



UNDP

Country Programme for

GEORGIA

2026-2030

Empowering People

Protecting the Planet

Shaping a Sustainable Future



GEORGIA'S DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT AND CHALLENGES



Georgia is an upper-middle-income country with a population of 3.7 million (52 per cent female) and a high Human Development Index (HDI 2023: 0.844). Economic growth is expected to reach 7.2 per cent in 2025, according to the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and the economy has remained resilient despite domestic and geopolitical uncertainty.¹

Poverty declined from 65.0 per cent in 2014 to an estimated 49.0 per cent in 2023.² The share of the population under the absolute poverty line declined from 23.5 per cent in 2014 to 9.4 per cent in 2024.³ Unemployment fell from 23.0 per cent in 2014 to 13.9 per cent in 2024.⁴ Reflecting positive developments, these figures remain above the European Union average. The Gini coefficient remains moderate at 0.36 (2024).⁵

The urban-rural disparity (62.0 per cent of the population is urban)⁶ can be a barrier to inclusive growth,⁷ indicating fewer opportunities for education and gainful employment. Labour force participation remains unequal (65.1 per cent for men and 43.1 per cent for women in 2023). While the unemployment rate is higher for men than for women, the latter remain underrepresented in leadership roles—38.8 per cent of managerial positions are held by women, while men lead 61.0 per cent of all newly established enterprises.⁸

Recognising its high vulnerability to climate change, Georgia adopted the National Climate

Strategy 2030 and the 2024-2025 Action Plan and is updating its Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) to the Paris Agreement. Improvements to both waste management and forestry management are needed, along with support for a cleaner ecosystem and the promotion of eco-tourism. However, challenges remain in strengthening environmental policies to address sectoral gaps and ensure a just transition towards shock-resilient growth. These include the promotion of energy-efficient and low-emission solutions in infrastructure, business, transport, and agriculture, with increased private sector engagement.⁹

Protracted conflict and the lack of durable solutions for about 293,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs), constituting about 7.85 per cent of the population, remain major obstacles to consolidating peace dividends and developing a new, forward-looking approach to development. While the humanitarian and security situation on the ground remains grave, human security challenges are not fully addressed on either side of the dividing line. Key human rights and development challenges remain unresolved. High vulnerability, restrictions on freedom of movement and isolation continue to exclude rights holders in conflict-affected areas from sustainable and inclusive development opportunities.

The Government continues to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and other global commitments. The country prepared

1 International Monetary Fund (2025).

2 World Bank (2025). Poverty Headcount Ratio at \$8.30 a Day (2011 PPP). Upper-Middle-Income Countries – Georgia.

3 National Statistics Office of Georgia (GeoStat) (2023). Indicators of Poverty and Gini Coefficient. [17 July 2025]

4 GeoStat (2024). Labour Force Report 2024. [16 March 2025]

5 GeoStat (2025). Living Conditions Statistics. Available at: GeoStat. [16 March 2025]

6 Worldometers (2025). Georgia Population.

7 Common Country Analysis. 2025

8 GeoStat (2024). Women and Men in Georgia 2024. [2 April 2025]

9 Independent Country Programme Evaluation - Georgia (ICPE). 2025



its third Voluntary National Review (VNR) report in 2024 and has systematically incorporated the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into its development policy documents, principally the overarching Vision 2030 – National Development Strategy of Georgia (2022) and the Government of Georgia – Program for 2025-2028 (2024). The Government actively engages municipalities in localising the SDGs through participatory action plans.

Georgia became a candidate country for European Union membership in December 2023. Although the Government decided not to raise the issue of European Union accession negotiations until 2028, prerequisite reforms for accession continue, focusing on the EU-Georgia Association Agreement and the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA).

At the 58th session of the United Nations Human Rights Council, held on 1 April 2025, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) expressed concerns about risks to civic space and freedoms of expression and association.¹⁰ While the Government has allocated funding for civil society organisations (CSOs), changes in the legislative environment could impede the work of civil society and the media, and the essential contributions they make to Georgian democracy and society as a whole.

Although the UNDP Gender Inequality Index (GII) for Georgia slightly improved from 0.271 in 2020 to 0.257 in 2023,¹¹ further gains are not guaranteed. In April 2024, Parliament abolished mandatory gender quotas in proportional party lists, while in April 2025, the terms “gender” and “gender equality” were removed from all Georgian laws and replaced by “equality between women and men.”

10 OHCHR (2025). Introductory remarks by Maarit Kohonen Sheriff, Director, Global Operations Division, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. [29 April 2025]

11 UNDP (2025). Human Development Report (HDR) GI. [26 September 2025]

UNDP COUNTRY PROGRAMME IN GEORGIA 2026-2030: BUILDING RESILIENCE AND OPPORTUNITY





The UNDP Country Programme in Georgia aligns with the national priorities, as confirmed by the Government of Georgia in joint United Nations consultations, to pursue sophisticated and innovative solutions to developmental challenges.

In 2026-2030, UNDP seeks to support further European Union integration, an aspiration both specified in the Georgian Constitution and aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

UNDP will focus on long-term development through creating responsive and adaptive programming to maintain relevance in a dynamic socio-political context.

This will be achieved through enhancing institutional capabilities, especially at the local level, targeting inequalities, providing wider support for civic space, and promoting sustainable and inclusive growth.



PRIORITIES AND PARTNERSHIPS



STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1:

HEALTHY PLANET AND PROSPERITY FOR ALL

What we aim to achieve

- Address environmental challenges and promote sustainable, climate-smart development.
- Unleash entrepreneurial potential by working with the private sector.
- Expand opportunities and foster innovation through the digitalisation of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).
- Empower women entrepreneurs through tailored support.
- Improve access to business development services and financing.
- Support digital transformation, sustainable technology, and artificial intelligence.
- Boost entrepreneurial skills to improve livelihoods, with a focus on non-agricultural sectors of the rural economy.

UNDP will collaborate with private sector entities and associations to drive innovation, advance connectivity and skills of the future, create green jobs, improve quality infrastructure management systems, trade policies and access to markets for SMEs, and promote sustainable production and consumption practices.

UNDP will work to decrease regional disparities within the country, targeting the sustainable future of municipalities. By applying an area-based development approach, portfolios for improving access to essential infrastructure and public services in rural and remote areas will be improved, thereby enabling economic participation and market access.

Increased productivity will result from the provision of training, resources, and technology to rural communities, along with promoting diverse models for and access to vocational education and training (VET) and advancing lifelong learning systems, with at least 5,000 direct beneficiaries. Support will be provided to public and private institutions to develop services for the high number of young people who are neither in employment nor in education or training (17.5 per cent in 2024).¹² Skills and entrepreneurship opportunities will also be provided to ensure equal access, creating pathways to stable income.

In Georgia, rural areas are facing limited economic opportunities and insecure market linkages. To

12 GeoStat (2025). Employment and Unemployment Statistics.

advance market integration, UNDP will support the expansion of rural livelihoods through enhanced private sector competitiveness and stronger rural value chains. Participatory planning will ensure the engagement of all community voices, especially the marginalised. Institutional support will strengthen the capacity of authorities and local organisations to plan and deliver services more effectively.

Building on improved policy frameworks and institutional capacity, UNDP will continue to address environmental challenges and promote sustainable, eco-friendly and climate-smart development; provide policy support and technical assistance; introduce innovative technologies and solutions; meet international commitments and obligations; and translate these into effective local action, including for the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Paris Agreement, the Montreal Protocol, the Convention on Biological Diversity, the EU-Georgia Association Agreement and the Energy Community.

UNDP will support policy alignment with European and international transport standards, strengthen institutions, and promote smart, integrated, and accessible transport systems, particularly in consideration of opportunities presented by investments in the Middle Corridor development. UNDP will advocate for a just and fair transition to a green economy, to encourage better coordination and cooperation between the Government, civil society, and businesses to create environmentally sound and people-centred policies and expand access to green solutions for all, while supporting a diverse national energy portfolio with an increased share of renew-

able energy (especially solar and biomass) and energy-efficient practices. With the Nationally Determined Contribution 3.0 implementation emphasising adaptation efforts, UNDP will ensure the anchoring of sectoral adaptation measures, such as health system resilience, in the National Adaptation Plan.

UNDP will work on environmental protection, disaster risk reduction and conservation of biodiversity and forestry reform, focusing on improvement in air quality monitoring systems with full nationwide coverage ensured, by making an additional 10 new monitoring stations operational; improved use of meteorological data and information, with the upgrade of the hydro and agrometeorological network completed; protection of the ozone layer; enhanced pollution and waste management, as envisaged in the National Waste Management Strategy; and promotion of circularity. Recognising that environmental challenges disproportionately impact women and marginalised groups, UNDP will ensure that at least three initiatives are developed for a green and just transition, promoting women's economic agency, leadership, and participation, as well as equal access to opportunities in the green economy.

UNDP will maintain its collaboration with central and local authorities to support the transition from reactive disaster management to adaptation and prevention. UNDP will maintain its focus on the enhancement of meteorological monitoring and forecasting capacities and the establishment of the Multi-Hazard Early Warning System to increase the resilience of communities to recurring climate-induced hazard events.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2:

EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE

What we aim to achieve

- Ensure human rights protection.
- Support vulnerable groups, including persons with disabilities, minorities, and other disadvantaged communities.
- Contribute to the implementation of at least 35 per cent of the 4th cycle of Universal Periodic Review recommendations.¹³
- Empower women through innovative digital solutions and services.
- Foster public-private partnerships.
- Integrate gender-responsive approaches across all portfolios.
- Adopt a portfolio-based approach that aligns thematic activities to ensure coherence, synergies, and complementarity among initiatives.



13 United Nations Human Rights Council. UPR-Georgia. [29 April 2025]

UNDP will leverage innovative solutions and strategic initiatives to ensure effective and responsive institutions, improve service delivery at the central level, and enhance evidence-based decision-making at the local level. This will include streamlining access to services for citizens and businesses, including through public service halls, and fostering inter-municipal cooperation.

UNDP support for digital public infrastructure and a municipal statistics portal will enhance data-driven, agile and anticipatory policymaking, with a strong focus on improving accountability, social inclusion, and equality, including 46 disaggregated indicators that support inclusive policy planning, tailored to the needs of women and men.

In addition, UNDP will ensure that adequate safeguards regarding data protection, privacy, and accessibility standards are integrated into all newly introduced digital innovations.

UNDP will continue focusing on developing the capacity of Georgian civil society organisations (CSOs) to monitor and advocate for justice and

equality before the law, environmental protection, and social inclusion. By strengthening the organisational capacity of CSOs, the programme will enhance their ability to lead confidence-building measures and to ensure transparency, public accountability, and effective governance.

Supporting CSOs in environmental governance will align their efforts with EU and international standards, fostering a more resilient, sustainable future.

By empowering at least 30 CSOs to deliver inclusive services to disadvantaged populations, the initiative will promote greater equity and fair opportunities for women and men, address the needs of the most marginalised, and contribute to achieving national targets, such as the National Human Rights Protection Strategy 2022-2030.

Together, these efforts will contribute to promoting more efficient governance and targeted development outcomes.



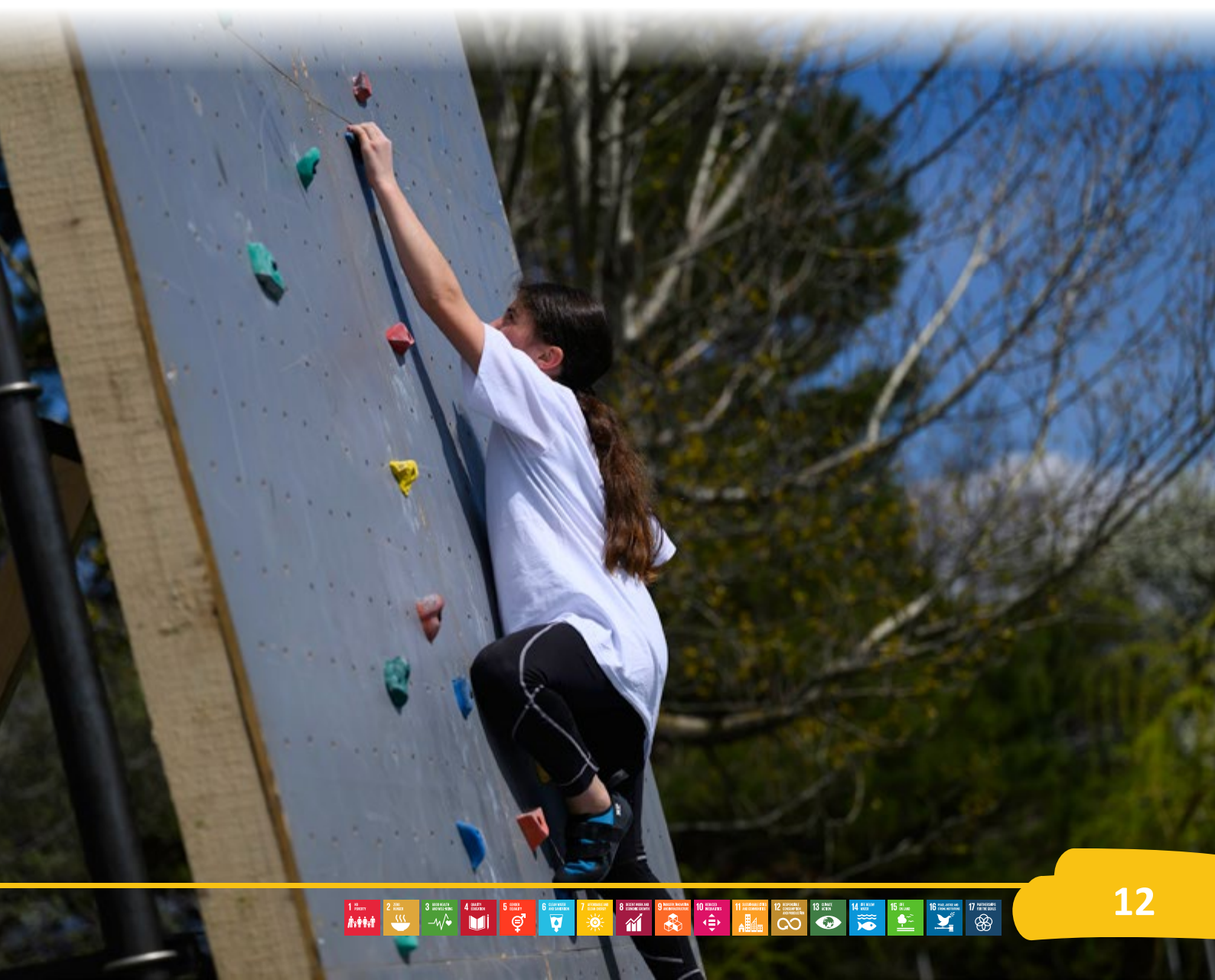
STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3:

CRISIS RESILIENCE

What we aim to achieve

- Enhance human security and resilience of conflict-affected communities.
- Foster social cohesion, dialogue, and confidence-building between the divided communities.
- Promote lasting peace.

To achieve these objectives, UNDP will prioritise inclusive development and a people-centred approach by emphasising women, youth, persons with disabilities, and other excluded groups.



UNDP will implement the following activities, building on previous achievements and exploring new areas of engagement:

- Ensure the quality of and access to essential services for a minimum of 4,000 persons.
- Promote social cohesion and intra-societal dialogue.
- Improve community-based social infrastructure.
- Ensure access to livelihoods, environment and disaster resilience for at least 500 persons.
- Promote human rights and equality between women and men.
- Contribute to media literacy.
- Empower a minimum of 70 local civil society organisations (CSOs) with a focus on women-led organisations.
- Promote interaction and dialogue between CSOs, professional groups, and young women and men divided by the conflict.

Fostering diverse and strategic partnerships at both central and local levels will be crucial to achieving outcome-level change.

Key stakeholders will include both duty-bearers and rights-holders, including the Government and public sector agencies at the central and local levels, such as the Public Defender's Office, national rule of law institutions, oversight institutions, regional partners, CSOs, human and women's rights activists, grassroots movements, the private sector, media, academia, and international organisations.



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The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is the leading United Nations organisation fighting to end the injustice of poverty, inequality, and climate change.

**United Nations Development
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