

EC Rehabilitation Programme for Abkhazia / Georgia
PROGRAMME I

Interim Narrative Report Second Quarter 2006

1. Name of Lead Partner of grant agreement and of legal representative:
United Nations Development Programme (UNDP,) Georgia
2. Name and title of the person responsible for the project:
Mitchell L. Carlson, Chief Technical Advisor (CTA)
United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Georgia
3. Name of partners in the project: **UNDP is working closely with UNOMIG on the infrastructure components of Phase I. UNDP has identified SAVE THE CHILDREN (SAVE) as a partner for the Health Training Component. ATINATI NGO in Zugdidi and OCHAMCHIRA YOUTH HOUSE NGO in Abkhazia are two local partners working on the agricultural youth clubs as part of the agriculture component.**
4. Title of the project:
The European Commission Rehabilitation Programme for Abkhazia Phase I
5. Contract number of the project: **TACIS/2005/111-166**
6. Start date of the reporting period: **April 1, 2006**
7. End date of the reporting period: **30 June, 2006**
8. Target country(ies) or region(s): **Abkhazia, Georgia**
9. Target groups: **vulnerable population of districts of Ochamchira, Tkvarcheli and Gali in Abkhazia, and Zugdidi.**

A. Compliance with the Grant Agreement:

1. Has the project been carried out as foreseen in the methodology? If not, please explain how and why the original proposal was modified, including the dates that any addenda were requested and received.

The project has been carried out using the methodology outlined in the original proposal and the workplan.

2. Was the provisional budget of the project respected? If not, please explain any changes that occurred.

Some initial savings were made through the use of United Nations Volunteer (UNV) contracts for some of the international positions. This will ensure that technical staff will be available for the duration of the project.

B. Project Objectives:

Please list all project objectives, and indicate if they were modified. The overall goal of the Project is to improve livelihoods and the environment for peace in Abkhazia/Georgia through integrated rehabilitation and recovery activities. Specific objectives of this project are:

- (1) To improve infrastructure through the rehabilitation of the water systems, the capacity building of water system and electrical system staff.
- (2) To enhance the delivery of and the access to social services through the provision of equipment to hospitals and the training and capacity building of hospital and district healthcare staff.
- (3) To reduce the vulnerability of the rural population through the delivery of agricultural inputs, improved technical skills in agriculture and support to farmer groups.

The Goal and objectives have not been modified.

C. Project Activities

Please list all the activities in line with Annex I of the Contract since the beginning of the project, e.g. Activity 1 Provision of Hospital Support and Capacity Building (Non-infrastructure) would be implemented by the International NGO SAVE THE CHILDREN in cooperation with UNDP. Save the Children was selected after an evaluation of proposals submitted by international NGOs.

Title of the activities:

- a) Provision of essential equipment and training of staff in its use
- b) Training and capacity building:
 1. Hospital administration;
 2. Service Delivery;
 3. Sanitation and waste management;
 4. Infrastructure maintenance and sustainability.
- c) Development and support of a working referral system
- d) Information campaign and advocacy work

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Please elaborate on the activities covered:

UNDP together with UNICEF and WHO representatives reviewed and evaluated the submitted proposals and selected in April SAVE the CHILDREN as implementing partner (IP).

Your assessment of the results of this activity:

Activity is ongoing. SAVE plans to submit a draft of their proposal in July. Training is expected to start in September-October.

Activity 1.2 Improvement of Water and Sanitation

Title of the activity i) Rehabilitation of the drinking water systems in Gali, Ochamchira and Tkvarcheli:

Please elaborate on the activities covered:

The Water Engineering Unit formed in March undertook a technical assessment of the water supply systems (pipelines, existing wells, reservoirs and water intakes) of Gali town, which includes villages of Rechhi, Tzhira, and First Gali. The tender documents for the rehabilitation work in Gali were prepared and published in newspapers and announced on TV. Training for potential bidders in preparing of tender documents was carried out and a site visit was arranged.

UNDP signed an agreement (MOU) with the Gali District Administration which sets up the basic structure for the Upravlenie Vodokanalizatsii (UVK or Water Department) of Gali town, identified the location of the UVK and revised the organizational system in general. The MOU confirms that the system operator (UVK) and local working group will participate in the project and outlines their duties and responsibilities for the rehabilitation works in Gali town.

To enhance the capacity of local operators and strengthen civic awareness on water/sanitation issues in the target areas, the Engineering Unit conducted a number of meetings with the population to explain the project's main goals and the necessity of appropriate maintenance of the system. In addition, members of the working group, including UVK staff, were trained in technical estimation of water supply systems and design.

A technical assessment of the Ochamchira town water supply system (water intakes, pipelines, reservoirs and existing wells) as well as prices for materials was done during this reporting period. The tender documents for the rehabilitation work in Ochamchira were prepared for two sub-projects and published in the local newspapers and announced on TV. Similar MOU as mentioned above was signed with the Local Administration and the Community. This followed the same process of meetings with Ochamchira inhabitants of informing and explaining the project's main goals and the necessity of appropriate maintenance of the system.

The Engineering Unit together with the Manager of Ochamchira Sanitation Epidemiological Station (SES) Laboratory selected the location for the

Bacteriological Laboratory. Rehabilitation needs and required technical equipment were identified, as well as how to organize the water-quality testing and maintenance of the laboratory. The UNDP Engineering Unit continued to work closely with the Regional Sanitation Epidemiological Station (SES) which is responsible for the overall water quality control and maintenance of water-borne disease records in all 3 districts. With assistance of the Bacteriological Service of Sukhumi a list of agents and tools to conduct water-quality control tests were defined and a Bill of Quantity prepared for the repair or replacement of laboratory equipment. Small repairs to the Laboratory were undertaken and paid for by the Ochamchira District Administration and Sukhumi town SES. The Ochamchira District Administration also assumed responsibility to recruit one staff member for the laboratory and to pay the salary at their own expense. The Sukhumi town SES will train new staff for the laboratory to test water samples to ensure the delivery of safe drinking water to the population.

An MOU between the Chief District Health officials in Ochamchira Administration and SES was formulated to maintain an update a database on the frequency of water-borne diseases in the three districts. This pilot project will systematize the water-borne disease reporting system and strengthen coordination between the Chief District Health officials and the Regional SES, which has ultimate responsibility for prevention of infectious diseases in the districts. This is an important step to improve the general health situation in the target districts.

Reason for modification for the planned activity (if applicable): **N/A.**

Your assessment of the results of this activity: **Activity is ongoing**

Title of the activity ii) Capacity building and training:

Please elaborate on the activities covered: **Health training will start once the detailed programme and work plan are agreed to by SAVE the CHILDREN and UNDP. As noted above, training is expected to start in September-October.**

Reason for modification for the planned activity (if applicable): **N/A**

Your assessment of the results of this activity: **The proposal is expected in July. Several meetings were held between SAVE and UNDP; no major problems were encountered.**

Title of the activity iii) Primary health awareness campaign:

Please elaborate on the activities covered: **Together with Capacity Building and Governance Specialist, the Engineering Unit announced a competition among schoolchildren and youth for creation of the best fliers, slogans and posters as part of a primary health awareness campaign related to water and sanitation issues in Gali and Ochamchira. The results of the contest and the distribution of the winning posters will take place in the third quarter.**

Reason for modification for the planned activity (if applicable): **N/A**

Your assessment of the results of this activity: **N/A**

Activity 2: Electricity Supply (Non-Infrastructure)

Title of the activity 2.1: **Provision of essential tools, supplies and equipment to the electricity company in Gali:**

Please elaborate on the activities covered: The Engineering Unit has conducted meetings with the Gali Electric Company to assess the staff needs for professional training. Contact has been made with the representative of PA Consulting who is responsible for the privatization of the electricity system in Georgia and has developed a training programme in Kutaisi. It remains to be seen whether the Gali electric workers will be allowed to participate and travel to the training centre.

Reason for modification for the planned activity (if applicable): N/A

Your assessment of the results of this activity: The activity is in the very early stages of development and dependent largely on when UNOMIG initiate its activities in this field.

Title of the activity 2.2: **The provision of training in management and technical issues:**

Please elaborate on the activities covered: This will not begin until at least second half of the project and will be done in close consultation with UNOMIG and the electricity authorities.

Reason for modification for the planned activity (if applicable): N/A

Your assessment of the results of this activity: The activity is in the very early stages of development.

Title of the activity 2.3: **Public information campaign and Lobbying:**

Please elaborate on the activities covered: This activity has not started as noted above and will begin in the second half of the project implementation.

Reason for modification for the planned activity (if applicable): N/A

Your assessment of the results of this activity: N/A

Activity 3: Assistance for Income Generating Activities – Local Agricultural Development

Title of the activity 3.1: **Provision of agricultural inputs**

Please elaborate on the activities covered: The identification of agricultural inputs and technical equipment and assistance was completed. Costs of inputs were calculated for each beneficiary group for the

required seeds and seedlings, fuel and lubricants for ploughing, chemical fertilizers and barbed wire and delivery started in May. The procurement of the inputs was undertaken locally through competitive bidding. A total of 4,029.45 kg of vegetable seeds (maize, beans, parsley, coriander, red beet, carrot, watermelon, pumpkin, turnip, squash) and 263,490 vegetable seedlings (white cabbage, cucumbers, hot pepper, sweet red pepper and aubergine) were delivered during the reporting period.

The distribution of seedlings was accompanied by training of project participants on methods of planting and care of the vegetables. It should be noted that during the distribution period the weather conditions were not favorable; the lack of rain and irrigation systems in targeted villages affected the yield.

The Agricultural team monitored the soil preparation (tillage) to ensure that all groups worked in accordance with accepted agricultural and technical standards. Three groups in Ochamchira agreed to pay for the tractor costs themselves as part of the contribution. UNDP agreed to reimburse the other groups for these expenses and payment should be completed in July.

Several documents to support implementation and monitoring of the projects were developed by the Agricultural Team:

- Partnership Agreements (PA) between UNDP and each local participating agricultural group (in both English and Russian), which serve as the basis for cooperation between the two parties.
- a Receipt-Voucher Form, signed by the parties to confirm the tillage expenses as well as fuel and lubricants of each Group.
- an Inputs Delivery Form signed by each group for every distribution, and
- a "Group Passport" consisting of 3 parts (General Information, Calculation, Delivery Schedule) which contains complete information about every activity of each group.

To identify the capacity of the groups and their training needs, meetings with project participants were held in Gali, Tkvarcheli and Ochamchira districts with a visiting FAO Expert. The FAO consultant also met with Minister of Agriculture, Head of Tkvarcheli District Administration, Management of Tamysh greenhouse farming to identify capacities and needs of local services and institutions. The FAO Expert conducted training on rural development for the UNDP Agro Unit and the Community Development Assistant; topics included: agricultural cooperative development, monitoring, post-harvest activity, marketing.

The selection of additional micro-projects in cattle-farming, bee-keeping, fish-farming and greenhouses will be completed in July.

Atinati, UNDP's Implementing Partner in Zugdidi, held an "Agrarian Youth Clubs" conference June 9 and 10, with representatives from the eight target villages of Samegrelo region (Rukhi, Kakhati, Narazeni, Odishi, Ingiri, Urta, Octomberi, and Chitatskari), 48 people attended the conference including the most active youth club members and leaders, teachers and school principles. The Agrarian Youth Clubs reviewed perspectives of agriculture development in Samegrelo region and participated in discussions on planting new crops (citrus, maize, soya bean) use

of peat for fertilizer, etc. Each Club presented the agricultural activity they proposed to implement with support from UNDP. After discussion with the experts the list of future projects was finalized for each school group. These were:

- Rukhi, Octomberi – bee-keeping
- Chitatskari, ingiri – Vegetable growing
- Kakhati, Odishi – Cattle-breeding
- Urta, Narazeni – pig-breeding

In May and June four trainings were conducted on personal development for 25 members of each club. During the trainings the participants worked on presentation skills, feedback and team building. At the same time, an agriculture expert held four meetings with each club during the reporting period. The importance of agriculture, its role in the economy, sectors of agriculture, cattle-breeding and other animal husbandry; crop-farming, greenhouse keeping; food production were some of the topics discussed during the meetings.

The first issue of the project newsletter "Nergebi" was issued in June covering information about the agrarian youth clubs and their future plans. The next issue is planned for September when the students are back in school.

Furthermore, UNDP selected the local NGO Ochamchira Youth House (OYH,) to organize nine agriculture youth clubs in three districts of Gali, Ochamchira and Tkvarcheli. The clubs will serve as an educational tool for youth in the villages and as a way to increase interest in agricultural activities. The project is similar to the one Atinati is implementing and aims to train youth in agriculture and small business practices and provide practical training in implementing an agriculture project identified by the youth in each school.

The process to establish District Development Committees (DDC) is ongoing. The UNDP Capacity Building and Gender Specialist (hired in April) continues to discuss this matter during her visits to the districts.

Reason for modification for the planned activity (if applicable):

The number of farmer groups, involved in vegetable and melon growing decreased (to 22 from 25) with three groups from Tkvarcheli dropping out for financial reasons. Correspondingly, the total area of farm land included under the project was reduced from 130 to 109.26 hectares, again because three groups from Tsarcha village in Tkvarcheli District declined to participate in the programme.

Your assessment of the results of this activity: The activity has been successfully implemented. Groups were formed and received agricultural inputs as planned.

Title of the activity 3.2: Provision of collective support to the groups

Please elaborate on the activities covered:

The identification of heavier equipment needs was completed and two tenders were announced on TV and published in newspapers for the end of June. Instructions for bidders were also prepared for the purchase of motor cultivators with additional equipment (carriage cart and coal oil,) and knapsack sprayers.

Reason for modification for the planned activity (if applicable): **N/A**

Your assessment of the results of this activity: **The activity is ongoing; delivery is expected in August.**

Title of the activity **3.3: Provision of access to extension services**

Please elaborate on the activities covered:

The assessment of the Extension Services needs has started. Information from the Central Veterinary Services, village administrators and stakeholders on the current situation and conditions on the access to extension services has been collected and UNDP is preparing a list of priorities in consultation with the stakeholders.

Reason for modification for the planned activity (if applicable): **N/A**

Your assessment of the results of this activity: **The activity is ongoing and is in the early stages of development.**

Title of the activity **3.4: Farmer exchanges**

Please elaborate on the activities covered: **The implementation of this activity is planned during towards the end of the project.**

Reason for modification for the planned activity (if applicable): **N/A**

Your assessment of the results of this activity: **N/A**

1. Please list all materials and publications (and no. of copies) produced during the project to date and include one copy of each item in the report.
None during the second quarter of the project.

Please state how your publications are being distributed and to whom. **N/A**

2. What problems have arisen and how have these been addressed?

The first bids received for the works under the Water and Sanitation component did not meet the standards. To overcome this, training in preparation of tender documents was carried out for all potential bidders. The Bid opening procedure was arranged at the District Administrations to familiarize people with the procedures and ensure transparency in the selection process.

3. Please outline any activities and publications foreseen in the agreement that have not taken place and any other changes to the foreseen activities or timetable, explaining the reasons for these. **As per above, there are no major activities or publications or other changes foreseen at the time of this writing.**

4. Please give a plan of activities for the financial period between this interim report and the next report on the basis of an updated action plan (Annex C). **There are no significant changes in the initial work plan. This will be reviewed after the third quarter and any revisions or changes made at this time.**

D. Results, Impact, Multiplier effect, and Evaluation

1. What results have been achieved during the reporting period (based on the results anticipated in your project application)? Please quantify these results, where possible.

Four tenders for the rehabilitation of the water supply systems were processed and implementing partners/contractors identified.

22 participating groups for income generation through agriculture (vegetable and melon growing) in 11 villages were formed and the corresponding agricultural inputs procured and distributed.

The international NGO for the health training component selected.

2. What is your assessment of the results of the project so far? Include observations on the extent to which foreseen goals are being met and whether the project has had any unforeseen positive or negative results (see Indicators in Log frame).

Within the Water and Sanitation component of the Programme the population of the districts as well as local authorities are actively involved in the entire project cycle.

In general, the income generation activities within the agriculture component is proceeding as planned. Project implementation process is successful.

3. What has been the impact on both the beneficiaries &/or target group (if different) and the situation in the target country population or target region which the project addressed?

District authorities in Gali and Oчамchira as well as the population as a whole are keen to see the results of the rehabilitation of the water supply systems, and therefore participate in the water initiative groups. In Oчамchira district authorities repaired the Sanitary Epidemiological Station Laboratory premises at their own expense and took the responsibility to recruit a staff member and pay the salary.

Agricultural groups in the four target districts are benefiting from the training and supply of agricultural inputs which will lead to an increase in income for the participants. A number of new farmers in the same villages as well as neighboring villages requested to participate in the UNDP agriculture programme and have initiated on their own, the formation of groups.

4. How and by whom have activities been monitored/evaluated? Please summarise the results of the feedback received, including from the beneficiaries.

The UNDP staff regularly visit the project sites in the field, meet with local stakeholders to ensure that the project activities are progressing. A monitoring system has been worked out and after completion of the water projects feedback will be received through a questionnaire to be filled in by the population.

Agriculture activities are monitored by the UNDP Agriculture team on a regular basis. The results of field visits are recorded in monitoring reports.

5. What impact is the project having on your organisation and on your partners?

The UNDP programme in Abkhazia has benefited from the support and funding provided by the EC. It has allowed the programme to expand and address some of the needs of the target populations in the 4 districts.

6. How is your organisation ensuring that the results obtained/the lessons learned from the project, are being made public?

The progress of the project is reviewed regularly through the working group meetings composed of representatives from the EC, UNOMIG and UNDP. At the monthly UNOMIG Information Sharing meetings in both Sukhumi and Gali, UNDP Staff provide updated information on the project implementation. Within the UNDP Information Centre established in Sukhumi, the progress on the Programme implementation is available for local NGOs and stakeholders. An update on the Abkhazia programme is also provided to the Info sharing meeting in Tbilisi.

7. Please outline any links you have developed with other programme/other donor projects.

UNDP received funds from the Government of Norway to implement projects in Abkhazia. These projects activities are being implemented in close collaboration with and complement those funded by the EC. Other donors have expressed an interest in supporting UNDP in Abkhazia; project proposals for new activities have been prepared and sent to interested donors.

8. The success of the project depended on various assumptions (see log frame). Have these influenced the results so far?

All potential risks have been taken into consideration in the implementation of the project. The risks coming from the lack of capacity of the potential contractors were overcome with organizing a training in tendering process. The security

situation, particularly in lower Gali is of concern, however still had not negatively impacted the project implementation. Weather conditions have affected the agriculture component, however adequate project adjustments were made.

E. Partners and other Co-operation:

1. How do you assess the relationship between the formal partners of this project (i.e. those partners which have signed a partnership statement)? Give details about the division of responsibilities, transfer of expertise, and overall co-ordination of the partnership(s).

UNDP signed agreements with two local NGOs for part of the agriculture component and will sign an agreement with an international NGO for the Health training component. UNDP continues to work in close collaboration with UNOMIG who is responsible for the infrastructure component of the EC programme. Coordination has not been an issue as there are regular working group meetings held either in Sukhumi or Tbilisi.

2. How would you assess the relationship between your organisation and state authorities in the project countries?

UNDP meets regularly with local authorities in Abkhazia to update them on the progress of the project.

3. How has this relationship affected the project?

The local authorities are aware of and respect the activities undertaken by UNDP. They participate in the project process and have agreed to take on specific responsibilities themselves. An example of this is the Ochamchira District Administrations agreement to undertake at its own expenses the repair of the Sanitary Epidemiological Station Laboratory premises and find funds to recruit staff.

4. Where applicable, describe your relationship with any other organisations involved in implementing the project, e.g. associated partners or sub-contractors.

UNDP continues to liaise closely with UNOMIG and other UN agencies during the implementation of the project. UNDP, UNICEF, WFP and UNIFEM moved their offices into the same corridor to facilitate information sharing and coordination. UNDP has established an Information Centre in Sukhumi and meets regularly there with both international and local NGOs and local authorities.

5. How do you evaluate co-operation with the European Commission services?

As noted above, the EC regularly visits Abkhazia and meets with both UNOMIG and UNDP as part of the working group. Cooperation has been excellent.

F. Other

1. How is the visibility of the EU contribution being ensured in the project?
Information on the source of funds for the project will be provided to the local newspaper and television stations. Signs will be put up for the water projects. The EC logo will be included on all publications.

2. Has the grant so far helped secure new sources of funding for the project? Please give details.
As noted above, UNDP received funds from the Government of Norway for its Abkhazia programme. These were secured at about the same time as the EC funding. New project proposals have been developed to be considered for additional funding.

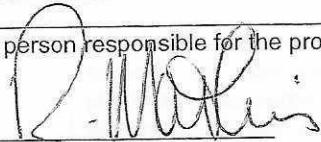
3. Please add any further information that would help the Commission to make a balanced assessment of the project to date.

4. Do you have any objection to this report being published? If so, please state your objections here.

UNDP has no objection to the report being published, but would appreciate discussing the content before distribution with the EC.

Name of the person responsible for the project:

Signature:



Location:

Tbilisi, Georgia

Robert Watkins
UNDP Resident Representative
UN Resident Coordinator

Date for report: Second Quarter 2006

Date submitted: 31 August 2006