



OVERVIEW OF EC ASSISTANCE IN ABKHAZIA & SOUTH OSSETIA

March 2006

The European Commission (EC) supports the peaceful resolution of the internal conflicts on the basis for meaningful negotiations and a continuing search for a political settlement. However, the EC is not directly involved in the political side of conflict resolution and prevention in Abkhazia or South Ossetia. Instead, the EC actively supports various economic rehabilitation and confidence building activities in the Georgian-Abkhaz and Georgian-Ossetian zones of conflict as an important measure to build greater trust between the conflict-affected populations. These projects aim at improving living conditions of the population affected by the conflict and creating conditions for the return of internally displaced persons, as well as facilitating progress in a constructive dialogue between 'opposing social groups'. The EC is the largest donor in the regions of South Ossetia and Abkhazia.

The ongoing and planned programmes in Abkhazia that are financed by the EC include humanitarian assistance, economic rehabilitation, confidence building projects with local and international NGOs, and democracy and human rights projects with local NGOs. Below is an overview of ongoing, completed and planned EC projects in Abkhazia:

ABKHAZIA - ONGOING PROJECTS

1. Rehabilitation projects of the Enguri Hydro-Power Plant (9.4m total, ongoing until early 2006)

The EC has granted 9.4 million Euros to Georgia for urgent repairs at the Enguri Hydro Power Plant (HPP) for two projects to replace the stoplog at the arch dam on the Georgian side and replace one of the generators of the power station at the Abkhaz side. These rehabilitation projects are confidence building measures.

1a. Rehabilitation of the stoplog and its hoisting system at Enguri arch dam – Samegrelo/Georgia (4.4m Euros, ongoing until early 2006)

The first project supports the rehabilitation of the Arch Dam of the Enguri Hydro Power Plant (HPP) through the replacement of the stoplog and its hoisting system at the arch dam of the Enguri HPP located in Upper-Samegrelo region. The original stoplog sank during an accident in 1994. A new stoplog is needed for the refurbishment of the valve gates of the four operational low-level outlets of the Enguri arch dam, which are in seriously deteriorating condition and leaking water from the reservoir. Project is supervised by Engurhesi and implemented by DSD Dillinger Stahlbau.

1b. Rehabilitation of generator No.3 of the Enguri HPP power station – Abkhazia (5m Euros, ongoing until early 2006)

The second project supports the rehabilitation of the Enguri Hydro Power Plant (HPP) through the replacement of one of the five generators (unit #3) of the Power station of the Enguri HPP as located in the Upper-Gali region in Abkhazia. The works include procurement of a new generator and implementation of electro-mechanical works. Once this new generator is operational it would add a max. capacity of 260Mw to Enguri Hydropower Plant, which could provide for 10% of Georgia's entire electricity supply. The project is managed by the EBRD and implemented by Voith Siemens.

2. EIDHR micro projects - call for Abkhazia (0.2m Euros, start June 2005)

Within the Programme European Initiative for Democracy and Human rights (EIDHR) the EC is supporting two projects of local NGOs in Abkhazia in the area of (1) promotion and protection of rights of vulnerable people and minorities, and (2) the monitoring of court cases and legal education of the judiciary in Abkhazia:

- Foundation Civic Initiative of Human Beings for the Future – "Monitoring of cases in court and legal education of representatives of the legal system in Abkhazia" (60,000 Euros, 24m)
- Association of Women of Abkhazia - "Promotion and Protection of Rights of Vulnerable Groups" (47.760 Euros, 36m)

3. EC Economic Rehabilitation Programmes for Georgia/Abkhazia (3.96m Euros total, start December 2005)

The EC has launched a comprehensive rehabilitation programme for the Georgian-Abkhaz conflict zone (e.g. the districts of Gali, Ochamchira, and Tkvarcheli in the east of Abkhazia, as well as the Zugdidi district on the Georgian side of the cease fire line) in order to improve living conditions of both ethnic Georgian and Abkhaz communities.

The objective of the rehabilitation programmes of the European Union for Abkhazia is to support rehabilitation and reconstruction operations in the conflict zones that would create the right conditions for economic reconstruction and the safe and dignified repatriation of refugees and displaced persons. UNOMIG and UNDP will be the main implementation partners of these programmes. This rehabilitation programme is divided into two separate phases and aims to provide for a linkage between the need for relief and development aid.

First EC Rehabilitation programme (1.98 m Euros, 24-36 months, start Dec 2005)

The first phase of the EC Rehabilitation programme includes the following components:

- Electricity (Gali, Ochamchira, Tkvarcheli, Zugdidi);
- Public health (hospital rehabilitation) and basic services (i.e. water, sewage & waste management) (Gali, Ochamchira, Tkvarcheli and Zugdidi);
- Local agricultural development (Gali, Ochamchira, Tkvarcheli and Zugdidi)

4. ECHO Humanitarian relief programme (1.1m Euros, start October 2005)

ECHO has supported humanitarian assistance programmes to improve the living conditions of the most vulnerable households in Abkhazia and Western Georgia of 2002 and 2003.

- ICRC - Humanitarian relief programme - Abkhazia, 560,000 Euros, 10/05-08/06
- Accion contra el Hambre - Food for Work Programme - Georgia/Abkhazia, 290000 Euros, 10/05-09/06
- Premier Urgence - Consolidation of Farming Activities for the Reinforcement of Food Security in Abkhazia, 305,000 Euros, 10/05-09/06

5. Decentralised Cooperation (0.95m Euros, start January/February 2006)

The EC rehabilitation programme will only address the needs outside the direct conflict zone. The Decentralised Cooperation initiative plans to complement rehabilitation intervention by extending the geographical location of the EC rehabilitation and confidence/capacity building activities to all regions of Abkhazia. Under Decentralised Cooperation activities similar to those of the rehabilitation programme will be introduced outside the conflict zone, e.g. in Sukhumi and west Abkhazia. The Decentralised Cooperation projects will be implemented by local NGOs, which may cooperate in partnership with international NGOs. The main project components for Abkhazia will be:

- Economic rehabilitation: community-based income generation activities in Abkhazia;
- Local NGO confidence and capacity building activities (universities, media, youth, disabled and women organisations, etc.)

The Decentralised Cooperation Programme includes the following projects, which started in Jan/Feb 2006:

- Danish Refugee council - Economic rehabilitation in Western Abkhazia, (97,000 Euros, 12m)
- Accion Contra El Hambre - Community-based income generation programme in Gudauta District - West Abkhazia (99,940 Euros, 12m)
- World Vision - Business and management skills for Abkhazia (100,000, 24m)
- Association of Women in Abkhazia - Cooperation of civil society with local authorities in the sphere of human rights and rights of women (50,000 Euros, 24m)
- Union of Business Women of Abkhazia - Tools of support of development of women business -. Creation of business-incubators (49,695 Euros, 24m)
- Article 19 - International Centre Against Censorship - Building Capacity for Good Municipal Governance in Abkhazia - with a focus on freedom of information and women's issues in Sukhum, Gudauta and Tkvarchali districts (97,000 Euros, 24m)
- Sukhum Media Club - Cooperation of civil society with local authorities in the sphere of human rights and rights of women (35,197 Euros, 24m)
- Centre for Humanitarian Programmes - Stimulating Cooperation between Civil Society and Local Government and Self-Government Structures for Effective Problem Solving on a Local Level (99,734 Euros, 24m)
- Civic Society Development Centre - Strengthening of a civil society, development of opportunities for Abkhazian NGO in the field of Human rights (45,821 Euros, 36m)
- Sukhum Youth House - Youth Initiative for the Future (89, 997 Euros, 36m)
- Association "Inva-Sodeistvie" - All different - All equal (95, 625 Euros, 24m)

ABKHAZIA - COMPLETED PROJECTS

6. ECHO Humanitarian relief programme (2x2m Euros, 2002- 2003)

ECHO has supported humanitarian assistance programmes to improve the living conditions of the most vulnerable households in Abkhazia and Western Georgia of 2002 and 2003.

7. RRM Confidence building Abkhazia (2x0.3m Euros, 2x6 months, until August 2005)

Under the Rapid Reaction Mechanism (RRM) two confidence building activities were implemented. Firstly, a project with International Alert (IA) included a series of joint confidence building activities with Georgian/Abkhaz civic society leaders. The activities have focused on grass roots security, divisive history, a needs assessment, and media activities. Secondly, a project of Conciliation Resources (RC) combined components on study visits to Northern Ireland with expert visits to Tbilisi and Georgian-Abkhaz dialogue workshops in the style of the Schailing process.

8. ECHO Humanitarian relief programme (4m Euros, 2004-2005, until December 2005)

ECHO has supported in 2004-2005 a humanitarian assistance and food for work programme to improve the living conditions of the most vulnerable households in Abkhazia, Samegrelo, Upper-Svaneti and Western Georgia. The following ECHO projects are currently ongoing in Georgia/Abkhazia:

- ICRC – Humanitarian relief programme (1.5m Euros, 9 months, 06/04-03/05)
- Accion Contra el Hambre – Food for Work Programme (0.1m Euros, 10m, 09/04-06/05); Income generation programme (0.5 m Euros, 12m, 10/04-10/05)
- Premier Urgence – Local agricultural income generating projects (0.34m Euros, 10m, 10/04-07/05)

ABKHAZIA - PLANNED PROJECTS

9. EC Economic Rehabilitation Programmes for Georgia/Abkhazia II (3.96m Euros total, start 2005)

The EC will launch a second phase of its comprehensive rehabilitation programme for the Georgian-Abkhaz conflict zone (e.g. the districts of Gali, Ochamchira, and Tkvarcheli in the east of Abkhazia, as well as the Zugdidi district on the Georgian side of the cease fire line) in order to improve living conditions of both ethnic Georgian and Abkhaz communities. This second phase rehabilitation programme will be implemented in parallel with the first phase. UNOMIG, UNDP and NGOs will be the implementation partners of these programmes. This rehabilitation programme is divided into two separate phases and aims to provide for a linkage between the need for relief and development aid.

Second EC Rehabilitation Programme (1.98 mln Euros, 36 months, start mid-2006)

The second phase programme will complement the first phase with the following components:

- Local economic development (non-agriculture) (Gali, Ochamchira, Tkvarcheli, Zugdidi)
- Educational support (Gali and Zugdidi).
- Rehabilitation actions of the Kodori valley (e.g. Kodori River - Gali)
- Capacity/confidence building of NGOs and (de-facto) local authorities (Abkhazia/Zugdidi district)
- Civilian police activities (Zugdidi), and
- Information Sharing Centre (Sukhumi)

10. EIDHR micro projects – call for Abkhazia (0.2m Euros, tentative launch 2006)

Within the Programme European Initiative for Democracy and Human rights (EIDHR) the EC is considering to continue support to initiatives of local NGOs in Abkhazia in the area of democracy and human rights. A second call for EIDHR projects for Abkhazia for 2006 (following the first call for proposals in mid-2004) is currently under review.

The European Commission is currently the major donor in Abkhazia. Since 1997 the EC has allocated about 25 million Euros of assistance to Abkhazia.

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SOUTH-OSSETIA – COMPLETED AND ONGOING PROJECTS

1. Economic Rehabilitation Programme in the zone of the Georgian-Ossetian Conflict, Phase (7.5m Euros, ongoing since 1998 to date)

Since 1998 the EC has been funding economic rehabilitation programmes in South Ossetia with the first objective to support the efforts of the Georgian Government to settle the Georgian-Ossetian conflict. The EC rehabilitation programmes in South Ossetia, with a total EC allocation to date of 7,5 million Euros, promote the improvement of the living conditions of the local and returning population and re-start of economic activity in the region as an essential instrument in creating the necessary preconditions for settlement of the peace process.

1a -First Phase EC Rehabilitation programme (3.5 Euros, implemented 1998-2001)

The first phase of the EC Rehabilitation programme included the following projects:

- Rehabilitation of drinkable water supply network (Edisi pipe, Dsomach pipe, Tskhinvali chlorination station);
- Rehabilitation of schools in Java, Kheiti and Tamarasheni;
- Rehabilitation of the Kekhvi Dam (irrigation);
- Rehabilitation of the electricity network in Tskhinvali region;
- Rehabilitation of establishment of three cooperatives for agriculture.

1b -Second Phase EC Rehabilitation programme (1.5 Euros, implemented 2001-2002)

The first phase of the EC Rehabilitation programme included projects on the rehabilitation of transport and energy infrastructure:

- Rehabilitation of the railway link Gori – Tskhinvali;
- Rehabilitation of the railway station in Tskhinvali;
- Rehabilitation of the gas network within Tskhinvali;
- Rehabilitation of the electricity network in Tskhinvali region (Vardnili power station);

1c – Third Phase EC Rehabilitation Programme (2.5m Euros, 27 months, ongoing until March 2006)

The third the EC funded rehabilitation programme is managed by the OSCE and implemented by UNDP and UNHCR. This programme consists of three components:

- Rehabilitation of basic infrastructures in support to the resident communities (with involvement of UNDP in the implementation). These include the following projects:
 - Gas distribution network in Tskhinvali (70,000 Euros);
 - Water distribution network in Tskhinvali (80,000 Euros);
 - Supply and installation of electricity meters and transformers in Tskhinvali (80,000 Euros);
 - Local waste management project (EUR 87,000 Euros);
 - Water pump in Kemerti (35,000 Euro Euros);
 - Edisi-Tskhinvali water pipe (60,000 Euros);
 - Connection of Avnevi and Tamarasheni-Kekhvi to gas distribution network (180,000 Euros);
 - Completion of the Edisi-2 hydropower plant (510,000 Euros);
 - Completion of previous EC funded school renovation projects (62.900 Euros);
- Rehabilitation of basic infrastructures to complement the shelter assistance foreseen in the first part (with involvement of both UNDP and UNHCR in the implementation)
- Basic shelter assistance and repatriation kits to returnees and internally displaced persons (with involvement of UNHCR in the implementation)

2. Support to the Joint Control Commission for South Ossetia (150,000 Euros, ongoing)

The EC is assisting the Georgian and South Ossetian sides within the framework of the Joint Control Commission (JCC) with an EU grant to OSCE. The JCC is a quadripartite body, including the Georgian and Ossetian sides (the parties in the conflict), Russia and North-Ossetia, that addresses issues related to Georgian-Ossetian conflict.

3. RRM Confidence building South Ossetia (155,000 Euros, 6 months, Feb-Jul 2005)

Under the Rapid Reaction Mechanism (RRM) a third confidence building activity has been implemented concerning South Ossetia. This project with the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) has promoted confidence building between Georgia and South Ossetia through a dialogue to develop a basis for transforming the recent crisis into a political dialogue leading eventually to political agreement between the two sides.

4. Further Support to the JCC (133,000 Euros, July2005-ongoing)

Further funding to support the activities of the Joint Control Commission for South Ossetia was provided in July 2005.

5. Support to the South Ossetia Needs Assessment Study (50,000 Euros, Nov 2005-March2006)

The EC is supporting the OSCE-led needs assessment study for South Ossetia with contribution of 50,000 Euros. This joint-donor needs assessment study has started in October 2005. It aims to provide the JCC and the donor community with an appraisal of infrastructural and economic development needs for potential further project assistance in the Georgian/Ossetian conflict zone.

SOUTH-OSSETIA – PLANNED PROJECTS

6. Further rehabilitation/confidence building actions

Additional funding will be available for further rehabilitation/confidence building actions in South Ossetia depending on further assessment.

The European Commission is currently the major donor in South Ossetia. The EC assistance programmes to South Ossetia amount almost 8 million Euros.

Project status: March 2006

For a monthly update on the EC project assistance to Abkhazia and South Ossetia please consult the website of the European Commission Delegation to Georgia and Armenia: www.delgeo.cec.eu.int

For further information please feel free to contact: Maria van Ruiten, Project Manager for Post-Conflict Rehabilitation (Abkhazia & South Ossetia), at the European Commission Delegation to Georgia and Armenia in Tbilisi, telephone: (+995-32) 94-37-63, email: maria.van-ruiten@cec.eu.int

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