region school graduates. Out of 481 school graduates from Abkhaz IDP schools in 2010, 37% were enrolled in tertiary educational institutions and 28% from schools in Gali region compared to 42% in the country, 62% in Tbilisi, 53% in big cities, and 32% in towns and rural areas.

Table 5: Tertiary enrolment rate, mean scores, and grant allocation among IDP school students in 2010

Student's residence	Abkhazia Schools	Gali Region	National
Number of secondary school graduates	481	315	51,396
Enrolment rate in tertiary education	37%	28%	42%
Mean score among admitted students	1,827	1,746	1,823
State grant (partial or full tuition waiver) recipients	24%	8%	33%

Source: Team estimates based on NAEC data on National Unified Admissions and MoES school data

Participation of CWD in education

As there is no accurate information on the number of CWD in Georgia, the annual increase in the participation rate serves as an indicator of progress for MoES efforts. According to the ministry, the inclusion rate of CWD in education is increasing and 800 students across the country are currently involved in the learning process, including 170 students in general schools and 629 students in special boarding schools. This number accounts for approximately one-fifth of the total number of CWD registered in the database of the Ministry of Labor, Health, and Social Affairs.

The law on general education states that a pupil with SEN has a right to receive education near his/her place of residence. If a pupil with SEN misses an academic year, he/she has the right to be included in a class that the multidisciplinary team defines as convenient for such a pupil without examinations. Schools should avoid discrimination of students with SEN during the school admission process.

At the current stage, 19 schools are piloting an inclusive education model in Georgia through the inclusive education project implemented by the Norwegian government and MoES. Ten pilot schools are located in the capital and nine in the regions, chosen according to the availability of children with special needs.

Apart from schools in which the social, physical and educational environment is being gradually transformed within the framework of the state project on inclusive education, the ministry also aims to create favorable conditions for inclusive education in all schools. One of the key tasks in terms of this goal is to activate the school community in the process of providing access to education to all children. With this aim MoES has announced a competition called “Learning Together.” This competition gives all schools an opportunity to submit their own projects on how they plan to introduce inclusive education into their schools. The projects are selected by a special commission of the MoES.

While acknowledging the importance of inclusive education, the state also realizes that general schools at the moment cannot satisfy all the educational needs of children with SEN and that specialized boarding schools remain an important instrument to provide access to education for CWD. In many countries of the world special schools play an important role in the development of inclusive education. They provide new knowledge and experience in teaching strategies, adapted curricula, and an individual approach to the needs of a child. With the aim of facilitating effective teaching in special schools, MoES covers the running costs and salaries for administrative/technical personnel and special teachers.

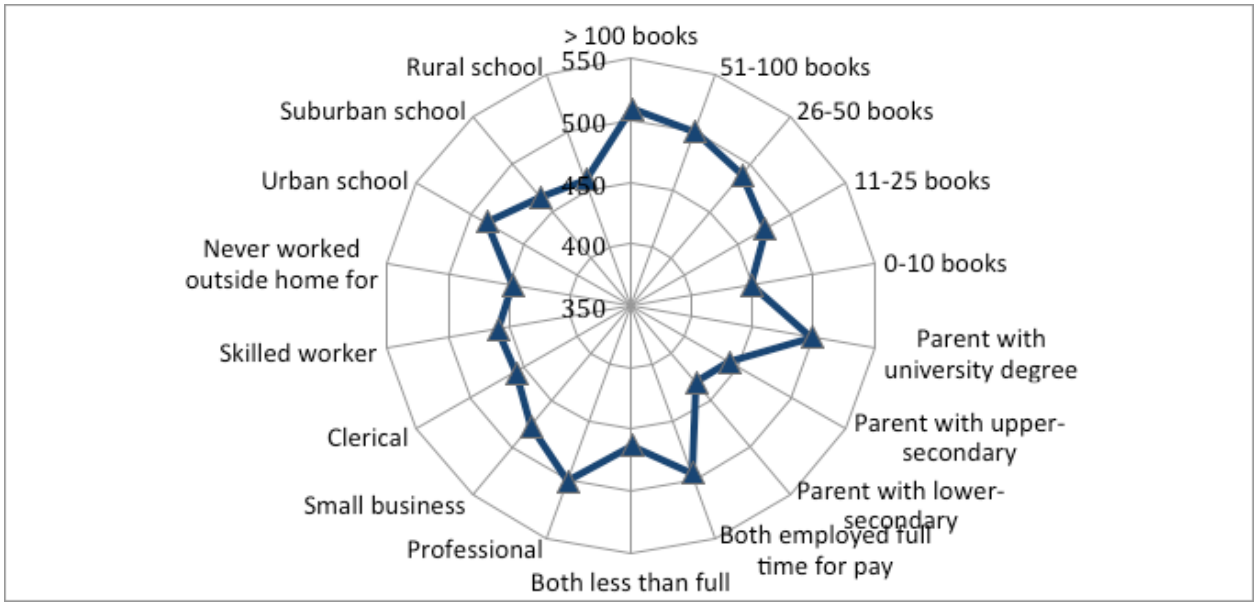
Performance

General data

Georgia has participated in the Progress in International Reading and Literacy Study for fourth-grade students (PIRLS 2006) and the Third International Mathematics and Science Study for fourth- and eighth-grade students (TIMSS 2007).[26] The country has performed significantly below the international average in all areas and below its expected performance given the country's GDP per capita.

Student performance on the international tests varied according to number of books in the household, school location, and school ethnic composition. There was some variation according to the share of economically disadvantaged students in a school as well. The Index of Home Educational Resources (HER) in the studies are measured based on parents' and students' reports of the number of books, the number of children's books, the presence of four educational aids (computer, study desk for own use, books of their own, and access to a daily newspaper) in the home, and on parents' education. Compared to the international average, Georgia has a lower share of students from higher HER families, meaning families with more than 100 books, more than 25 children's books, at least three of the four educational aids, and where at least one parent completed university.

Figure 3: Student Achievement in Reading and Literacy, 2006



Source: PIRLS 2006, Boston College

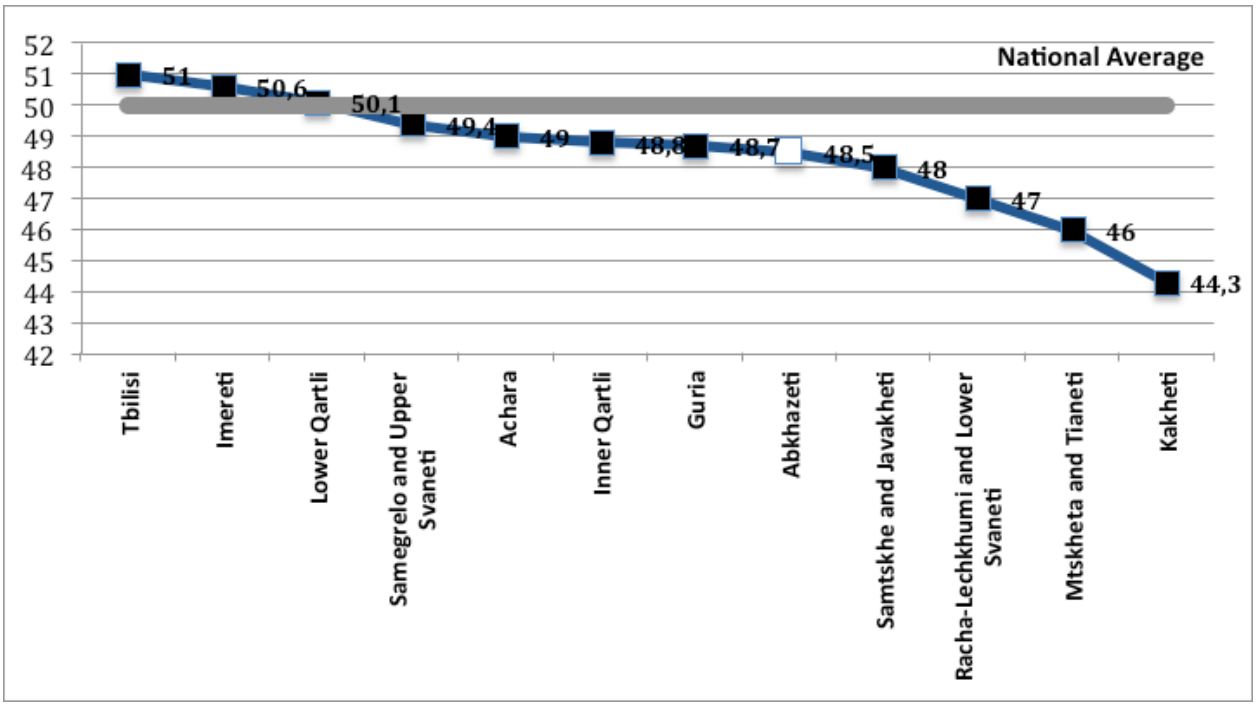
Eighty-seven percent of students are from medium HER families. Students in high HER families score 510 in the reading assessment and students in medium and low HER families score 470 and 453 respectively. Students' results also vary according to parents' education, employment and occupational level. Students in urban schools did better (486) than students in rural areas (456).

[26] Georgia also participated in PIRLS 2010 and TIMSS 2011, but results have not yet been published.

Performance of IDP children

Performance data on internally displaced children is available from the PIRLS and TIMMS results. However, the data in these studies is limited to the sample from IDP schools and does not include internally displaced children in integrated schools. Students in IDP schools demonstrated above national average scores on the TIMSS, but fell behind the national average on the PIRLS. The standardized mean score for fourth-grade students in Abkhaz schools was 48.7, which was higher than the mean standardized score for four other regions but below the national average (50). Also, students from Abkhaz public school did not feature in the advanced or high benchmark groups and none of the students showed achievement above the international scale average.

Figure 4: Standardized mean scores in PIRLS 2006 (Fourth Grade Reading and Literacy Assessment) Results by Regions, where Abkhazeti Region is represented by Abkhaz Public Schools



Source: National Examination Center, 2006

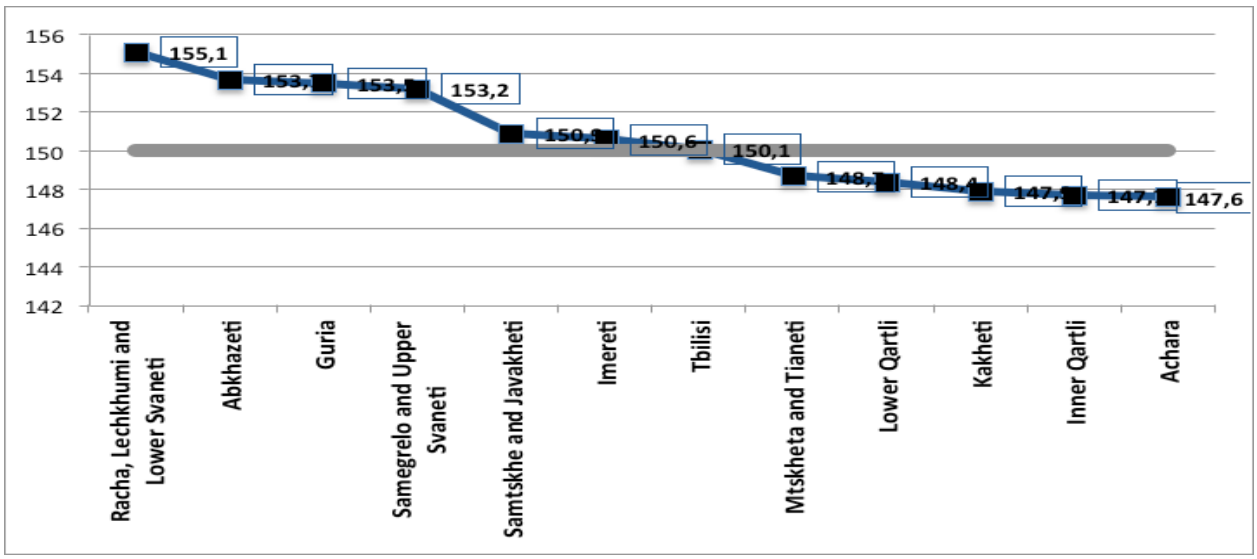
Students from Abkhaz public schools in Georgia scored better in the TIMSS/Mathematics component when compared to the country's average. The standardized score for Abkhaz public school students in this component was higher than the national average in Georgia, and higher than in most regions in the country (see Figure 5).

No students in the fourth grade in Abkhaz public schools achieved results in the advanced benchmark group. However, Abkhaz public schools performed well in the high benchmark group: 11% of fourth-grade students from Abkhaz public schools achieved this level, which is higher than in 7 out of the 12 regions of Georgia (see table A.9). The Abkhaz public schools also had the lowest percentage of students (11%) with results below the scale, compared with the other regions of Georgia (for some regions of the country this was almost as high as 44%).

Among eighth-grade students, Abkhaz public schools have the highest (3%) share of students in the advanced benchmark and also 10% of students in the high benchmark group exceeding eight other

regions and the national average. However, the percentage of eighth-grade students with results below the scale was among the highest in Abkhaz public schools at 53% (see table A.10).

Figure 5: Standardized mean scores in TIMSS 2007 mathematics assessment results among 4th Grade students by regions, where Abkhazeti is represented by Abkhaz public schools



Source: National Examination Center, 2007

Performance of students with disabilities

Important changes can be tracked in the normative documents regulating teaching and learning for tailoring the processes to the real needs of CWD. The revised version of the law on General Education (1) clearly defines the concepts of an individual curriculum and a student with SEN; (2) clarifies the role of the MoES's multidisciplinary team on inclusive education as an agency responsible for evaluating and identifying the best method of education for students with special educational needs; (3) incorporates gestures and Braille language in the chapter "Language"; and (4) obliges schools to implement an individual curriculum for pupils with SEN.

According to the national curriculum, if a school has a student with SEN, the school is obliged to modify the curriculum and student assessment strategy to meet the individual needs and capacity of the student. Schools should have a person responsible for coordination of inclusive education, which may be a teacher, an administrative officer or a parent.

Recent revisions to the national curriculum now stipulate that a student with SEN is one who has physical, intellectual or sensory disability (visual or hearing), speech disorder, behavioral and emotional disorder, long-term hospitalization needs, or is challenged by socio-economic factors.

Clear guidelines are also elaborated for (1) development and use of individual curriculum, (2) assessment and attendance of pupil with SEN, and (3) implementation of a home schooling component.

In cooperation with teachers and parents, after the special needs of children are identified, the multidisciplinary group works on an individual curriculum and learning goals. The individual plan can be changed and modified. Students have their individual deadlines for achieving the goals that help to develop precise monitoring and evaluation schedules.

The responsibility for assessing CWD performance on a national level has been assigned to the MoES multidisciplinary group. However, no national assessment data has been produced thus far.

Household Spending on Education

General data

While at the elementary and basic levels household expenditures on education do not vary across subgroups, at the secondary level we find large disparities according to urban/rural, ethnicity and self-perceived poverty level. Families in urban areas spend GEL 226 (USD 135) on average per year while rural households spend GEL 48 (USD 29). Families of Georgian ethnicity spend three times as much as ethnic minority families. In addition, families that perceive their economic status as poor or extremely poor spend four times less than non-poor families (see table A.7).

These differences in secondary schooling expenditures occur due to differences in expenditures on private tutors and extracurricular educational services. Given the low quality of public schools in the country, families in Georgia seek supplementary educational services outside the public school system.[27] Private tutoring is a widespread phenomenon in the country. The most recent study on private tutoring indicates that 75% of 11th-grade students take private classes in at least one subject area and 24% take private lessons in three subjects.[28] But not all families can afford the costs associated with the additional educational services. The data from 2009 show that the share of students using additional educational services also varies according to location (urban/rural), ethnicity, and self-perceived poverty level. At the secondary school level (grades 9, 10, and 11 in 2009), 20% of children in urban areas and only 8% of children in rural areas have private tutors and/or are engaged in other extracurricular activities outside school. Urban families spend almost two times as much as rural families.[29]

Table 6: Tutoring and extracurricular activities at the secondary level

Subgroups	Tutoring and/or Extracurricular Educational Activities	
	Share of students	Mean annual expenditure in GEL
Urban/rural		
Urban	20%	778
Rural	8%	339
Ethnicity		
Georgians	13%	619
Ethnic minorities	4%	253
Poverty		
Non poor	17%	769
Poor	8%	303

Source: Calculations based on Geostat NHS data of 2009

[27] International Institute for Education Policy and Planning, 2004.
[28] Silova, I. and M. Bray, eds., *Education in a Hidden Marketplace: Monitoring of Private Tutoring,* Open Society Institute, New York, 2006.
[29] Team estimates based on Geostat NHS data, 2009.

This table shows the share of students at the secondary level using fee-charging educational services outside school and mean annual payments made for these services in GEL (1 GEL = .6 USD).

National Household Survey data also illustrate significant differences in spending on education between IDPs and non-IDPs. IDPs spend considerably less on education. The difference can be explained also by the fact that more IDPs perceive themselves as poor and very poor compared to the general population of Georgia.

According to the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) study on educational needs of IDPs,[30] the difference in economic conditions causes differences in access to educational resources funded mainly through private sources, including school textbooks and private tutoring. Abkhaz schools are often in poorer condition than general public schools and have to rely on additional private financing, including from parents, in order to cover even essential costs, creating an additional burden for parents.

The NRC study also shows that there is a difference in responses from IDP compared with non-IDP students in questions related to the ownership of personal items such as a computer and study desk. There is also a significant difference in the proportion of IDP/non-IDP students having access to the Internet; and fewer students from Abkhaz public schools have textbooks for all school subjects.

Data on the spending of parents of CWD is not currently available in Georgia.

Vertical Mobility

The increasing financial burden that families are assuming for tertiary education — including the private lessons that are seen to increase a student's chances of getting into tertiary education — work against poor students. Therefore, disparities in participation begin to grow at the tertiary level. Given that residential location is associated with poverty differences, urban/rural differences signal differences between students from poorer versus richer families. Rural students have lower scores on the National Unified Admission Exam and thus lower chances of gaining access to university. Tertiary participation rates are highest (39%) among youth (18-22) in Tbilisi, are 30% in urban areas, and 9% in rural areas (see Figure 2). The same can be found in the National University Admission data (see Table 7). The share of secondary school graduates entering tertiary institutions is 63% in Tbilisi, 53% in other relatively big cities (Batumi, Kutaisi, and Rustavi), and 31% among school graduates in towns and rural areas. Tertiary enrolment also varies according to ethnicity and self-perceived poverty. Participation among ethnic Georgians is three times higher than among ethnic minority youth. Also, young people from households that perceive themselves as non-poor have tertiary enrolment two times as high (23%) as those categorizing themselves as poor (12%).

Table 7: Tertiary Enrolment, Average Admission Scores, and Allocation of Grants by Residence in 2010

[30] Norwegian Refugee Council. Not Displaced, Out of Place, 2010

Student's residence	Tbilisi	Other cities	Towns and rural	Country
Number of secondary school graduates	16647	7267	37586	61773
Enrolment rate in tertiary education	63%	53%	31%	42%
Mean score	1894	1872	1816	1823
Allocation of grants by grant type				
100%	6%	4%	4%	5%
70%	7%	5%	4%	6%
50%	10%	9%	6%	8%
30%	17%	14%	13%	14%
None	60%	67%	73%	67%

Source: Calculations based on NAEC 2010 National Unified Exam data and MoES school enrolment data 2009

Table 7 shows significant variations by residence in tertiary net enrolment rates, the mean scores in admission tests among enrolled students, and the share of grant recipients. Relative to other cities and certainly relative to rural and remote locations, Tbilisi students had a higher enrolment rate in tertiary education, a higher average score on the National Unified Examination, and a larger share of grants.

There is no accurate data on vertical mobility of children with disabilities. However, ensuring access to higher education institutions for children with specific education needs and introduction of the principles of inclusive education into vocational institutions are mentioned as important challenges to be addressed in the MoES strategy for the years 2011-2015.

Private Tutoring

Partly due to the low quality of public schools in the country, private tutoring has become a widespread phenomenon in Georgia. It has been perceived not only as an important addition to mainstream general education, but also as a vital path towards entry into higher education.

The data on private tutoring among IDP children is extremely fragmented. Two different stories are visible (Table 8). Among those living outside collective centers, 22% of IDP children in secondary schools pay for private tutors or extracurricular activities at the secondary level of their schooling, compared to 12% among non-IDPs. However, they also tend to spend significantly less (GEL 372) on average than non-IDPs

(GEL 627). Children in grades 6 through 12 studying in IDP schools, however, show a different picture. When IDP school students were compared to non-IDP school students in similar settings, the share of students using private tutoring was significantly lower among Abkhaz public schools students.[31] Thirty-two percent of students in Abkhaz schools and 43% of students in non-IDP schools reported they take private classes.

Table 8: Spending on private tutoring or extracurricular activities by subgroups

Subgroup	Percent of group paying	Mean annual expenditure in GEL
IDP students living in private sector	22%	372
Non-IDP students	12%	627
All students	12%	610

Source: Calculations based on Geostat NHS data, 2009

Data on the scope of private tutoring among CWD is not currently available in Georgia.

[31] NRC 2010

Teaching and Learning Resources

Teacher Quality

Teacher preparation schemes are regulated by the Law on General Education of Georgia (Article 21). The types of teachers are a) primary level teachers (B.A. in education, I-VI grades); b) subject teachers (B.A. in relevant subject, M.A. in education (I-XII grades); c) subject group teachers (B.A. in relevant subject, M.A. in education (I-XII grades); d) arts and sports subject teachers (full general education, relevant sport and art education (I - XII grades); teachers of students with SEN (one of the above-mentioned types of teacher that have completed a special program accredited by MoES).

Georgia has developed a teacher certification examination that checks teachers' mastery of their subject and pedagogic knowledge. Becoming certified earns the teacher higher pay. The process is voluntary until 2014. Two rounds of voluntary certification have been administered. Given the voluntary nature of taking this exam, the data on teachers' performance on the tests does not yet measure all teachers. Probably the early rounds involve a selection bias, as teachers with stronger knowledge and skills would be more likely to enter the lists first. Nonetheless, in 2010, 14,000 teachers participated in the professional competencies test and 10,663 took a test in the subject they teach.

In both parts of the credentialing examination, teachers in urban areas did significantly better than teachers outside major cities in the country (Table 9). However, variation also exists within Tbilisi. More well off neighborhoods have a 15-20% advantage in the share of certified teachers among applicants compared to other neighborhoods. The share of teacher applicants who pass the credentialing exam is below the national average among Abkhaz schoolteachers, but Abkhaz schools are doing better in professional competencies compared to schoolteachers from towns, rural, and remote areas.

Table 9: Teacher certification results by location, 2010

School	Professional competencies		Subject matter	
	Applicants	Certified	Applicants	Certified
Tbilisi	2,012	59%	1,517	81%
Other cities (Kutaisi, Rustavi, Batumi)	1,422	65%	1,133	85%
Towns, rural, and remote	9,780	33%	6,880	41%
Country	14,636	40%	10,663	52%
Abkhaz schools	111	36%	97	40%

Source: National Examination Center, 2011

According to official MoES figures, there are 250 specialized teachers in Georgia. The Teacher Professional Development Center has elaborated a standard for special teachers that involves four types of special

teachers: teachers of students with mental disorders, teachers of emotional and behavioral disorders, teachers of students with hearing disorders, teachers of students with visual disorders. The standard includes two aspects: (1) general, which is common for all types of teachers; and (2) specific, for each type of teacher.

The MoES is currently providing in-service training for teachers who teach CWD. Norwegian and Georgian experts have jointly developed training modules for teachers. The modules cover (1) main approaches and principles of inclusive education, (2) teaching/learning approaches for children with learning problems, (3) teaching/learning approaches for children with physical disabilities, (4) teaching/learning approaches for children with behavioral problem, and (5) teaching/learning approaches for children with sensorial deficits.

Over a two-year period MoES has organized 50 training sessions and trained 414 teachers.

In order to increase the involvement of teachers and schools in general in the introduction of inclusive education, the MoES organizes annual regional conferences dedicated to inclusive education. Such conferences are mainly held for schoolteachers and students of pedagogical faculties.

Another important aspect is pre-service training of teachers. MoES currently cooperates with seven universities in Georgia to teach principles of inclusive education to future teachers at the university level through special workshops and summer schools. In cooperation with the aforementioned universities, MoES also works on standardized programs for SEN teachers at the B.A. and M.A. levels. In 2010 the first professional policy was developed for specialized teachers with a focus on promoting introduction and strengthening both the undergraduate and Master's programs for specialized teachers. The MoES is also planning to open a specialized and inclusive education courses within the State University of Kutaisi to train specialized teachers of general profile.

At present, none of the Georgian universities provide training of specialized teachers for students with impaired hearing, vision and behavior. According to the MoES strategy for 2010-2015, after the general B.A. program for specialized teachers, the Ministry will start negotiations with the relevant universities on the development of an M.A. program for specialized teachers.

Textbooks and teacher support materials

The availability of quality learning resources for both students and teachers is an essential factor in achieving equity.

Recently, there has been growing concern in the literature over textbook affordability for poor families. According to a study conducted by the National Assessment and Curriculum Center in 2009, only 54% of interviewed students said they had all required textbooks. Parents complained about the very high cost and, in some cases, limited availability of textbooks. According to this study, in 2009 on average families spent GEL 108 (USD 65) a year on textbooks. The expenses varied across grade levels. Grades 1 through 5 spent GEL 78, grades 6 through 9 spent GEL 118, and grades 10 through 12 spent GEL 124 on average.

In order to increase access to textbooks, the MoES has begun subsidizing textbooks for disadvantaged groups and recommended schools to choose textbooks for five-year term. In 2010, the government provided first-grade students from socially disadvantaged families with free textbooks. In 2011, the MoES extended the program to students of all grades, spending some GEL 8 million (USD 4.8 million).

In the study conducted by the Norwegian Refugee Council in 2010, IDP parents often complained about the affordability of textbooks and other school supplies. Parents also complained about schools frequently changing textbooks, which did not allow them to use secondhand books. The MoES textbook availability programs would have positively affected internally displaced students from families with socially disadvantaged status. However, assuming that poverty extends far beyond the official measure of social vulnerability, textbook availability must be a challenge for a great number of IDPs, especially in collective centers with an assumedly higher concentration of poverty.

Unavailability of special guidance materials for teachers who work with CWD was mentioned as an important challenge in the strategy for inclusive education. Within the framework of the inclusive education program, the MoES publishes and disseminates support materials for teachers such as "Inclusive Education: A Guidebook for Teachers, 2009" and "Inclusive Education: Learning Together, 2008." In September 2010 the guidebooks on inclusive education were delivered to all schools and Educational Resource Centers. A glossary on inclusive education has been also published and disseminated in all schools.

Another important problem is adaptation of the physical environment of schools. Although several schools have been adapted within the framework of the MoES project, the infrastructure as a whole cannot satisfy the needs of CWD. In most cases only the first floor of an adapted school building is available for children with disabilities and students do not have access to classrooms and learning resources on upper floors. Resource rooms that have been created for students with special needs should not become the only space where students with special needs can stay while being at school.

All respondents say that increased financial support from the side of the state is crucial for the overall success of the initiative.

Most of the interviewed respondents say that coordination between schools is very weak at the current stage and there are few if any private initiatives in this direction. It is very important to improve communication between schools and ensure that teachers have an opportunity to share experiences as well as to jointly discuss common problems. Spreading information about best practices could serve as a good motivator for people who are currently involved in the process.

Integration and Public Attitudes

The qualitative data gathered and compiled for the report suggest that the most evident problem with regard to children with SEN is public attitudes. To different degrees, integration also remains a challenge for both internally displaced and CWD children.

Most school-age children from internally displaced families were born in displacement, in their current locations, but some may still feel psychologically abused on the basis of their families' displacement history. Qualitative data gathered by the Norwegian Refugee Council in 2010 from "old" and "new" IDP as well as non-IDP students, parents, and teachers suggest that there was a higher degree of sense of being discriminated or abused among internally displaced children in non-segregated schools, which for some parents became a reason to move a child back to a segregated school. Seventeen years after the initial displacement of Georgians from Abkhazia, many parents and children still express a clear desire to maintain Abkhaz public schools, albeit often for negative reasons (discrimination and stigmatization).

Children of “old” IDPs, as well as their parents, say that psychological abuse by teachers is more common than abuse from children or other adults towards "old" IDP children themselves. Both children and parents say they feel more comfortable in segregated IDP schools with IDP teachers and children from internally displaced families. Parents feel they have more in common with teachers with backgrounds similar to theirs and that such teachers understand their children better. The same is true about children from internally displaced families. They prefer IDP-segregated schools because they feel more comfortable around other IDP children.

Children who have experienced displacement themselves are concerned about abuse on the basis of being displaced from the local population both in and outside the school environment. Before moving to a segregated school in the government-constructed village of Tserovani, the children displaced after the 2008 war with Russia were first assigned to various urban schools close to their temporary shelters. During the time they spent at integrated urban schools, they had mixed feelings about local populations’ attitude towards them. The students can remember teachers and students being particularly abusive. Among the post-2008 displaced population, both students and parents are more certain about their preference towards IDP segregated schools. Students among newly displaced populations also have very little contact with the local population.

Results of the interviews with administration, teaching personnel and parents of so-called inclusive schools also lead to the conclusion that awareness and readiness is still low in society and school communities in particular. Parents of students who are in the same classroom with CWD say that their children do not receive enough attention from teachers because CWD require more time. Parents expressed a similar attitude during the EPPM qualitative study on inclusive education in 2007.

Stakeholders consider the existence of a long-term vision and the active involvement of the state in promoting inclusive education to be a very positive factor. Initiatives for inclusive education have become much more coordinated and systemic. However, in the opinion of parents, teachers and principals there are also areas for further improvement. One such area is qualification of teachers. Despite well-organized, permanent training, teachers still exhibit difficulties in using new methods in practice. Some of the teachers consider working with CWD as extra work for the same salary. According to one of the interviewed principals, teachers often do not want to work on individual plans for CWD, even if they are provided with professional assistance and guidance.

Conclusions

During the last decade, Georgia has made significant progress in ensuring access to compulsory and general education. Children in the mainstream education system receive fairly equal support from the state. The government, under the support of bilateral and multilateral agencies, has made sizable progress towards inclusive education for children with special education needs. However, the study has also found areas of concern where further improvement is required.

1. The Georgian educational system fails in ensuring that the majority of students acquire age-relevant minimum competencies, as demonstrated in the international assessments in which Georgia participated during the last five years. Multiple assessments (PIRLS in 2006, TIMSS in 2007, and PISA in 2009) show that Georgian students are performing considerably below the international average and below the country's predicted level based on GDP per capita. The PISA 2009 results are particularly dramatic, with Georgian students' results in reading, math, and science literacy among the lowest in 74 participant countries. While relatively well off and non-poor families seem to compensate, at least partially, by educational resources outside the mainstream education system such as private tutoring and learning resources at home (books, Internet, museums, libraries), poor families have limited or no access to such resources. This is also true of IDP children who are more likely to come from socially and economically disadvantaged families. Conditions at home are generally worse in IDP households. The average income of IDP families is also significantly lower than that of non-IDP families.

2. The prevalence of private tutoring at the secondary level, coupled with very low vocational sector absorption capacity, high tertiary fees, and weak financial support systems both at the vocational and tertiary levels, creates a condition where access to education beyond the secondary level is a function of a student's family, social, and economic background. Internally displaced children, together with other socially and economically disadvantaged groups, are most likely to be affected. This has particularly dramatic implications for a society where a large share of the population is socially and economically disadvantaged, as is the case in Georgia. Growing evidence indicates that this condition hinders economic growth and creates risks for social stability.

Participation in vocational education and training (VET) is limited due to the limited number of locations as well as the limited number of government-subsidized places. Overall, participation in VET institutions is low. Only 4% of young adults in the age group 15-22 are enrolled in VET institutions. Participation in VET is 2% higher among young IDPs, which can be explained by interventions implemented by donor agencies such as the Norwegian Refugee Council and USAID that provide additional funding for VET centers to enroll youth with IDP status.

Access to tertiary education is hindered by two factors. One is related to the financing arrangements of the system, which are characterized by high tuition fees and weak financial support. Only some 5% of highest performing students on the National Unified Exams receive full tuition waivers in a public institution and GEL 2,250 (USD 1,350) at a private university. A very limited number of students also receive a presidential stipend based on their performance at a tertiary institution. Additional 6%, 8%, and 14% receive partial 70%, 50%, and 30% tuition waivers, respectively. The majority of remaining students (67% in 2010) do not receive state grants. Only 6% to 10% of all state grants can be allocated to needs-based grants, which do not include IDP as a separate category.

Another barrier to access to tertiary education for disadvantaged groups is related to the financial burden associated with preparation for National Unified Exams. In order to meet entrance examination standards and increase the chances of entering tertiary educational institutions through competitive merit-based entrance examinations, parents turn to private tutors' services. However, private tutoring is not affordable for socially and economically disadvantaged students. This is especially true of IDP children who are more likely to come from low socio-economic backgrounds. Teachers, parents and students consider the availability of private tutoring to be an important factor in determining success on the National Unified Exams. Because IDP students are from poorer families, they are less able to afford private tutoring. IDP families living in the private sector (IDPs not in government-provided shelters and assumedly better off than IDPs living in collective centers) spend less than non-IDPs on private tutors and other extracurricular activities. The implication is that proportionally fewer students from Abkhaz public schools enter tertiary education as a result. Analysis of the results of National Unified Exams shows that a smaller proportion of students from Abkhaz public schools enter tertiary educational institutions and fewer receive merit-based grants.

3. The need for segregated schooling for IDPs was greatest at the time of displacement, and decreased with time. However, 17 years after the initial displacement of Georgians from Abkhazia, many parents and children still express a clear wish to maintain Abkhaz public schools, albeit often for negative reasons of discrimination and stigmatization. This raises wider questions about the possibility for full social integration in Georgia and presents a series of policy challenges.

4. Despite an information campaign by the MoES, public awareness on the issue of CWD remains low. In pilot schools where an inclusive education model for CWD was systematically introduced, the attitude towards inclusive education is much more positive than in ordinary schools. This leads to the conclusion that negative stereotypes and skeptical attitudes are dismantled more effectively when parents, teachers, and students themselves actively participate in the process and see the positive results of inclusive education.

MoES in cooperation with other agencies involved in implementation of the state strategy on social integration of CWD has managed to fulfil most of the obligations for the years 2010-2012. General principles along with specific processes for inclusion of CWD in general education are clearly formulated in legislation and the framework curriculum. Standards for special teachers have been defined and mechanisms for in-service and pre-service training for special teachers have been enacted.

The ministry, in cooperation with donor organisations, has established a structure for implementation and monitoring the quality of inclusive education through interdisciplinary groups that are present at both the central and school levels.

The number of CWD currently involved in education recently reached 800 students, or approximately one-fifth of the total number of currently registered CWD in Georgia. However, taking into consideration that many parents do not want to admit that their children have special needs, there are likely many students in ordinary schools that do not receive appropriate qualified assistance in the process of learning. This leads to the problem of proper registration of children with SEN/CWD.

In general, registration of CWD remains a problem. Despite efforts applied by the MoES in this direction there is still much to be done to speed up the process. Other important tasks for implementation of an

inclusive education agenda are integrating the principles of inclusive education into vocational and higher education systems.

Based on its review, the team has made eight recommendations for policy-makers to consider:

Recommendation 1: The government should consider increasing its spending on secondary education. The country's spending on education both in terms of share of GDP and the share of government expenditure is well below the OECD average and below some middle-income countries. It is important to consider that the educational sector has been significantly affected by a decade-long economic, social, and political crisis in the country. For it to recover and, moreover, to transform, will require sustained financial investments. Notwithstanding the twin crises (global financial and the War with Russia in 2008), Georgia's GDP grew at a faster pace than the average for the CIS or CEE countries or, in 2009, fell less. Projections for the coming years are also positive. It is projected that during the next two years Georgia's GDP will grow at a steady pace. This could translate into increased public resources for the education sector.

Recommendation 2: The MoES should follow a balanced approach to controlling outcomes and inputs on the one hand, and supporting quality improvement on the other. The government has been putting greater focus on quality control mechanisms. Starting from 2009, in addition to other quality control instruments, the MoES began National School Exit Exams, school accreditation and school branding, and teacher certification. With inadequate quality support mechanisms in place, too much focus on quality control mechanisms creates a condition in which the state delegates its share of the responsibility over reaching targets to households. While some control mechanisms might act as important external incentives for change, it is essential that educational institutions as well as teachers and students receive adequate support to meet the benchmarks set by the state.

Recommendation 3: Increase targeted assistance for students from disadvantaged groups. The MoES has started subsidizing textbooks for socially disadvantaged students and implemented a program to send teachers to remote areas. It is important that the MoES builds on this experience and extends the practice to meeting other needs on educational resources by supporting schools and teachers serving socially disadvantaged groups, including IDPs, in improving their educational services. Such services might include but are not limited to teacher professional development and educational resources.

Recommendation 4: Increase the VET sector's absorption capacity. The government of Georgia is making efforts in supporting the VET sector. However, the sector remains underfunded and access to VET institutions remains limited. According to the team estimates, approximately 50% of secondary school graduates each year are left without further formal educational and training opportunities. This is largely attributed to the low capacity of the vocational education and training sector, with its limited available places, weak geographical coverage, and weak financial support system in place.

Recommendation 5: Strengthen the financial support system at the tertiary level. Current financing arrangements at the tertiary level do not favour socially and economically disadvantaged groups. Limited government participation in tertiary education funding translates into unprecedentedly high tuition fees even at public institutions. Moreover, the very limited government grants are mostly merit-based which normally goes to students with very strong academic backgrounds, which are more likely to be coming from non-poor or well off families.

The system could become more equitable by diversifying financial support mechanisms. Many countries have introduced student loan schemes targeting middle-income families. This could be an option for

Georgia to substitute current merit-based grants, which seems to be serving more well off families. At the same time, the Government should increase the share of needs-based grants for vulnerable groups.

Recommendation 6: Increase schools' and teachers' capacity planning and implementation of individual study plans. National curriculum requirements envisage that teachers are able to develop individual plans for students. However, more intensive consultancy and training is needed to ensure that teachers apply the method in practice and are capable of developing realistic and helpful individual plans for students with special needs. To this end, MoES should strengthen this component in existing in-service and pre-service training programs as well as offer on-site support to teachers in the process.

Recommendation 7: Identify and promote best practices in inclusive education and promote them among the parents of children with special educational needs. MoES should facilitate strengthening horizontal links between schools to share information on inclusive education practice. With this aim MoES may assist schools in identifying key progress indicators in terms of inclusive education and help them in developing monitoring schemes. Information on best practices and current challenges should be systematically gathered at the school level and easily shared between schools. In parallel, this information should be made available to parents.

Recommendation 8: The government of Georgia should consider improving the quality of data on vulnerable groups' participation in education and their outcomes for adequate education planning. It is also important that the government does not monopolize access to data and the data is available for researchers and stakeholders outside the governmental institutions for them to contribute to informed decision-making in the sector.

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National Assessment and Examinations Centre http://www.naec.ge/index.php?lang=eng

Danish Refugee Council (Georgia) http://www.drc.dk/relief-work/where-we-work/south-caucasus/georgia/

Georgian Union of Educators "Lampari" http://www.lampari.org.ge/?cat=about_us&lang=eng

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UNHCR (Georgia) http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/page?page=49e48d2e6

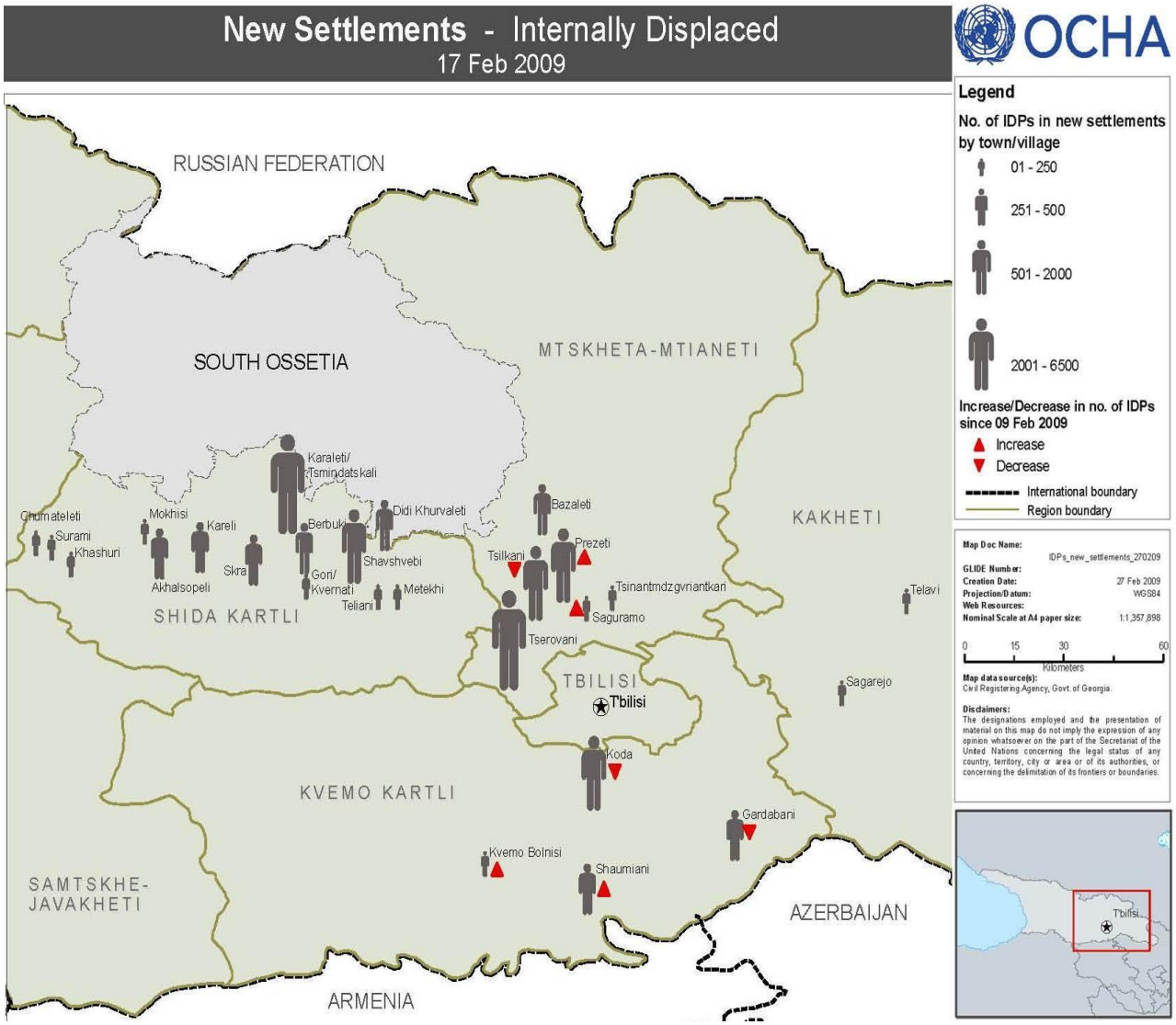
UNICEF (Georgia) http://www.unicef.org/georgia

World Vision (Georgia) http://georgia.worldvision.org

ANNEXES

Annex 1: The story of displacement

During the last two decades, two waves of displacement in Georgia left 258,000 people internally displaced in the country. The first occurred in 1992 in Abkhazia and in 1993 in South Ossetia. The people displaced at that time are often referred as “old” IDPs, and their number is around 222,000. Some of the IDPs from South Ossetia, unlike those from Abkhazia, returned to their homes despite the risk of sporadic and occasionally fatal shootings. In August 2008, during the five-day war between Russia and Georgia, 128,000 predominantly ethnic Georgians fled their homes, some of them for the second time. They were first accommodated in temporary collective centers in public schools, VET centers, and kindergartens. Within several months, the government of Georgia had built new constructions in a settlement 30 km from Tbilisi to accommodate the new flow of IDPs. People who were displaced within Georgian territory during the war in August 2008, but later returned to their places of residence (so-called “new returnees”) amounted to over 100,000 people. Unlike the returnees to the Gali region in Abkhazia, however, these new returnees do not retain their IDP status.



Because of the lack of security in many areas of the return as well as the ongoing need for reintegration, UNHCR presently considers them as “persons in an IDP-like situation." People who remain displaced from South Ossetia following the war in August 2008 and are unable to return to their homes are described as “new” IDPs and amount to 26,000 people. The displaced persons who cannot return to their homes tend to be concentrated near their region of origin. Those who fled from Abkhazia have mainly resettled in the adjacent regions of Samegrelo and Imereti, with significant populations also residing in the major urban centers of Tbilisi and Batumi. The displaced population from South Ossetia is concentrated mainly in the region of Inner Qartli, immediately to the south of the disputed region.

Currently 40% of IDPs live in collective centers in state-owned buildings such as hotels, schools, kindergartens, and hospitals. Recently the government started dislocating the “old” IDPs from collective centers, offering them cash or alternative accommodation. In 2010, over 1,000 internally displaced families were evicted from collective centers.

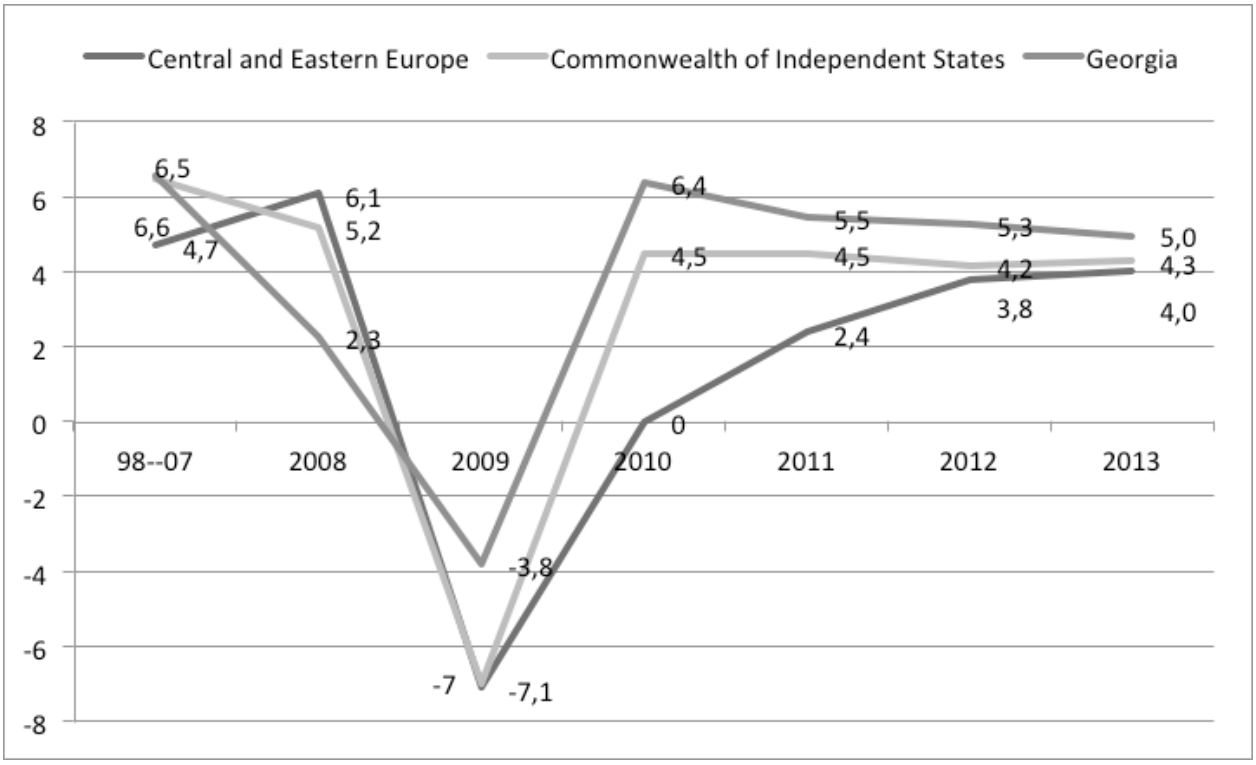
Annex 2: Supplementary Tables and Figures

Table A.1: Differences between IDPs and General Population According to Socioeconomic indicators

Socioeconomic characteristics		GP	IDP	Chi-square value	Prob.
		(n=79,293)	(n=2,714)		
Employment status	Employed	57.1%	38.2%	1,187.4	0.000
Educational Institution Currently Attending		(n=36,008)	(n=1,022)		
	None	89.0%	82.1%		
	School	6.0%	8.8%		
	Specialized school/Lyceum	0.2%	0.2%	51.8	0.000
	TVET	0.6%	1.4%		
	HEI	4.2%	7.5%		
		(n=48,370)	(n=1,584)		
Educational level attainment	Basic Education	9.8%	6.8%		
	Secondary Education	43.8%	37.2%		
	VET, Professional Education	20.1%	19.1%	124.5	0.000
	Bachelor's	0.8%	1.3%		
	Master's	24.0%	35.1%		
	Doctoral	1.5%	0.4%		
		(n=79,137)	(n=2,698)		
By material status, which category describes you best?	Rich	0.1%	0.1%		
	Well-off	1.5%	1.9%		
	Middle	47.6%	33.2%	324.8	0.000
	Poor	44.9%	52.5%		
	Extremely Poor	5.9%	12.3%		

Source: Team estimates based on the Geostat NHS data of 2009

Figure A.1: Annual percent change in GDP growth measured in constant 2005 US$[32]



Source: Georgia: Table ECA.4; CIS and CEE: Table ECA.1. Global Economic Prospects June 2011: Regional Annex: Europe and Central Asia. World Bank.

Table A.2: Level and distribution of poverty in Georgia (2007)

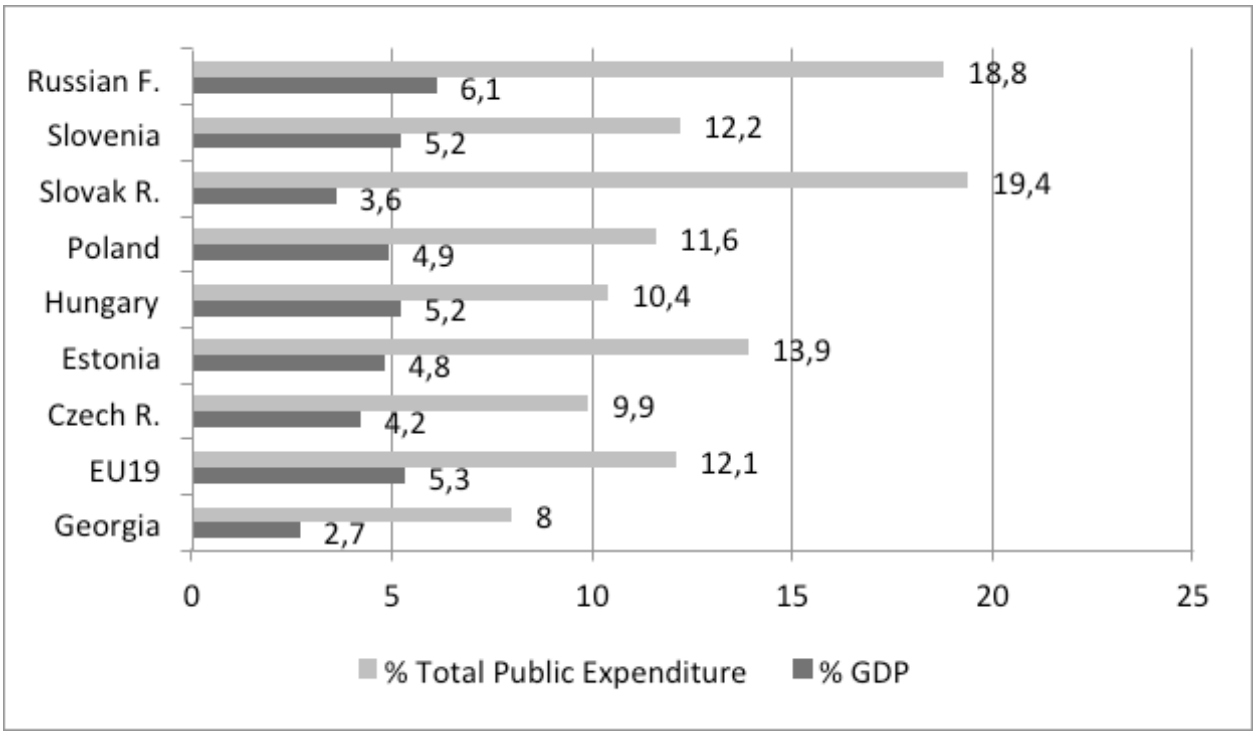
Location	Poverty headcount	Distribution of poor	Distribution of population
Poverty line = 72.6 lari (total poverty)			
Urban	18.3	41.1	53.1
Rural	29.7	58.9	46.9
Total	23.6	100.0	100.0
High poverty regions			
Kakheti	46.3	15.7	8.0

[32] 1998-2007: real; 2010: estimated; 2011-13: projected

Inner Kartli	59.4	18.9	7.5
Mtskheta-Mtianeti	40.6	4.2	2.5
Poverty line = 47.1 lari (extreme poverty)			
Urban	6.7	37.9	53.1
Rural	12.4	62.1	46.9
Total	9.3	100.0	100.0
High poverty regions			
Kakheti	20.8	17.9	8.0
Shida Kartli	32.2	25.9	7.5
Mtskheta-Mtianeti	18.5	4.9	2.5

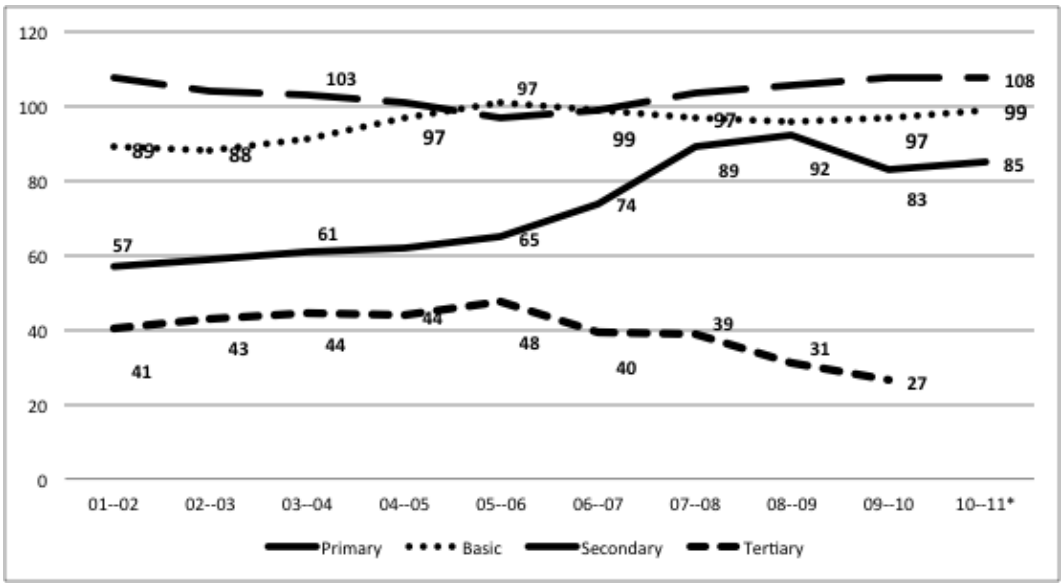
Source: World Bank estimates based on 2007 LSMS. World Bank. Georgia Poverty Assessment, 2009, Table 2.4, p.37.

Figure A.2: Public education expenditures on education as a percent of GDP and of total public expenditures for EU19, CEE, and CIS countries (2007)



Source: Georgia MoF, 2011; OECD Education at a Glance, 2010

Figure A.3: Gross enrolment rates* by education level



Source: Calculations use Geostat data, 2011. *For calculating pre-tertiary enrolment rates, the Spraque formula was used to calculate single-year population numbers from Geostat's five-year population figures.

Table A.3: MoES allocation in targeted assistance programs, 2009-2011

Program	MoES allocations in Thousand GEL		
	2009	2010	2011 (plan)
Qualified Georgian language teachers for ethnic minority schools	819	772	1.051
Teach for Georgia (Sending teachers to remote areas)	250	235	385
State university student's need-based grant	2.772	3.090	3.675
Textbooks for children from families below poverty level	-	4.083	8.100
Multilingual education support program	35	79	50
Inclusive education support program	386	516	500
Education services for Juvenile Prisoners	47	147,6	160
Total	4.308	8.407	13.921
As a share of MoES Budget	0,9%	1,6%	2,5%

Source: State Budget Allocations, Ministry of Finance, 2011 and Teacher's Professional Development Center budget

Table A.4: Distribution of needs-based state grants by social groups, 2005-2007

Social groups of students		2005	2006	2007
Students from highland areas and ecological migrant students		90	125	216
Students from conflict zones	Total	77	85	68
	a) Abkhazia	46	50	24
	b)South Ossetia	31	35	44
Graduates from Azeri language minority schools		11	5	-
Graduates from Armenian language minority schools		15	7	3
Students of the KIA and MIA military families		29	34	30
Decedents descendants of minority groups deported from Samtkhe-Djavakheti, Georgia		2	1	4
Orphans and students with four and more siblings		-	-	10
Students from socially disadvantaged families		-	-	-
Total number of students		224	257	331

Source: Ministry of Education and Science, 2008

Table A.5: Distribution of needs-based state grants by student category by grant type, 2008

	Student category	Type of tuition waiver					Total in GEL
		30%	50%	70%	100%	Total	
1	Students from socially disadvantaged families	3	7	29	40	79	168 650,00
2	Student who graduated Azeri schools	0	0	1	28	29	20 550,00
3	Student who graduated Armenian schools	0	0	1	22	23	32 300,00
4	Students from conflict zones - South Ossetia	2	2	16	33	53	67 000,00
5	Students from conflict zones - Abkhazia	1	7	14	169	191	261 300,00
6	Orphans and students with 4 and more siblings	0	3	16	94	113	139 950,00
7	Decedents of ethnic groups deported from Samtkhe-Djavakheti, Georgia	0	0	0	1	1	1 500,00
8	Students of families of the KIA and MIA military families	3	6	5	18	32	36 100,00
9	Students from highland areas and ecological migrant students	9	36	50	36	131	129 275,00
	Students impacted by Russian aggression, August 2008 (Undergraduate students)	55	26	5	515	598	796510
10	Students impacted by Russian aggression, August, 2008 (Master and PhD students)	-	-	-	159	159	236000
	Total	103	137	207	1215	1409	1 889 135,00

Source: Ministry of Education and Science, 2009

Table A.6: IDP enrolment rate by age groups

Age groups	15-17				18-22				15-22			
Subgroups	School	VET	Tertiary	None	School	VET	Tertiary	None	School	VET	Tertiary	None
All	82%	1%	1%	17%	16%	3%	17%	64%	22%	3%	16%	60%
Regions												
Tbilisi	82%	1%	1%	16%	17%	1%	39%	43%	23%	1%	36%	41%
Kakheti	81%	0%	0%	19%	18%	3%	11%	68%	24%	3%	10%	63%
Inner Qartli	78%	0%	0%	22%	14%	4%	10%	71%	21%	4%	9%	66%
Lower Qartli	66%	2%	0%	32%	15%	1%	11%	73%	20%	1%	10%	69%
Samtskhe and Djavakheti	90%	4%	6%	0%	10%	4%	8%	78%	18%	4%	8%	71%
Achara	79%	0%	0%	21%	17%	6%	9%	69%	23%	5%	8%	64%
Guria	82%	6%	0%	12%	22%	1%	9%	67%	25%	2%	9%	64%
Samegrelo	95%	0%	2%	4%	23%	2%	16%	59%	28%	2%	15%	54%
ImereTi	94%	0%	0%	6%	13%	4%	19%	64%	20%	3%	17%	59%
Mtskheta and Tianeti	60%	0%	0%	40%	11%	2%	14%	73%	13%	2%	14%	72%
Urbanicity												
Rural	80%	1%	1%	18%	16%	3%	9%	72%	21%	3%	9%	68%
Urban	83%	2%	0%	15%	17%	3%	30%	50%	24%	3%	27%	46%
Ethnicity												
Ethnic minorities	59%	0%	4%	38%	7%	2%	6%	86%	10%	2%	6%	83%
Georgians	85%	1%	0%	14%	18%	3%	19%	60%	24%	3%	17%	56%
Displacement												
Non IDP	81%	1%	1%	17%	16%	3%	17%	65%	22%	2%	15%	61%
IDP	91%	0%	0%	9%	24%	6%	28%	43%	29%	6%	25%	40%
Poverty												
Non Poor	80%	1%	1%	18%	17%	3%	23%	58%	22%	3%	21%	55%
Poor	82%	1%	0%	16%	16%	3%	12%	70%	22%	3%	11%	65%

Source: Team estimates based on Geostat NHS data, 2009

Table A.7: Household mean expenditures on education by level of education and by subgroups

	Elementary and Basic	Secondary	VET	Tertiary
Urban/rural				
Urban	45	226	280	813
Rural	40	48	344	744
Ethnicity				
Georgians	40	123	324	793
Ethnic minorities	55	31	304	694
Displacement				
Non-IDP	42	116	317	779
IDP	37	87	403	939
Poverty				
Non poor	43	188	390	799
Poor	41	45	263	765
All	42	115	322	787

Source: Team estimates based on Geostat NHS data, 2009

Table A.8: Education attainment among IDP and non-IDP population in 15-24 age group, 2009

Population aged 15 to 24		
Education Level Attained	General Population (n=7606)	IDP (n=285)
Basic Education	26.8%	26.3%
Secondary Education	50.2%	49.1%
VET, Professional Education	9.8%	6.7%
Bachelor's	1.2%	0.7%
Master's	10.1%	16.8%
Doctoral	2.0%	0.4%

Source: Team estimates based on Geostat NHS data, 2009

Table A.9: Share of 4th-grade students' TIMSS mathematics benchmarks by regions, where Abkhazeti is represented by Abkhaz public schools

Regions	Advanced (%)	High (%)	Average (%)	Low (%)	Below the scale (%)
National	1	10	35	67	33
Abkhazeti	0	11	44	89	11
Racha and Lechkhumi	0	18	73	82	18
Samegreli and Upper Svaneti	2	18	45	79	21
Guria	1	25	53	75	25
Tbilisi	0	8	36	72	28
Samtskhe and Javakheti	3	18	38	71	29
Imereti	1	11	37	67	34
Mtskheta-Mtianeti	0	1	28	65	35
Kakheti	1	7	30	62	38
Inner Kartli	0	4	25	60	39
Lower Kartli	1	6	27	60	40
Adjara	0	4	26	56	44

Source: National Examination Center, 2007

Table A.10: Share of 8th-grade students' TIMSS mathematics benchmarks by regions, where Abkhazeti is represented by Abkhaz public schools

Regions	Advanced	High	Average	Low	Below the scale
National	1	7	26	56	44
Abkhazeti	3	10	30	47	53
Racha and Lechkhumi	0	25	100	100	0
Samegreli and Upper Svaneti	0	15	37	66	34
Samtskhe and Javakheti	0	3	22	66	34
Tbilisi	1	8	31	63	37
Inner Kartli	0	5	24	60	40
Kakheti	0	5	26	60	41
Guria	1	10	26	56	44
Mtskheta-Mtianeti	0	1	18	55	45
Imereti	0	5	26	53	47
Lower Kartli	2	6	17	43	57
Adjara	0	1	12	41	59

Source: National Examination Center, 2007

Table A.11: Logistic regression for likelihood of employment from the National Household Survey

Predictors	Employment (Employed=1)		
	B	S.E.	Exp(B)
General Population (non-IDP)	1.087***	0.196	2.965
Female	0.260	0.141	1.296
Urban	-1.122***	0.162	0.326
Age	0.040***	0.006	1.041
Tbilisi	0.086	0.210	1.090
Kakheti	-0.032	0.394	0.969
Shida Kartli	-0.290	0.253	0.748
Kvemo Kartli	0.618	0.322	1.855
Samtkhe-djavakheti	2.277	1.060	9.748
Mtskheta-tianeti	-0.036	0.659	0.965
Adjara	-0.699*	0.349	0.497
Guria	1.302*	0.625	3.676
Samegrelo	0.370	0.221	1.448
Imereti			1.000
Single	-0.004	0.311	0.996
Married	0.300	0.264	1.350
Divorced	-0.816	0.490	0.442
Widowed			1.000
Rich			1.000
Well off	0.192	0.537	1.212
Middle	0.914***	0.217	2.494
Poor	0.354	0.202	1.424
Very poor			1.000
No education			1.000

Basic education	-1.851	1.098	0.157
Secondary	-1.975	1.060	0.139
Technical/vocational	-1.821	1.067	0.162
Bachelor's	-4.043***	1.233	0.018
Master's	-1.748	1.067	0.174
Doctoral	0.301	0.545	1.351
Economically Inactive	-24.179	845.727	0.000
Constant	0.468	1.208	1.597
Chi-square	3,699.037		
df	26		
Sig.	0.000		
-2 Log likelihood	1,518.760		
Cox & Snell R Square	0.618		
Nagelkerke R Square	0.832		
Percentage Predicted	90.4		

Source: Calculations based on Geostat NHS data, 2009

Table A.12: Number of IDP

No.	Region	District	Settlements	Individuals
1	Kakheti	Kakheti	Lagodekhi	54
2	Kakheti	Kakheti	Sagarejo	70
3	Kakheti	Kakheti	Telavi	80
4	Lower Kartli	Bolnisi	Kvemo Bolnisi	79
5	Lower Kartli	Gardabani	Gardabani	321
6	Lower Kartli	Marneuli	Shaumiani	450
7	Lower Kartli	Tetritskaro	Koda	1259
8	Mtskheta-Mtianeti	Dusheti	Bazaleti	311

9	Mtskheta-Mtianeti	Mtskheta	Prezeti	761
10	Mtskheta-Mtianeti	Mtskheta	Saguramo	75
11	Mtskheta-Mtianeti	Mtskheta	Saguramo	136
12	Mtskheta-Mtianeti	Mtskheta	Saguramo	35
13	Mtskheta-Mtianeti	Mtskheta	Tserovani	6385
14	Mtskheta-Mtianeti	Mtskheta	Tsilkani	1287
15	Mtskheta-Mtianeti	Mtskheta	Tsinantmdzgvriantkari	127
16	Mtskheta-Mtianeti	Mtskheta	Tsinantmdzgvriantkari	72
17	Inner Kartli	Gori	Berbuki	454
18	Inner Kartli	Gori	Gori	78
19	Inner Kartli	Gori	Gori	67
20	Inner Kartli	Gori	Gori/Kvernati	14
21	Inner Kartli	Gori	Karaleti	1482
22	Inner Kartli	Gori	Karaleti/Tsmindatskali	1607
23	Inner Kartli	Gori	Shavshvebi	587
24	Inner Kartli	Gori	Skra	296
25	Inner Kartli	Kareli	Akhalsopeli	333
26	Inner Kartli	Kareli	Kareli	265
27	Inner Kartli	Kareli	Kareli	204
28	Inner Kartli	Kareli	Mokhisi	215
29	Inner Kartli	Kaspi	Didi Khurvaleti	440
30	Inner Kartli	Kaspi	Metekhi	128
31	Inner Kartli	Kaspi	Teliani	170
32	Inner Kartli	Khashuri	Chumateleti	81
33	Inner Kartli	Khashuri	Khashuri	64
34	Inner Kartli	Khashuri	Surami	68
35	Inner Kartli	Khashuri	Surami	51

36	Inner Kartli	Khashuri	Surami	22

Table A.13: List of Abkhaz public schools

School number	Address	students	Technical personnel	Teachers	Administration
Abkhaz Public school N 1	Zugdidi, 222 Agmashenebeli str.	346	5	31	3
Abkhaz Public school N 2	Tbilisi, 4 Gelovani str.	132	3	25	3
Abkhaz Public school N 3	Tbilisi Sea	123	4	23	3
Abkhaz Public school N 5	Kutaisi, 6 a Chavchavadze str.	170	5	28	3
Abkhaz Public school N 6	Kutaisi, 15 Nikea str.	93	4	23	3
Abkhaz Public school N 7	Senaki, military settlement	291	10	28	3
Abkhaz Public school N 8	Tskneti, 1 Grishashvili str.	228	7	32	3
Abkhaz Public school N 10	Chkhorotsku, 5 Stalin str.	256	7	35	4
Abkhaz Public school N 11	Zugdidi, 10 Quji str.	270	4	28	3
Abkhaz Public school N 12	Zugdidi, 1 Janashia str.	135	3	24	3
Abkhaz Public school N 14	Zugdidi rayon, Akhalkakhati village	103	3	23	3
Abkhaz Public school N 15	Zugdidi rayon, Zeda Etseri village	104	3	23	3
Abkhaz Public school N 21	Photi, 12 Tabidze str.	415	13	48	4
Abkhaz Public school N 22	Borjomi, 39 Meskheti str.	29	2	10	2
Total		2695	73	381	43

Source: Ministry of Abkhazian Ministry of Education, Culture, and Sports

Table A.14: Number of recipients of family assistance for children with special needs under age 18

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Children with special needs under age of 18	6638	9723	12625	12060	9140	5924	4319	3656

Source: Ministry of Labor, Health and Social Protection of Georgia

Annex 3: List of inclusive schools

Pilot inclusive schools in the capital Tbilisi:

Public school N 67

Public school N 130

Public school N 24

Public school N 10

Public school N 180

Public school N 87

Public school N 60

Public school N 181

Public school N 21

Public school N 160

Pilot inclusive school in the regions of Georgia:

Mtskheta Public school N1

Kobuleti Public school N 3

Akhaltsikhe Public school N 5

Zugdidi Public school N 5

Chokhatauri Public School N 1

Rustavi Public school N 28

Oni Public school

KHashuri Public school N 2

Zestaphoni Public school N 4

Telavi Public school N 7

Total number of students with SEN: 169

List of special schools:

1. Tbilisi №200 Public school: 130 students

2. Tbilisi №202 school for students with visual disorders: 40 students

3. Tbilisi №198 public school: 149 students

4. Tbilisi №203 school for students with hearing problems: 177 students

5. Kutaisi №45school for students with hearing problems: 43 students

6. Chiatura №12 Public school: 45 students

7. Samtredia №15 public school: 14 students

8. Akhaltsikhe public special school: 31 students

Total number of students with SEN: 629