NATIONAL SECURITY AND THE SOCIAL SECTOR IN GEORGIA

December 2009

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Executive Summary

The events of August 2008 in Georgia underscore the significance of understanding the full spectrum of security concerns in the country – from "national" to "personal" – and links to the social sector. The interplay of economic stress, politics and governance in transition, tangible threats to sovereignty and human security, and large-scale international commitments to the country's development and stability, place a premium on understanding how these links are perceived by citizens and expert observers. Even in the midst of ongoing threats to the sovereignty and physical security of the country, research in Georgia illustrates the primacy of economic and social issues in security perceptions at the level of individuals and communities.

Moreover, linkages between security and the social sector operate in both directions, with social sector shortcomings affecting security, and *vice versa*. For Georgia, this suggests that the prospects for national security in the narrower sense – the ability to defend the country's borders and cooperate effectively with security partners – will be heavily influenced by domestic factors of the kind discussed in this analysis, including social cohesion, the preservation of an adequate human resource base, and longer-term investments in education, health and the environment. Given the pervasiveness of these challenges, these findings and their policy implications should have wider relevance for societies in transition and U.S. programs elsewhere.

Approach and In-Country Research

The design of this study draws on analytic literature from the national security and development fields, and a scoping seminar held in Washington in January 2009. The approach encompasses the idea of "security" as a service provided by state and non-state institutions, as well as the increasingly comprehensive and diverse definitions of security current in the strategic studies debate. The study attempts to identify a hierarchy of concerns ("what people worry about") at the nexus of national security and the social sector. Above all, the methodology reflects a grass-roots approach to understanding perceptions about security and the social sector at the level of Georgian society, and close observers of the Georgian scene. The primary research for this study was undertaken via a series of eleven focus group discussions conducted in Tbilisi, Zugdidi and Akhaltsikhe in May 2009. The respondents were selected to reflect the salient demographic and ethnic characteristics of the locale, gender balance, and age cohorts. These focus group discussions were augmented by a series of interviews with officials, experts and local observers in Tbilisi and elsewhere.

Key Findings

The current environment in Georgian is shaped by two compelling realities: the recent experience of war with Russia and the ongoing risk of conflict; and the deteriorating economic situation, driven by global conditions and exacerbated by the events of August 2008 and their aftermath. There is a powerful sense of unrealized expectations and relative deprivation within Georgian society. After years of high growth, optimism, and steadily improving political stability and governance, the society has experienced a succession of blows to its prosperity, stability and security at all levels. Georgia is not a quite a "fragile" state when viewed in terms of the state's ability to provide services or guarantee security, but there is now a pervasive sense of insecurity affecting most levels of society. In most cases, this insecurity is closely tied to concerns about economic opportunity and the rule of law – both affecting access to social services. The legacy of the Soviet years, including the communist model of service provision, is not far from the surface and still influences the outlook and expectations of the older generations; all of which underscores the transitional nature of the society.

- ***Georgians are keenly aware of the issues explored in this study, and are inclined to seek remedies outside government institutions***. Discussion participants displayed a sophisticated awareness of the actual and potential linkages between security and the social sector, and readily reflect on the implications for the country and their situation as individuals. Much of this debate turns on declining confidence in the ability of the state to provide predictable access to services, or to assure their security in the broadest sense. Where possible, Georgians are increasingly inclined to organize their social and personal security without reference to the state.

- ***Insecurity has bred short-term thinking and inhibits future planning and investments at all levels of society***. The prevailing environment in Georgia is characterized by pervasive insecurity, although there are notable regional and generational differences in exposure and perspective. One important consequence of this sense of insecurity has been the compression of time horizons, affecting expectations for the future and perceived remedies. Short-term thinking predominates, with implications for social sector priorities and development.

- ***Economic security concerns are paramount***. Economic insecurity, above all the fear of unemployment and its consequences, is a leading, perhaps *the* leading driver of perceptions about security and social cohesion. Accusations of nepotism and social exclusion are pervasive in the debate over jobs and access to social services.

- ***Personal security is a growing concern***. Focus group participants and expert observers identify criminality as a looming threat to Georgian society and the future stability of the country. This is especially pronounced in Tbilisi and the border regions, and closely tied to youth unemployment, drug use and smuggling. There is also a more diffuse concern about generational drift and loss of identity as elements in urban crime. Anxiety about the safety of children at or en route to school and other activities is one prominent example of the concern about personal security.

- ***Concerns about the rule of law and human rights are at the top of the "community security" agenda***. Interlocutors acknowledge that by some measures the police have become more effective, but there is little trust in the competence and impartiality of the security forces and the judiciary. This concern interacts with the growing sensitivity to personal security to produce a heightened sense of insecurity in society.

- ***Health and access to healthcare are prominent issues for Georgians, and high on the hierarchy of personal concerns***. Here, too, the cost of healthcare looms larger in the context of a deteriorating economic climate, and the declining ability of average citizens to pay for more expensive procedures. This view is accompanied by skepticism about privatization efforts in the health sector. Health issues are also closely linked to environmental risks in the view of many interlocutors. For the regions, difficult access to advanced health services in Tbilisi is the main concern. Those in Tbilisi worry about inept governance in the health sector.

- ***The uneven ("asymmetrical") development of the country is seen as undermining Georgian prosperity and security***. Infrastructure is part of this equation. The urban-rural divide is another. With the exception of some specific parts of society (e.g., young couples), housing does not appear to be a priority concern within the security-social sector equation in Georgia. Not surprisingly, questions of physical security loom large in border regions.

- ***Social challenges are undermining "national security" in the narrower sense***. In the view of expert respondents, Georgian security and sovereignty are negatively affected by unfavorable demographic trends, emigration, internal displacement, and declining social cohesion and "morale." The short and long term risks associated with these problems are fueled by shortcomings in the economy and the social sector. These challenges, many associated with the country's human capital base, could become acute and undermine Georgia's ability to staff its armed forces and operate effectively with international security partners. The education system is widely seen as rigid and detached from modern economic and social needs.

- ***External actors are an integral part of the equation***. Georgians are inclined to see their national security as hostage to the actions and preferences of external actors. With regard to the social sector *per se*, Georgians view foreign governments and NGOs as leading providers of services and welfare. Between the role of international donors and advisors, on the one hand, and the growing inclination toward private arrangements for access to services of all kinds, on the other, the space for the Georgian state as a services provider in the traditional sense, is declining – at least in the perception of citizens.

Broader Implications for U.S. Policy, Programs, and Strategy

These findings suggest a close connection between national security perceptions and conditions in the social sector. Beyond the specific findings relevant to the Georgian case, the analysis also suggests a number of wider observations about the nexus of national security, stability and social conditions in Georgia, which can inform U.S. thinking and USAID programming in Eurasia and elsewhere. Some of these conclusions are in line with established thinking about security in transitioning states. Others are "non-canonical" and point to the need for critical thinking about what is stabilizing, what is destabilizing, and the importance of public perception as a variable in this equation.

- ***History and culture matter.*** Social transitions and security perceptions are strongly conditioned by established historical narratives, political and strategic culture, and other "qualitative" factors. These elements can easily be overlooked, not least because they are difficult to measure. Our research in Georgia suggests that historical and cultural issues can drive expectations and strongly condition views of the state as a security provider. A "retreat to history" can also be an indicator of problems on the horizon (see indicators for security risks on the next page).

- ***Ethnic tolerance and inter-communal relations are at the core of the social sector/national security equation.*** Ethnically mixed regions (e.g., Akhaltsikhe in the Georgian case) are particularly exposed, and can serve as bell weathers for overall perceptions about security, from access to employment and social goods, to treatment by the police and security services. At the same time, shortcomings in the rule of law and behavior of security personnel can spill over to affect inter-communal relations even in traditionally tolerant settings. In the Georgian case – and arguably elsewhere – external threats to national sovereignty and security can leave ethnic minorities exposed to economic and political exclusion, or worse.

- ***Security sector reform should be a priority for U.S. and international engagement in Georgia***. At the level of the police and the security services, issues of competence and impartiality will increasingly be seen as key measures of progress on governance and transition, closely linked to perceptions of personal and community security. Georgia will also benefit from a greater capacity for warning, planning and crisis management. This can contribute to improved

public confidence and can enhance Georgia's ability to cooperate with security partners, including the U.S., NATO and the EU.

- ***Insecurity is isolating, and especially damaging to societies critically dependent on external ties***. Georgia is critically dependent on cross-border links and connections to the wider world for trade, investment, education and exchanges of all kinds. Conditions of social crisis and perceived instability can have a profoundly isolating effect. They can also "feed back" into the security equation in significant ways. In the Georgian case, one clear manifestation of this has been the growing diffidence of key international partners and the more distant prospect of NATO membership – precisely when these are needed for strategic reassurance. Constraints on national and personal-level interactions with the outside world appear to have a pronounced effect on security perceptions. These dynamics will be worth exploring in other cases.

- ***Employment is a security issue in Georgia and a key measure of state legitimacy***. Therefore, focus on employment, economic security, and mitigation of the social costs of unemployment is of vital importance. Job creation, and the related challenges of education and training for employment, will remain key measures of progress for most Georgians, closely tied to the outlook for stability and security. Longer-term questions of economic reform, and even prosperity broadly defined, do not appear to drive society's perceptions in the same manner. Employment, and particularly employment that conforms to professional and other expectations, are the *sine qua non* for improved perceptions of security at the level of individuals and communities. This reality may be driven by the current economic crisis, or may be indicative of an underlying trend. In either case, the Georgian example offers a pointer relevant to other settings where USAID is engaged. Reversing the outflow of trained individuals will be essential to the longer-term outlook for development and national security in Georgia. Support for small businesses and the rehabilitation of idle manufacturing facilities can pay dividends, as can effective public-private partnerships in training for employment and other areas.

- ***Promote the establishment of effective institutions for forward-looking public policy debate and analysis.*** Ideally these would be independent but officially "vested" to perform an advisory role for the Georgian government. They could be tasked with national-level studies, planning and training of analysts. These organizations could address foreign, security and domestic public policy issues in a multi-disciplinary way– with special attention to the national security/social sector equation. The American Federally Funded Research and Development Center (FFRDC) model offers one useful model, among others. These institutions could offer a pole of attraction for professionals who would otherwise turn to employment abroad, and could contribute to the overall development of Georgian civil society.

- ***Reinforce programs for urban youth.*** The economic crisis and unstable conditions in the wake of the August 2008 crisis are fueling a particularly acute problem among young people, especially in Tbilisi. Civil society organizations and training centers oriented toward younger Georgians should be strengthened, alongside efforts to address the mounting problems of drug addiction and urban crime.

- ***Support improvements in the urban environment***. Small, visible features can weigh heavily in security perceptions, broadly defined. Quality of life, especially in the urban environment, can drive perceptions of security and political legitimacy. Attitudes toward the government as a provider of social services and security can be shaped by apparently marginal or symbolic features, from the condition of buildings and public spaces, to the collection of refuse. These

and other questions may prove surprisingly significant in other national settings (conditioned, as always, by historical expectations). Provincial areas and areas such as forestry and water management also deserve attention, but Georgian perceptions will be most heavily affected by new investments in municipal sanitation and the rehabilitation and maintenance of the urban environment. Making Georgia's cities more attractive and livable can contribute substantially to confidence in the social, economic and security future of the country.

Our research also suggests a number of indicators, warning signs that can point to deterioration in the security environment, with implications for stability, including:

- ***A contraction of time horizons*** – an apparent characteristic of individuals and societies under stress;
- ***Reversion to traditional spheres of allegiance and trust*** – the "retreat to history" – accompanied by shrinking circles of trust in political and commercial life, with implications for transparency at multiple levels;
- ***The rise of mistrust and anxiety along ethnic or regional lines*** – especially where these have not been prevalent in the past;
- ***A deteriorating sense of personal safety*** – and the perception of being "unprotected";
- ***Fear of de-professionalization*** – a more specific aspect of the employment challenge, and a driver of migration and internal instability among politically active elites;
- ***Sudden demographic shifts*** – including declines in birth rates and life expectancy, an increase in migration, and the rapid emergence of a national diaspora in societies unused to this phenomenon. The role of the new and substantial Georgian diaspora in the future stability of the country is uncertain. But the question will surely arise in other transitioning states, in other regional settings. Can these diasporas contribute to USAID's development and security objectives?

Finally, our research suggests a number of gaps in our knowledge and open questions for future study. Some of these concern demographic trends, human capital, and the sensitivity of developments in these areas to national security factors – and vice versa. The role of the Georgian diaspora and its ability to serve as an element in the social development of the country is another promising area for analysis, along with a clearer assessment of the role of "identity" in Georgian modernization. It will also be worth exploring how the Georgian case can inform the analysis of similar challenges elsewhere, and comparative lessons learned from cases where social, economic and external security problems interact in transitioning states.

Re-establishment of Georgian confidence in effective governance and defense, and the reassurance of closer ties to the West, can help provide the necessary conditions for longer-term national planning and investment in the social sector. In the absence of this, Georgian society could become increasingly inward-looking and parochial, with negative consequences for security at all levels. In this sense, the success of U.S. and international efforts to improve economic conditions and governance in Georgia will be closely tied to the success of efforts to bolster Georgia's sense of strategic reassurance, as well as deterrence of external risks. Overall, this analysis suggests that a strengthened social sector can make a leading contribution to Georgian national security, broadly defined. Progress in this area will be a key measure of successful transition from the perspective of Georgian citizens in the years ahead.

Introduction

The experience of transition in post-Communist states has spawned extensive research and analysis on the links between social investment and the prospects for economic growth. In the area of economic development, in particular, connections can be established, and many of these are amenable to quantitative measurement.[1] Governance and political development are more difficult and subjective areas. But here, too, inferences can be drawn and perceptions measured through focused discussion, opinion surveys and other means. The challenges of counter-terrorism after September 11th, and the stabilization efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan, have contributed to interest across the policy community in links between development in the social sector and national security.

This interest is part of a growing dialogue between traditionally separate development and security debates. Experience in the Balkans from the mid-1990s onward, and more recently in the Caucasus, underscore the need for a better understanding of how health, education, welfare and other parts of the social infrastructure can influence security, and *vice versa*. This analysis explores key aspects of the national security and social investment question in the case of Georgia, with an emphasis on public perception and the assessments of local officials, observers and opinion shapers. In Georgia, the challenges of internal transition have been augmented by a series of stark threats to stability and security raised by the Russian invasion of August 2008. The in-country research for this study was conducted in April-June 2009, and featured a series of regionally distributed focus group discussions and expert interviews.

It is worth underscoring that the Georgian case and others like it are "transitional" not only in terms of market transformation and the unconsolidated nature of democratic governance, but also in security terms. Relationships between the individual and communities, communities and the state, states and their neighbors, and the national position vis-à-vis partners and allies are all in flux. This flux can, in turn, affect security perceptions, and reality. In the Georgian case, the perception of pervasive insecurity has clearly driven society – and policymakers – toward short time horizons, accompanied by decreasing confidence in the capacity of the state to provide for the security of its citizens.

Insecurity at the level of individuals and communities erodes social cohesion, spurs emigration, constrains economic growth in an already troubled climate, and further complicates the outlook for political stability and national defense. Unemployment, officially running at 17 percent in July 2009 – but certainly far higher by realistic measures -- and weak rule of law, are the overwhelming drivers of social unease and insecurity in today's Georgia. Following on from a period of high growth and improving (if uneven) governance, the current troubles have spurred a keen sense of relative deprivation and unfulfilled expectations. Perceived shortcomings in health, education, welfare and environmental security are part of the equation, as are growing concerns about crime and other threats to personal security.

Beyond helping to understand the current Georgian situation, this analysis aims at enhancing policymakers' understanding of what to anticipate, and above all, the implications for U.S. policies and programs. In short, what can analysis of Georgian perceptions tell us about the tangible and intangible links between the social sector and security? What are the highest leverage areas for U.S. and international assistance to this highly insecure society?

[1] See Michael Cain Kathryn Anderson and Christine Allison, *The Importance of Social Investments for Economic Growth and Governance in Transitioning States: Survey of Recent Evidence* (Washington: USAID, July 2006).

Structure of the report

Section Two of this report discusses key themes from the existing literature on the relationship between national security and the social sector in transitioning states, and describes a spectrum of relevant security concerns. This section also highlights the "two-way street" nature of the relationship between security and social investment, and the evolution of modern thinking about these dynamics. Section Three describes and assesses the findings from in-country research on a sector-by-sector basis. Section Four offers overall observations and conclusions, including implications for U.S. policy and programs in Georgia. The report from focus group discussions conducted in Tbilisi, Zugdidi and Akhaltsikhe is included as Appendix A. A list of additional interviews and contributors is found in Appendix B.

Analytic Background

The core research for this study consisted of a series of focus group discussions and interviews with specialist and non-specialist observers in Georgia. In framing the key questions for the in-country research, as well as an earlier expert roundtable held in Washington in January 2009, we surveyed the existing literature related to national security and the social sector. Broadly, analyses of this relationship have been undertaken from two distinct but ultimately complementary academic and policy perspectives. First, there is a long tradition of examining the relationship between the social sector and national security in the strategic studies literature – essentially writing on conflict and strategy. Much of this work is historical in nature, or flows from recent debates over the definition of security in the post-Cold War, post September 11th environment. Second, there is a growing, contemporary body of work exploring the question from a development and foreign assistance perspective, often focusing on "fragile" or "transitioning" states. This analysis is informed by both of these approaches, starting from the core question of national security and its underpinnings in the social sector. Naturally, the study also takes account of recent research and analysis on Georgia itself.

Defining Security

The strategic studies literature offers a range of useful definitions, from the narrowest (defense of national borders) to the most expansive (protection of citizens from the full range of foreign and domestic risks). Nation states have naturally made the defense of territory a cornerstone of security and strategy. At base, this continues to be about planning for the use of force and organizing societies for defense.[2] Modern thinking about the social sector foundations of national security began in earnest with the appearance of mass armies, in particular Napoleon's *levee en masse*, and the natural rise in importance of public education and welfare to support national economies and military establishments. The rise of greater specialization in armies, requiring new standards of education, also imposed a closer relationship between society and defense.

Since the industrial revolution, strategists have generally favored a more comprehensive approach to national security, embracing economic security, resource security, and by the end of the 19th century,

[2] The most comprehensive survey of the evolution of strategic thought, including definitions of security, remains Peter Paret, ed., *Makers of Modern Strategy: From Machiavelli to the Nuclear Age* (Princeton: Princeton University press, 1986).

more explicit considerations of social security as a component of national power and potential. Well before the First World War, states were already thinking in terms of social investment as a contribution to internal stability as well as mobilization for defense. The clearest example of this can be seen in the development of the social welfare infrastructure in Bismarck's Prussia and its role in the consolidation of the German states. In a very real sense, these innovations were undertaken as contributions to national security in "societies in transition" across Europe and on both sides of the Atlantic. Transition in this case refers to the rise of modern industrial societies, pressures for greater political participation and more liberal governance, urbanization, and the erosion of traditional social hierarchies. These changes strongly influenced thinking about the relationship between security and the social sector at the time. They also bear some resemblance to the flux experienced by the transitioning states of Europe and Eurasia in the post Cold War period, with societies and leaderships compelled to reassess definitions of security at all levels.

The interwar period, with its parallel economic and strategic challenges, offers further examples of transition in which the social sector was employed to bolster alternative visions of national security, often driven by extreme ideologies.[3] The anticipation of "total war," in which societies as a whole would be exposed to the physical and economic consequences of conflict, underscored the close connection between social investments, welfare, political stability and defense. Totalitarian regimes sought to promote the hardening of their societies against economic and military competitors. Faced with the challenges of economic depression, democratic societies also responded with greater social investments, often with the fear of social instability and political turmoil just below the surface. These, too, were described in terms of national security. The Cold War advanced this concept further, with an emphasis on social security and prosperity as facets of the competition between two security conscious systems with very different ideas about the role of the individual and the state.[4] These images are worth bearing in mind because they are part of the intellectual and political inheritance of transitioning states, including Georgia.

The last two decades, and especially the period since 2001, has been marked by a further enlargement of the definition of security, to include human security, environmental security and security of identity. Today, domestic and personal security concerns often outweigh external risks in the strategic calculus of individuals and governments.[5] An "inside-out" approach to security is now the norm in many, perhaps most regional settings, and is integral to the nation building debate even where conventional, cross-border challenges remain prominent.[6] The current environment in and around Georgia demonstrates this clearly, with questions of economic opportunity and social welfare very much part of the broader national security debate.[7] One prominent school of thought describes security explicitly in terms of sectors, with specific social purposes associated with each (coercion, protection, status, commerce, the

[3] See P.J. Katzenstein, ed., *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics* (New York: Columbia University press, 1996).
[4] See John Lewis Gaddis, *We Now Know: Rethinking Cold War History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997); and John Killick, *The United States and European Reconstruction: 1945-1960* (Edinburgh: Keele University Press, 1997).
[5] The steady rise of demographic, social and human security factors in successive assessments of global trends by the U.S. National Intelligence Council parallels the rise of internal issues in security perceptions, worldwide. See National Intelligence Council, *Global Trends 2025: A Transformed World* (Washington, NIC, 2008).
[6] See Francis Fukuyama, *Nation Building: Beyond Afghanistan and Iraq* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006). On lessons from multiple settings and sectors, see James Dobbins et al, *America's Role in Nation-Building: From Germany to Iraq* (Santa Monica: RAND, 2003).
[7] Successive conflicts in the Balkans and elsewhere spurred Western thinking about the economic component of security in unstable settings. See, for example, Johanna Mendelson Forman, "Achieving Socioeconomic Well-Being in Post-Conflict Settings," *Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 25, No. 4, Autumn 2002, pp. 125-138.

environment, identity, etc.).[8] The so-called "Copenhagen School" avoids functional and sectoral definitions altogether, and associates security with *securitization* – a special kind of politics with special prerogatives and special rules of the game. This somewhat abstract approach has some relevance on the ground in transitioning states, where citizens often confront extra-legal or extra-democratic actions justified on the grounds of national security emergency.

Understanding the Role of the Social Sector

An alternative analytic approach, much newer, but evolving from the specific conditions prevailing in transitional and fragile states, emphasizes the relationship between civil society and the state in providing a range of services, including security.[9] This is closely linked to public goods theory and thinking about alternative approaches to the delivery of services (state, market, community action, co-production, etc).[10] The services perspective emphasizes democratic consolidation and governance, alongside the role of non-state providers, and is now the prevailing approach among government and non-government agencies concerned with state building as an international development priority.[11] It has been buttressed by the progressive rise of the "inside-out" approach to national security in recent decades, and further reinforced by counter-terrorism and counter-insurgency imperatives after September 11th, 2001. Iraq and, above all, Afghanistan have spurred more pointed reflection on the relationship between security and assistance to the social sector in unstable settings.[12] More broadly, analyses of the security and development nexus build on a parallel tradition of concern about failed states and dysfunctional governance.[13]

The role of civil society, and non-defense institutions more generally, is central to this approach. In many instances, non-state actors are seen as more important producers of security than the state.[14] This argument has been developed extensively with regard to fragile states, but elements can also be observed in more stable, transitioning cases such as Georgia. To the extent that security is defined very broadly, this is even more likely to be the case. Regime type is also identified as a key factor in the security equation. Transitional societies, in particular those with weak democratic institutions, are often poorly placed to provide security for their citizens. Consolidated democracies and authoritarian

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[8] Barry Buzan, Ole Waever and Jaap de Wilde, *Security: A New Framework for Analysis* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1998). See also, Barry Buzan, *People, States and Fear: An Agenda for International Security Studies in the Post-Cold War Era* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1991).

[9] The willingness and ability to provide services, including those necessary to safeguard security and human rights, is a key parameter of "fragility." See OECD, *Concepts and Dilemmas of State Building in Fragile Situations: From Fragility to Resilience* (Paris: OECD, 2008); and OECD, *Service Delivery in Fragile Situations: Key Concepts, Findings and Lessons*, OECD/DAC Discussion Paper (Paris: OECD, 2008).

[10] These concepts are surveyed in Patrick Meagher, Stephen Commins and Cynthia Clement, *Service Delivery in Fragile States: Framing the Issues* (Washington: USAID/IRIS Center, University of Maryland, 2006).

[11] It has also been a part of the aid effectiveness concerns of international financial institutions and others. See Edward Bell, *The World Bank in Fragile State and Conflict-Affected Countries: How, Not How Much* (London: International Alert 2008); and Sakiko Fakuda-Parr and Robert Picciotto, "Conflict Prevention and Development Cooperation," Wilton Park policy workshop on "Conflict Prevention and Development Cooperation in Africa," November 2007.

[12] See, for example, Serge Michailof, "The Seven Capital Sins of the Donor Community in Afghanistan," GMF Policy Brief (Washington: German Marshall Fund of the United States, 2009); and Barnett Rubin, *Afghanistan's Uncertain Transition from Turmoil to Normalcy*, Council on Foreign Relations, 2006.

[13] Louise Andersen, Bjorn Moller and Finn Stepputat, eds., *Fragile States and Insecure People: Violence, Security and Statehood in the Twenty-First Century* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007).

[14] The role of civil society networks in mediating social disputes is emphasized in Jean-Marc Chataigner and Francois Gaulme, *Beyond the Fragile State: Taking Action to Assist Fragile Actors and Societies* (Paris: Agence Francaise de Developpement, 2005)

regimes, both in a position to bring strong institutions to bear on security challenges, tend to be more efficient providers of security. The tendency toward closer integration of the intellectual debates on security and development, and conversation among security and development policymakers, has been a key feature of the post 9/11 period.[15]

A more extensive analytic literature has focused on the role of social investments in economic growth and improved governance in transitioning states.[16] In general, studies in this area have touched obliquely on national security issues, treating security benefits as derivative of economic growth and greater public participation in politics. A similarly extensive literature is associated with the subject of security sector reform, including cases in Eastern Europe, the Balkans and around the Black Sea, where reforms of this kind have been integral to both EU and NATO enlargements. Georgia has been a particular focus for security sector analysis and reform efforts in recent years, from the modernization of the police to the development of a national capacity for security decision-making.[17] By and large, Georgia has received decent marks for progress in this arena, although the experience of the August 2008 crisis and conflict with Russia has rekindled this debate.

The Georgian Case

Developments in and around Georgia over the last decade have spurred a substantial literature relevant to this study. In particular, it is worth noting the extensive survey research undertaken by the International Republican Institute with the support of USAID.[18] Aspects of this polling touch on issues treated in this analysis, including public attitudes toward a range of internal and external concerns. The IRI results are broadly convergent with the findings from the focus group research conducted for this analysis. Both studies underscore the primacy of economic, and especially employment concerns in Georgian public perceptions.

In framing the questions for focus group discussion, we have referred to the opinion survey developed for use in the North Caucasus in Phase I of USAID's Social Sector and National Security Project. On more general questions of governance and reform in Georgia valuable assessments have also been undertaken by the Bertelsmann Stiftung, the NATO Defense College, and the Carnegie Corporation/Eurasia Partnership Foundation.[19] A recurrent theme in these and other studies has been the continued significance of internal and social security concerns, even against a backdrop of regional crisis and external threat. Georgian society continues to rate economic and social security high on the

[15] This theme has been taken up by institutions involved in transatlantic discussions on development policy. See, for example, Jonathan M. White, "No Development Without Security: The Transatlantic Donor Community Needs to Redesign Aid for Fragile States," *Brussels Forum Papers* (The German Marshall Fund of the United States) March 2009.

[16] For a summary of findings and a survey of the literature on this theme, see USAID, *The Importance of Social Investments for Economic Growth and Governing in Transitioning States* (Executive Summary), July 2006.

[17] By far the most substantial analysis along these lines is Philip H. Fluri and Eden Cole, From Revolution to Reform: Georgia's Struggle with Democratic Institution Building and Security Sector Reform (Vienna and Geneva: Austrian National Defense Academy and the Geneva Center for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces-DCAF, 2005).

[18] See International Republican Institute, Georgian *National Survey, February 21-March 3, 2009* (and earlier polls).

[19] See *Public Security in Georgia: Crime Victimization, Fear of Crime, Fraud, Corruption and Policing* (Tbilisi/Geneva: TC Team Consult, March 2006); *The Caucasus: Post August 2008*, results of a multi-year survey initiative of the Carnegie Corporation, the Eurasia Partnership and CRRC (2009); *Bertelsmann Transformation Index 2008: Political Management in International Comparison* (Gutersloh: Bertelsmann, 2008). Other useful sources include Pierre Razoux, "What Future for Georgia?" *NATO Defense College Research Paper*, No. 47, June 2009; *Internally Displaced Persons in Georgia: Issues of Concern* (Tbilisi: Transparency International Georgia, April 2009); and Maria Caparini and Otwin Marenin, "Crime, Insecurity and Police Reform in Post-Socialist CEE," *The Journal of Power Institutions in Post-Soviet Societies*, No. 2, 2005.

public policy agenda, and perceives a close connection between questions of governance, social cohesion and the ability to safeguard the country's sovereignty.

A Hierarchy of Concerns

In the case of societies in transition in Eurasia, an expansive definition of national security is most useful in assessing the links to social services and infrastructure. For example, it may be possible to assess whether the provision of adequate healthcare or secondary education, contributes to an effective system of national military service and the capacity for territorial defense; both very real consideration for Georgia in the wake of August 2008. Moreover, the question of what constitutes security is not just the province of decision-makers and specialists. It can be an important element in public perception, and this in itself may prove a useful marker in terms of transition and development. What citizens worry about in security terms can be revealing about economic change and governance.

For the purposes of this analysis, it is useful to discuss national security in terms of a spectrum or, ideally, a hierarchy of concerns spanning the security of the individual, the community and the state. In each category or sector, the relative development or underdevelopment of social infrastructure may bear on security and security perceptions. At the "high" end, security is often about low probability but high consequence events (invasions, cross border attacks, devastating civil emergencies, etc.). At the opposite end of the spectrum, security can be about daily interactions and diffuse perceptions of vulnerability – all potentially consequential for individuals and groups, and possibly existential for states over time. A related set of questions concerns the ability of the security environment itself to shape the availability of social goods. These links can be especially significant in the case of transitioning societies such as Georgia. As a concrete example, if roads are insecure, access to education and healthcare may suffer. If the country faces an ongoing risk of instability and conflict, investment will be inhibited and employment will suffer. In the Georgian case, links of this kind are more explicit in the border regions adjacent to Abkhazia and South Ossetia. But the wider economic and social effects of physical insecurity are felt across the country as a whole.

Shortcomings in the social sector can interfere with the capacity of a state to defend itself, including the ability to plan and organize for defense, recruit suitable forces, and maintain positive morale.[20] Taking these links into account, this analysis focuses on the more direct connections between social goods and their absence, and the sense of security or insecurity of average citizens.

[20] These links are explore in detail in "National Security and the Social Sector in Transitioning States: A Framework for Analysis," scoping paper prepared by the Hudson Institute in Association with Creative Associates International, and the Aguirre Division of JBS International, October 2008.

Findings from In-country Research

A Note on Methodology

Observations from the analytic literature, existing surveys and expert discussions in Washington and Georgia were used to develop a series of questions for focus group meetings held in Georgia in May 2009. The focus groups were designed to explore perceived links between the social sector and national security in the Georgian case. But the methodology should be broadly applicable to other transitioning states. Each 90 minute focus group was comprised of eight participants plus a discussion leader. The focus groups were mixed gender, and targeted a range of age cohorts, from 15 to 56+ years of age.

The research was regionally diverse. Five discussions were held in Tbilisi, three in Zugdidi and three in Akhaltsikhe. The participants were selected to be representative of the social and ethnic composition of the city or town in which the discussions were held. This was especially important in Akhaltsikhe with its substantial Armenian community.

Regional Perspectives

Our findings reflect significant differences in exposure and perspective across the three regional settings. The multi-ethnic character of Akhaltsikhe, and its generally lower level of urban and social stress, exerts a strong influence on the outlook of its citizens. That said, citizens of Akhaltsikhe are inclined to worry about the durability of the coexistence among ethnic groups in the city. There is some concern that the events of August 2008 and the continued risk of conflict with Russia could destabilize relations between the Georgian and Armenia communities, and perhaps tempt external actors to intervene in local politics. Perceptions in Zugdidi, close to the border with Abkhazia, are driven to a greater extent by concerns about renewed conflict and physical security *per se*. Here, too, the links between stability and economic development are perceived as more direct. In Tbilisi, economic conditions -- a concern everywhere -- and the specter of political instability loom large. Residents of Tbilisi are also more attuned to problems of criminality and drug abuse.

In general, the responses from Tbilisi are more "political" in character, focusing on questions of governance and rule of law as factors in access to social services and the overall security of the country. In the regions, there is a heightened sense of security risk and a greater sense of exposure to external challenges. Indirect connections between the social sector and national security abound in the perceptions of all respondents. In the regions, these connections are more overt and direct. One important tendency, common across the board, and reinforced by the comments of expert observers, is the prevalence of short time horizons. Respondents are very much focused on immediate or near-term challenges and solutions. There is little in the way of nostalgia for past practices, but also a very weak sense of future opportunity or initiative. At the level of individuals, communities and the state, there is only a weak interest in and capacity for forward planning.[21]

Economic Security and Social Cohesion

Under the conditions prevailing in today's Georgia, it is not surprising that economic security emerges as a predominant concern, with direct consequences for perceptions of security in other areas. High rates of economic growth in recent years, driven by foreign investment and an increasingly globalized

[21] One official bemoaned the absence of a national statistical organization that could produce accurate data for decision-makers.

economy, raised expectations, especially among younger Georgians. War with Russia, together with the global economic crisis, has brought a halt to this period of growing prosperity and confidence. Unemployment is officially around 17 percent, but certainly far in excess of this figure by more realistic and comprehensive measures. Underemployment is chronic. The result is a climate of frustrated expectations and keenly felt relative deprivation. Interlocutors place the state of the economy and the dismal employment outlook in the first rank of concerns, and economic security is at the top of the hierarchy of worries for the average Georgian. Concerns about economic security are pervasive and dominate the public discourse, even trumping concerns about renewed conflict with Russia.[22] Interlocutors are also keenly aware of the implications of this situation for Georgian sovereignty and national security.

There is a strong social dimension to perceptions of economic insecurity. Unemployment *per se* is a problem. But respondents also perceive the employment crisis through the lens of social standing and opportunity. At almost every level, Georgians feel that the available jobs are inappropriate for their level of education and training. Fear of downward mobility is part of the picture, and even in the face of financial hardship, individuals are reluctant to accept "inappropriate" jobs disconnected from their professional interests. There is a strong sense of exclusion in many quarters, with access to appropriate jobs determined on the basis of family and other "connections" rather than merit. Price increases are especially disconcerting against a backdrop of rising unemployment and low salaries. Discussions reveal an erosion of social cohesion, a perception of economic polarization between "rich" and "poor," with an evaporating middle class. These concerns are not necessarily new, nor are they unique to Georgia, but they have become more explicit and pronounced during the current economic crisis.

Respondents are inclined to be deeply critical of the economic management of the country. There is a sense that the transition from the Soviet economic system has occurred on a haphazard basis with little in the way of rational planning. Cronyism is a leading complaint among individuals and business owners. Outside Tbilisi, economic transition is often portrayed as concentrating economic power and activity in the center, upsetting traditional patters of agricultural and manufacturing, and reinforcing the "asymmetric development" of Tbilisi and the regions. Migration from the regions to Tbilisi is a longstanding concern, although the effects of the crisis in this regard are not entirely clear; frustrated job-seekers may well return to their own communities where family networks offer a hedge against economic and social insecurity.

One measure of the pervasive economic and social insecurity in the country can be seen in the large number of Georgians migrating or applying for asylum abroad. In 2008, Georgia was number three, behind Somalia and Iraq, in the worldwide ranking of countries and their asylum seekers.[23] Internally displaced persons (IDPs) are another acute problem, with IDPs particularly exposed to the consequences of the economic crisis.[24] Georgian interlocutors are keenly aware of the economic and social pressures driving this exodus. They are also aware of the potential consequences of this for Georgia's governance and security. The departure of more highly qualified young people risks creating a hollow society with a more limited capacity to safeguard its sovereignty and national security. This could also create a condition, visible in the Balkans and other settings, where a growing diaspora is increasingly disconnected from prevailing social and political conditions inside the country, complicating

[22] The most recent IRI *Georgian National Study* reveals similar findings in its public polling.
[23] The UNHCR report reveals that one out of every 1,000 people in Georgia – a total of 5,548 individuals -- applied for political asylum abroad in 2008. http://www.unhcr.org/statistics/statistics/49c796572.pdf
[24] As many as 200,000 Georgians are still displaced from the crises of 1992-93. The Georgian government estimates that some 54,000 people remain displaced from ethnic Georgian villages in South Ossetia and elsewhere. See David L. Philips, *Post-Conflict Georgia* (Washington: The Atlantic Council of the United States, September 2008), p.7.

future crisis management and reform. In past decades, the Georgian diaspora was very small and disconnected from the country. Today, one out of five Georgians lives abroad.

Importantly, perceptions of economic and social insecurity are viewed, at least implicitly, as part of a wider complex of insecurity involving access to education, healthcare, and social insurance, and with implications for both personal and national security. Affordability, social exclusion, and shortcomings in governance and the rule of law provide the critical connections among these elements. Here, as in other areas, there is a considerable gap between the official perception of increased initiative and social security, and public skepticism. As an example, one high-ranking Georgian official points to the implementation of a "one window" approach to benefits for the poor or internally displaced, with enhanced levels of benefit for the poorest individuals. In 2006, 38,000 people were covered under this scheme. Today, the number is 1,600,000. The benefits take the form of vouchers valid at banks, and ultimately providing a significant stimulus for the economy (officials acknowledge the looming effect of this enhanced pension and benefits program on the hard-pressed Georgian economy). From the perspective of Georgian public interlocutors, however, the system of social benefits appears arbitrary and inadequate, and does little for the mass of unemployed people above the official poverty line.

Education and Identity

Access to suitable education is a basic social good, and perceived shortcomings in the education sector are interwoven with other sources of stress in the current Georgian environment. The inability of individuals to find jobs in a changing economy is directly connected to rigidities and outmoded patterns of study at the secondary and higher education levels. The costs of education are creating impediments to access, now felt more keenly under conditions of economic stringency. The absence of appropriate vocational training limits Georgia's ability to reform and reshape its industrial base.

Interlocutors are critical of the situation in primary and secondary education, but the gap between expectations and reality is most acute in the case of higher education. Access to the system is acceptable, although patterns of instruction are widely seen as outmoded. Issues of concern include the cost of text books, the need for expensive private tuition in order to pass examinations, and a vague sense of corruption and arbitrary treatment within the system (admittedly, less pervasive than prior to the introduction of national examinations). These perceptions share some characteristics with unease about predictability and the rule of law expressed in other areas. The lack of confidence in educational outcomes also contributes to the wider problem of short time horizons and lack of confidence in the system as a whole.

Higher education poses more obvious problems, more closely connected to the insecurity of individuals and society. Large numbers of young people aspire to a university education, but university qualifications no longer lead to predictable and appropriate employment. The result has been a widespread devaluation of qualifications and the "de-professionalization" of Georgian society. This challenge is exacerbated by the lack of effective vocational training alternatives to higher education. Even under more prosperous conditions, the Georgian economy was not able to absorb the numbers of graduates seeking employment in modern sectors of the economy. Regional differences also come into play. Graduates of the University of Akhaltsikhe and other provincial institutions cannot compete with graduates from the capital, and these, in turn, are uncompetitive with graduates from foreign universities. This situation reinforces existing concerns about the uneven development of the country, and the domination of Georgian society by external actors and institutions.

From the perspective of job seekers, lack of opportunity is the critical problem. From the perspective of business leaders and entrepreneurs, the problem is not so much lack of opportunity (although, clearly,

the economic crisis imposes constraints) but lack of suitable and qualified graduates. Georgian business interlocutors repeatedly mention the absence of "education for employment" and the resulting cost to enterprises and the country as a whole. Foreign investors have also been deterred by the absence of qualified staff. This poses special problems in the Georgian case, where the import of large numbers of foreign employees to staff foreign-owned or joint-venture operations would pose inevitable political acceptance challenges. Georgian officials have reportedly turned aside substantial Chinese and other investment opportunities for this reason.

Security of identity is part of the equation. Georgian interlocutors often associate the problems of youth and social "drift" with the decline of interest in traditional culture and religion. However accurate or inaccurate, concerns about security of identity are very much a part of the Georgian discourse. As elsewhere, these sensitivities appear to be heightened by economic stress and conflict, against a backdrop of rising nationalism in Georgia's neighborhood and, indeed, in Europe. Georgians possess a strong sense of their cultural inheritance and often exhibit an unreconstructed patriotism and belief in the country's rightful role. An increasing number of Georgians are inclined to see the reinforcement of traditional institutions, including the church, as a response to dysfunctional governance and unstable politics. A crisis of identity with economic, political and security implications is also evident in secular circles. Georgians were key contributors to the educational and cultural elite in the Soviet Union. In the view of many observers, these high expectations about education, policy sophistication and governance have been difficult to reconcile with the crises and perceived mismanagement of recent years. Expectations have never been recalibrated to reflect current realities.

Community Security and the Rule of Law

Community security encompasses a series of concerns related to human rights, the rule of law, the position of ethnic and religious minorities, and the more general problem of the exposure of communities to unpredictable or corrupt governance. Taken together, our research revealed these to be leading worries for Georgian citizens, second only to problems of economic security. Indeed, in the view of many interlocutors, insecurity in these areas is closely linked, and not unrelated to the pervasive concern about external pressures.

Several concerns stand out. First, there is a widespread absence of understanding about citizens' rights at various levels, including labor rights and rights of expression. Under the current economic conditions, labor rights are a leading issue. Job insecurity is often seen through the lens of potential discrimination and exclusion based on lack of "connections" or a generalized preference for younger workers at all levels. The institution of patronage, widespread nepotism and other abuses by government and business managers are often mentioned, along with a fear that free expression of political views may lead to firing or demotion.

Second, this is clearly just one aspect of a more general concern about freedom of expression, surveillance by the security services, and exposure to extra-legal harassment (e.g., sudden attention of the tax authorities). Some of the problem is ascribed to the government, but Georgians also acknowledge that the society's own poorly developed sense of human rights and the rule of law is partly to blame. These perceptions are not uniform, and some respondents clearly felt little frustration about their ability to express themselves freely. Indeed, the very open nature of the responses in focus groups and interviews suggests that concerns about political expression are "situational," and largely tied to employment and political activity rather than social interaction on a day-to-day basis. Straightforward arbitrariness and incompetence in the legal system is another concern for Georgians, with interlocutors citing unfair judgments and courts inherited from the Soviet period. In a more direct sense, lack of

confidence in the rule of law, and fear of retribution inhibits witnesses and complicates the pursuit of criminals.

Third, the perception of weak and unpredictable rule of law spills over to affect perceptions of access to social services, from pensions to social assistance for needy families and others. Some associate this climate of unpredictability with the continuing transition from Soviet era practices. Others are less inclined to excuse these shortcomings, and worry about the erosion of social cohesion and the rise of a durable "everyone for themselves" culture. This might have been tolerable in the years of high growth with more resources at every level. But current conditions underscore the fragility of the Georgian system. Among elites, and some sectors of the public, there is awareness that convergence with European Union practices could improve the social-security equation over time. But there is an even stronger wariness about tying Georgian practices too closely to foreign models – the ever-present worry about Georgian sovereignty.

Fourth, the fear of declining social cohesion transcends economic questions. In Akhaltsikhe there is a very real concern that traditional patterns of tolerance and coexistence between Georgians and Armenians may not prove durable.[25] The conflict with Russia and the general anxiety about foreign interference reinforces this concern, with some noting the pro-Russian attitude of many Armenians. That said, interlocutors in the region stress that inter-communal relations remain positive and stable, and there are few if any visible distinctions in access to education and social services. Economic migrants and internally displaced persons are part of the discourse, especially in Akhaltsikhe where they are seen as increasing pressure on employment and, sometimes, thriving as a result of family or government connections.

Personal Security

Fear of crime and other physical threats to the security of individuals is increasing across Georgia, and particularly in Tbilisi and the border regions. Many interlocutors refer to a sense of exposure and vulnerability (as one Tbilisi resident put it, "I am completely unprotected"). Even if the physical risks to most Georgians remain moderate in objective terms, there is a strong sense of relative insecurity in this sector. Between the risks of crime, political violence and the arbitrary behavior of the police, Georgians are increasingly inclined to worry about their personal security and the security of their family members.

For many Georgians, the problem of rising crime is associated with uncertainty and unrest on the political and regional scenes. There is a vague sense that much of the new criminality in Georgia is at once encouraged and masked by political instability and, above all, the conflict with Russia. At the same time, some aspects of criminality have actually decreased, notably the problem of smuggling (a byproduct of porous borders and lack of interest in interdiction). Anxieties about personal security extend to traditionally "safe" places such as schools. Some parents note their anxiety about sending their children to school given the risk of demonstrations and violence. More broadly, there is a concern about the inhibiting effect of political violence and crime (and the fear of these) on the free movement of individuals for education, employment and access to social services, especially at night (this concern is markedly less pronounced in Akhaltsikhe).

Fear of drugs and drug-related violence is very much part of this equation, especially in Tbilisi, where drug and alcohol addiction is perceived as a growing problem, closely associated with high youth unemployment. The very visible problem of drug use and trafficking is among the most frequently cited

[25] One interlocutor cited the language barrier between Armenian and Georgian villages as an impediment to communication and a source of misunderstanding and friction.

concerns in the personal security realm among those interviewed in Tbilisi and Zugdidi, and a frequently cited measure of the state's inability to address urban security challenges.

There is a notable divide in perceptions of personal security according to the economic situation of the interlocutor. The unemployed, and those keenly concerned about the security of their employment, tend to see the personal security problem largely in terms of crime, and closely linked to the economic crisis. By contrast, those with predictable and adequate employment tend to view the personal security issue through the lens of political turmoil and external threats. Not surprisingly, interlocutors in Zugdidi also tend to associate personal security with the threat of war and its indirect consequences. Views about the Georgian police are similarly divided. Some view the police as unreliable, slow to respond and prone to arbitrary and abusive treatment. This view is especially pronounced in Zugdidi. Many are disinclined to turn to the police as a matter of principle. Others take a more positive view, citing notable improvements in the behavior and effectiveness of the police in recent years. From either perspective, further reform of the police and security services is likely to enjoy the support of Georgians at virtually all levels.

Health Security

Interlocutors in each of the areas cited "heath security" as a top tier concern (from second to fourth among seven sectors discussed). Broadly, this concern can be divided into two categories: cost as a factor in access; and the extent and quality of available services. The health sector reforms of recent years, in particular, the privatization of hospitals, are widely seen as having increased the cost and insecurity of the system from the perspective of Georgian citizens. Expert observers also cite the privatization initiative as a short-sighted attempt to capitalize on the spiraling real estate values prior to the financial crisis and war. Economic stringency and widespread unemployment are placing increased pressure on the system and giving rise to real concerns about access to health services, especially serious and emergency surgery. Current health insurance schemes are widely viewed as inadequate, and the details of these schemes are poorly understood by Georgian citizens.

Among the priority areas for new investment and services, interlocutors mention aid for disabled individuals, rehabilitation centers for drug users, especially in Tbilisi and Zugdidi, and an expanded system of shelters for the elderly and displaced persons. There is a general perception that Georgia's medical infrastructure is badly in need of modernization. These needs are compounded by the low salaries available for medical personnel, and the consequent migration of many of the most qualified specialists. This is one of the more acute aspects of the human capital and "brain drain" challenge facing Georgia, and one closely related to perception of insecurity at the public level.

In contrast to the frequent suspicion of international activity in other sectors, in the health arena, Georgians tend to be supportive of external programs. Our discussions revealed a degree of awareness and positive attitudes toward the activities of UNICEF, USAID, the International Committee of the Red Cross, Save the Children and others. Ultimately, however, Georgian interlocutors are inclined to view the issue of health security, or insecurity, as derivative of the economic crisis and, to an extent, the current external security challenges facing the country. Here, as elsewhere, there is also a striking gap between the policy initiatives trumpeted by government ministries and the pervasive skepticism and lack of confidence among ordinary Georgians.

Environmental Security

Perhaps understandably given the pressing economic and conventional security challenges facing Georgian society, environmental security takes a lower place in the hierarchy of prevailing concerns.

But it is not absent. Worries about the environment are expressed in urban and rural settings. In some cases, these worries overlap with concerns about health and even personal and political security. The leading problems cited by interlocutors include landfills (Tbilisi and Zugdidi), water quality and canal management (Akhaltsikhe). In the countryside, forest preservation and management are also mentioned. In the cities, food safety is a concern, alongside litter, dust and the general deterioration of buildings and public spaces. In some case, participants in focus group discussions described at length problems of sanitation and garbage disposal in their neighborhoods, often using this to make a point about the general absence of civic consciousness and responsibility.

Notably, references to the environment tend to be couched in terms of personal safety and health rather than wider policy concerns such as global climate change. The discussion reflects a sense that environmental degradation can inhibit the country's economic recovery, investment in tourism and other sectors. The condition of public spaces is also associated with the problem of recreational opportunities for young people and others, and contributes to the pervasive expectations gap regarding the prosperity and development of the country. As in other sectors, the quality of the Georgian environment from the perspective of individuals is perceived as an indicator of the success or failure of the state and municipal administrations – and a factor of some importance in the future political stability of the country.

Security Perceptions and Political Stability

Participants in the focus group discussions consistently cited external security and political stability (the groups used the term "political security") as a leading concern, just behind economic security and health. This finding is broadly consistent with other recent polls conducted in the wake of the August 2008 conflict with Russia. In the border regions of Zugdidi and to a lesser extent, Akhaltsikhe, perceptions of political and external risk are naturally most acute. But concerns on this score are pervasive, and often find their way into the discourse on economic development, employment and other questions. The events of August 2008 and their aftermath have created a climate of insecurity at the level of individuals, communities and the state. The result has been a distorted approach to public policy in other areas and, above all, a tendency toward crisis-driven, short-term decision-making at the level of officials, firms and individuals. From government ministers to young job seekers, Georgians have eschewed forward planning and inclusive thinking, and have opted to focus on the immediate and the personal.

This is a marked change from the years of rapid economic and political development after the Rose Revolution. It also marks a reversion to deep, traditional patterns of behavior in which family, clan, village and regional affiliations drive behavior in politics, commerce and social interactions. Under these conditions, cooperation with international partners is more complicated and fraught with perceived implications for national sovereignty. Established relationships are under stress, and this, too, lends an air of unpredictability to Georgian politics and national security. The spring 2009 revelations about coup plots within the Georgian military are a good example of this trend. In the past, plots of this kind would have been much more difficult to imagine in the small and closely-knit environment of the Georgian political and security elite, or indeed at lower levels.

Two further political points are noted by expert observers; both with implications for stability and security. First, there is a marked generational divide at work in today's Georgia (a reality also noted by focus group participants). This is a divide along somewhat unusual lines, with the most "alienated' individuals to be found among the very young (unemployed, in their twenties) and those middle aged and older (50+). These individuals are the most evidently frustrated by economic conditions and the absence of adequate social support programs. This frustration extends to the political realm, where there is a sense that the Georgian government is led by people in their 30s, many educated abroad and perceived

as "out of touch" with Georgian realities. The gap between these young technocrats and the mass of Georgian citizens is wide. In a small, close-knit society in which "trust" is a critical factor in political and social interactions, this gap is troubling. In the wake of the Georgian military's poor performance against Russian forces in August 2008, this trust gap is now also part of Georgian security perceptions.

Second, there is an evident gap – chasm might be a better description – between the programmatic optimism and self-perceived effectiveness of Georgia's political and administrative class, on the one hand, and the mass of frustrated Georgian citizens, on the other. Ministry officials are quick to point to new programs and initiatives in various sectors. Very often, these initiatives and their effects are invisible to Georgians who wonder at the absence or ineffectiveness of key services, above all in the social sector. This tendency is part of the broader phenomenon, noted earlier, in which Georgians within the political leadership preserve an exalted sense of the country's capacities, a legacy of Soviet-era cultural and administrative influence and expectations in the wake of the Rose Revolution. Shortcomings in the sphere of economic opportunity and social services, including public safety and security, are seen as key markers of successful governance – or its absence. The fact that many Georgians sympathize with the plight of the unemployed and under supported gives this sense of grievance and unfulfilled expectations wider political significance, with implications for Georgian stability. Lack of informed public discussion on challenges facing the country reinforces the perception of mismanagement and incipient crisis.

External Security

Responses from the focus groups and expert discussions underscored the prominence of external security concerns in public perception and political discourse. At the expert level, the persistent threat of conflict with Russia, and the government's response to it, are widely perceived as having an inhibiting effect on the economic and social development of the country. At the same time, it is understood that shortcomings in the social sector may also threaten Georgian sovereignty and security. Human capital is a critical element in this regard. The flight of experienced, well-motivated individuals is already having a direct effect on the leadership cadres available to govern the society and organize a coherent defense.[26] Lack of confidence in Georgian institutions and a growing focus on the individual, clan and region can erode the morale of the Georgian armed forces. The precise role of this "social disillusionment" factor in the events of August 2008 is unclear, but it cannot be discounted in future crisis management and defense scenarios. So too, unmet expectations at the level of social services and conditions can open the door to external subversion and chaotic, anti-democratic political conditions. As important, it can be *seen* as opening the door to these forces.

Continuing external security challenges are likely to have direct implications for the social development of the country. First, the war with Russia and the threat of further conflict is widely seen as having an inhibiting effect on economic development, from deterred investment to the flight of professional elites. Tourism, one of Georgia's most promising sectors, has been especially hard hit by regional instability and conflict. But the effects are being felt across the board.

Second, conflict with Russia is having an isolating effect on Georgian society. In terms of trade and investment, the loss of ties to Russia has been pronounced. For all of the political friction of recent years, Russia remains a natural economic partner for Georgia. In this context, the preservation of cross-border ties to Turkey has become critical as an alternative. A number of focus group participants and others noted the inhibiting effect of the conflict on social, educational and economic ties outside the

[26] If Georgia's external security challenges are not resolved successfully over the coming years, it is likely that many of the country's leading public policy experts – including a number interviewed for this research – will leave to pursue opportunities in Europe or the United States.

country. The August 2008 crisis and the fear of renewed conflict or political turmoil have deterred individuals from leaving for educational, commercial and other purposes for fear of being "trapped" abroad. Georgians abroad are also deterred from visiting under these conditions. Research respondents cited concerns about the safety and freedom of movement of family members with plans to travel outside Georgia, or to border regions. Over time, these conditions may also have a negative effect on the ability of Georgian educational, health and other institutions to function in a globalized environment. Georgia benefits from openness, but the current situation drives the society in the direction of an inward-looking and sovereignty-conscious approach. Georgians at many levels of the society are aware of this problem and ponder its implications.

Third, Georgian defense expenditure in 2008 was approximately $1 billion, a very large sum for a small country with many competing needs. Expert interlocutors were broadly skeptical of the value of this expenditure for national security in comprehensive terms. Large expenditures on military forces and defense equipment are seen as having contributed little to the country's ability to defend its borders, and may well have been provocative in the view of some observers. At the same time, badly needed social services have been deprived of adequate funding, potentially undermining the longer-term stability and security of the country. The education and training issues raised in connection with the delayed modernization of the Georgian economy may also apply to the modernization of the Georgian military establishment. To the extent that Georgia acquires new defense systems and seeks greater interoperability with NATO forces, the morale and human capital dimension is likely to loom larger as a priority for Tbilisi and its international security partners. Looking ahead, low birth rates and high mortality levels, especially among males, will likely constrain Georgia's ability to staff its military establishment. It may also have implications for Georgia's regional weight (Azerbaijan already has a larger population than Armenia and Georgia combined).

Fourth, a pervasive sense of insecurity, greatly increased after August 2008 and reinforced by the discourse of Georgia's political leaders, is understood by many to have distorted the public policy discourse in fundamental ways. Against a backdrop of ongoing external security challenges, it has been especially difficult to mobilize an informed debate about the economic and social development of the country, or to engage in forward policy planning in critical areas such as education, infrastructure and health. Although Georgia clearly faces pressing security risks on its borders, the isolation and opportunity costs of the current situation are widely perceived as exacerbating the economic and social hardships facing the country – core national security challenges in their own right.

Overall Observations and Conclusions

The continued risks to external security and political stability in Georgia place a premium on understanding the full spectrum of security concerns – from "national" to "personal" – and their connections to the social sector. The interplay of economic stress, politics and governance in transition, tangible threats to sovereignty and human security, and large-scale international commitments to the country's development and security, make it useful to assess how these links are perceived by average citizens and expert observers. Even in the midst of ongoing threats to Georgian sovereignty, in-country research illustrates the primacy of economic and social issues in security perceptions at the level of individuals and communities.

Linkages between security and the social sector operate in both directions, with social sector shortcomings affecting security, and *vice versa*. For Georgia, this suggests that the prospects for national security in the narrower sense – the ability to defend the country's borders and cooperate effectively with security partners – will be heavily influenced by domestic factors of the kind discussed in this analysis, including social cohesion, the preservation of an adequate human resource base, and investments in education, health and the environment.

The current climate in Georgia is shaped by two compelling realities. First, the Georgian discourse continues to be strongly affected by the experience of war with Russia and the ongoing risk of conflict. Second, the deteriorating economic situation, driven by global conditions and exacerbated by the events of August 2008 and their aftermath, poses immediate challenges for all Georgians. The isolating effect of conflict on the Georgian economy and society provides a tangible link between these two realities.

Key Findings

This analysis points to a number of conclusions about the state of Georgian society, the social sector, and national security:

- ***As the experience of the Rose Revolution fades, there is a powerful sense of unrealized expectations and relative deprivation affecting Georgian society***. *Shortcomings in the social sector are a key element in this equation*. After years of high growth, optimism, and steadily improving political stability and governance, the society has experienced a succession of blows to prosperity, stability and security at all levels. Georgia is not a quite a "fragile" state when viewed in terms of the state's ability to provide services or guarantee security, but there is now a pervasive sense of insecurity affecting most levels of society. In many cases, this insecurity is closely tied to concerns about economic opportunity and the rule of law – both affecting access to social services. The legacy of the Soviet years, including the communist model of service provision is not far from the surface and still influences the outlook and expectations of the older generations in Georgia; all of which underscores the transitional nature of the society. Georgian society faces multiple "gaps," spanning generations, perceptions of public policy, and above all, between historical expectations and reality. Assumptions about Georgia's capacity to provide for the social development and security of its citizens remain high, and these expectations have not been recalibrated to take account of the country's current economic and security problems.

- ***Georgians are keenly aware of the issues explored in this study, and are increasingly inclined to seek remedies outside government.*** Our interlocutors displayed a sophisticated awareness of the actual and potential linkages between security and the social sector, and readily

reflect on the implications for the country and their situation as individuals. Much of this debate turns on declining confidence in the ability of the state to provide predictable access to services, or to assure their security in the broadest sense. Where possible, Georgians are increasingly inclined to organize their social and personal security without reference to the state.

- ***Insecurity has bred short-term thinking and inhibits future planning and investment***. The prevailing environment in Georgia is characterized by pervasive insecurity, although there are notable regional and generational differences in exposure and perspective. One important consequence of this sense of insecurity has been the compression of time horizons, affecting expectations for the future and perceived remedies. Short-term thinking predominates, with implications for social sector priorities and development, the ability to develop effective public-private sector partnerships for the development of human capital and other tasks.

- ***Despite the external security risks facing the country, economic security concerns are paramount for virtually all Georgians.*** Economic insecurity, above all the fear of unemployment and its consequences, is a leading, perhaps *the* leading driver of perceptions about security and social cohesion. Accusations of nepotism and social exclusion are pervasive in the debate over jobs and access to social services. At the same time, employers face a shortage of appropriately trained applicants. The education/employment gap is evidence of a wider human capital challenge affecting Georgian society, with potentially important consequences for the future national security of the country, including effects on military recruitment, morale, political stability and the role of the Georgian diaspora.

- ***Against a backdrop of economic stringency and risks to security at the regional and national levels, personal security is also a growing concern for Georgian citizens***. Focus group participants and expert observers identify criminality as a threat to Georgian society and the future stability of the country. This is especially pronounced in Tbilisi and the border regions, and closely tied to youth unemployment and drug addiction. There is also a more diffuse concern about generational drift and loss of identity as elements in urban crime. The widely noted anxiety about sending children to school and other activities is just one example of rising personal security concerns.

- ***Concerns about the rule of law and human rights are at the top of the "community security" agenda***. Interlocutors acknowledge that by some measures the police have become more effective, but there is little trust in the competence and impartiality of the security forces and the judiciary. Many Georgians worry about political instability and the unconsolidated democratic evolution of the country, not least because these threaten to erode an already delicately poised situation with regard to the legal system and freedom of expression. This concern interacts with the growing sensitivity to personal safety to reinforce the sense of insecurity in society.

- ***Health and access to healthcare are prominent issues***. Here, too, the cost of healthcare looms larger in the context of a deteriorating economic climate and the declining ability of average citizens to pay for more expensive procedures. This view is accompanied by public and elite skepticism about privatization efforts in the health sector. Health issues are also closely linked to environmental risks in the view of many interlocutors. For the regions, difficult access to advanced health services is the main concern. Residents of Tbilisi worry about inept governance in the health sector.

- ***The uneven ("asymmetrical") development of the country is seen as undermining Georgian prosperity and security***. Infrastructure is part of this equation, together with the lower quality of higher education and training outside Tbilisi, and the overall urban-rural divide. With the exception of some specific parts of society (e.g., young couples), housing does not appear to be a priority concern within the security-social sector equation in Georgia. Not surprisingly, questions of physical security and defense are more prominent in border regions.

- ***Social challenges are undermining Georgian national security in narrower, defense-related terms***. In the view of expert respondents, Georgian security and sovereignty are negatively affected by demographic trends, emigration, internal displacement, and declining social cohesion and "morale." The short and long term risks associated with these problems are fueled by shortcomings in the economy and the social sector. These challenges, many associated with the decline of the country's human capital base, could become more acute over the coming years. In particular, they could undermine Georgia's ability to staff its armed forces and operate effectively with international security partners. The education system is widely seen as rigid and detached from modern economic and social needs, and this shortcoming is also perceived in the defense sector.

- ***External actors are an integral part of the equation***. Georgians are inclined to see their national security as hostage to the actions and preferences of external actors. With regard to the social sector itself, Georgians view foreign governments and NGOs as leading providers of services and welfare. Their perceptions are largely positive. Between the role of international donors and advisors, on the one hand, and the growing inclination toward private "arrangements" for access to services of all kinds, on the other, the space for the Georgian state as a services provider in the traditional sense, is declining – at least in the perception of citizens. Improving governance and policy implementation across the board should continue to be a priority for international partners committed to the modernization and security of the country.

Broader Implications for U.S. Policy, Programs, and Strategy

These findings suggest a close connection between perceptions of personal, community and national security, and conditions in the social sector. They also suggest a number of policy implications for U.S. and USAID programs in Georgia, as well as for international partners, in regards to the links between social conditions and national security and stability. Some of these conclusions are in line with established thinking about security in transitioning states. Others are "non-canonical" and point to the need for critical thinking about what is stabilizing, what is destabilizing, and the importance of public perception as a variable in this equation.

- ***History and culture matter***. Social transitions and security perceptions are strongly conditioned by established historical narratives, political and strategic culture, and other "qualitative" factors. These elements can easily be overlooked, not least because they are difficult to measure. Our research in Georgia suggests that historical and cultural issues can drive expectations and strongly condition views of the state as a security provider. A "retreat to history" in terms of a reversion to traditional regional spheres of allegiance and trust could also be an indicator of deterioration in the security environment, with implications for stability.

- ***Ethic tolerance and inter-communal relations are at the core of the social sector/national security equation***. Ethnically mixed regions (e.g., Akhaltsikhe in the Georgain case) are particularly exposed, and can serve as bell weathers for overall perceptions about security, from access to employment and social goods, to treatment by the police and security services. At the

same time, shortcomings in the rule of law and behavior of security personnel can spill over to affect inter-communal relations even in traditionally tolerant settings. In the Georgian case – and arguably elsewhere – external threats to national sovereignty and security can leave ethnic minorities exposed to economic and political exclusion, or worse.

- ***Security sector reform should be a continuing priority for U.S. and international engagement in Georgia***. At the level of the police and the security services, issues of competence and impartiality will increasingly be seen as key measures of progress on governance and transition, closely linked to perceptions of personal and community security. At the other end of the institutional spectrum, Georgia will benefit from a greater capacity for warning, planning and crisis management. This can contribute to improved public confidence and debate, and can enhance Georgia's ability to cooperate with security partners, including the United States, NATO and the EU. On external security on the other hand,

- ***Insecurity is isolating, and especially damaging to societies critically dependent on external ties***. Georgia is critically dependent on cross-border links and connections to the wider world for trade, investment, education and exchanges of all kinds. Conditions of social crisis and perceived instability can have a profoundly isolating effect. They can also "feed back" into the security equation in significant ways. In the Georgian case, one clear manifestation of this has been the growing diffidence of key international partners and the more distant prospect of NATO membership – precisely when these are needed for strategic reassurance. Constraints on national and personal-level interactions with the outside world appear to have a pronounced effect on security perceptions. These dynamics will be worth exploring in other cases.

- ***Employment is a security issue in Georgia and a key measure of state legitimacy***. Therefore, focus on employment, economic security, and mitigation of the social costs of unemployment is of vital importance. Job creation, and the related challenges of education and training for employment, will remain key measures of progress for most Georgians, closely tied to the outlook for stability and security. Longer-term questions of economic reform, and even prosperity broadly defined, do not appear to drive society's perceptions in the same manner. Employment, and particularly employment that conforms to professional and other expectations, are the *sine qua non* for improved perceptions of security at the level of individuals and communities. This reality may be driven by the current economic crisis, or may be indicative of an underlying trend. In either case, the Georgian example offers a pointer relevant to other settings where USAID is engaged. Reversing the outflow of trained individuals will be essential to the longer-term outlook for development and national security in Georgia. Support for small businesses and the rehabilitation of idle manufacturing facilities can pay dividends, as can effective public-private partnerships in training for employment and other areas.

- ***Promote the establishment of effective institutions for forward-looking public policy debate and analysis***. Ideally these would be independent but officially "vested" to perform an advisory role for the Georgian government. They could be tasked with national-level studies, planning and training of analysts. These organizations could address foreign, security and domestic public policy issues in a multi-disciplinary way– with special attention to the national security/social sector equation. The American Federally Funded Research and Development Center (FFRDC) model offers one useful model, among others. These institutions could offer a pole of attraction for professionals who would otherwise turn to employment abroad, and could contribute to the overall development of Georgian civil society.

- ***Reinforce programs for urban youth***. The economic crisis and unstable conditions in the wake of the August 2008 crisis are fueling a particularly acute problem among young people, especially in Tbilisi. Civil society organizations and training centers oriented toward younger Georgians should be strengthened, alongside efforts to address the mounting problems of drug addiction and urban crime.

- ***Support improvements in the urban environment.*** Small, visible features can weigh heavily in security perceptions, broadly defined. Quality of life, especially in the urban environment, can drive perceptions of security and political legitimacy. Attitudes toward the government as a provider of social services and security can be shaped by apparently marginal or symbolic features, from the condition of buildings and public spaces, to the collection of refuse. These and other questions may prove surprisingly significant in other national settings (conditioned, as always, by historical expectations). Provincial areas and areas such as forestry and water management also deserve attention, but Georgian perceptions will be most heavily affected by new investments in municipal sanitation and the rehabilitation and maintenance of the urban environment. Making Georgia's cities more attractive and livable can contribute substantially to confidence in the social, economic and security future of the country.

Our research also suggests a number of indicators, warning signs that can point to deterioration in the security environment, with implications for stability, including:

- ***A contraction of time horizons*** – an apparent characteristic of individuals and societies under stress;
- ***Reversion to traditional spheres of allegiance and trust*** – the "retreat to history" – accompanied by shrinking circles of trust in political and commercial life, with implications for transparency at multiple levels;
- ***The rise of mistrust and anxiety along ethnic or regional lines*** – especially where these have not been prevalent in the past;
- ***A deteriorating sense of personal safety*** – and the perception of being "unprotected";
- ***Fear of de-professionalization*** – a more specific aspect of the employment challenge, and a driver of migration and internal instability among politically active elites;
- ***Sudden demographic shifts*** – including declines in birth rates and life expectancy, an increase in migration, and the rapid emergence of a national diaspora in societies unused to this phenomenon. The role of the new and substantial Georgian diaspora in the future stability of the country is uncertain. But the question will surely arise in other transitioning states, in other regional settings. Can these diasporas contribute to USAID's development and security objectives?

Looking Ahead – and Some Open Questions

This research suggests a number of gaps in our knowledge and open questions for future study. Demographic trends, the development of human capital and the sensitivity of these issues to national security factors – and *vice versa* – is a promising area for more detailed research. The role of the Georgian diaspora and its ability to serve as an element in the social development of the country is another promising area for analysis. Policy and programs might also benefit from a clearer understanding of the role of "identity" in Georgian modernization. Finally, it will be worth exploring how the Georgian case can inform the analysis of similar challenges elsewhere, along with comparative "lessons learned" from other cases where social, economic and external security problems interact in transitioning states.

Renewal of Georgian confidence in the country's capacity for effective governance and defense, and the reassurance provided by closer ties to the West, can help provide the necessary conditions for longer-term national planning and investment in the social sector. In the absence of this, Georgian society could move further in the direction of isolation and become increasingly inward looking, with negative consequences for security at the level of individuals, communities and the state. In this sense, the success of U.S. and international efforts to improve economic conditions and governance in Georgia will be closely tied to the success of efforts to bolster Georgia's sense of strategic reassurance, as well as deterrence of external risks. A strengthened social sector can make a leading contribution to Georgian national security, broadly defined. Progress in this area will be a key measure of successful transition and national security from the perspective of Georgian citizens in the years ahead.

Appendix 1 – Social Sector and National Security in Transitioning States: The Case of Georgia (Qualitative Focus Group Report)

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Social Sector and National Security in Transitioning States Case of Georgia

Qualitative Research Report Prepared for Hudson Institute

Tbilisi, Georgia

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Technical Information

Research objectives

1. Explore links between social sector and national security in "transitioning" states
2. Design analytic approach applicable to Georgia and other cases

Research method

Method **–** Qualitative study, focus group discussions (8 respondents per FG)
Number of FGD's ***- 11***
Duration of FGD's**:** 90 minutes

Recruitment criteria

Quotas for FGD respondents:

- Gender _ Mixed
- Geographical area: Tbilisi, Zugdidi and Akhaltsikhe
- Age group: Tbilisi (15-25, 26-35, 36-55, 56+) / Region (15-25, 26-35, 36-55)

Profile of the Target Group: The respondents of each focus group will be selected in a way, which will ensure that they represent all social characteristics inherent to the city/town of their residence. This is especially important for Akhaltsikhe, where there is Georgian, as well as Armenian ethnic groups.

FGD composition

N of FGDs	Target group	Place	Date
1 FGD	26-35 Age-group	Tbilisi	6.05
2-3 FGD	26-35 Age-group 15-25 Age-group	Tbilisi	7.05
4,5,6 FGD	15-25, 26-35, 36+ Age-group	Zugdidi	9.05
7,8,9 FGD	15-25, 26-35, 36+ Age-group	Akhaltsikhe	10.05
10-11 FGD	36-55 Age-group 56+ Age-group	Tbilisi	12.05

Main findings

The research was based on the assumption that security environment in Georgia is defined by the hierarchy of stress. That was the basis of the assessment of the expected degree of the security in Georgian reality.

In addition, a requirement of the research was to define an expected degree of security in Georgian reality.

The functional finding of the study is that the respondents connect the theme of security with physical, economic, health, and personal aspects of security. In terms of the social sector, it was evident in practically all focus group surveys conducted in Tbilisi[27] that stresses are generated by unrealized expectations of the population, first after the collapse of Soviet Union, and then after every change of the government.

The groups from Akhaltsikhe have slightly different perceptions due to the fact that the city is located on the Southern periphery of Georgia and has both Georgian and Armenian population. The fact that an ethnic Armenian population lives in this region determined a very specific environment and perception of threats. Focus group participants think that Russia's political and military course concerning Georgia can cause problems in the multinational regions. Therefore, the problem of political security has the highest priority for the population of Akhaltsikhe and is a source of the largest stress for the respondents of this region. All other problems are of secondary importance; among them are traditional themes of health, education, and economy. Here the theme of environmental security gets more urgency.

Akhaltsikhe dwellers, unlike inhabitants of the capital, do not connect the problem of public health, or other issues, with economic security, as having money does not solve all the problems that the population of this region can have. Respondents speak not only about the economic problems, but also about the infrastructure of the public health system (about the medical equipment, an opportunity for carrying out high quality operations in the region, etc.)

As a general conclusion, it is possible to say that:

1. Health security is associated with changes in the system of public health. The stress of respondents is caused by the fact that in the case of unexpected illness it will be almost impossible to find adequate funding to cover treatment. Certainly, "expensive" treatment is a problem for the respondents, although this factor is not the only one. The main stress is caused by the prospects of indefinite expectations. This problem is systemic.

2. Economic problems are similar to health problems, as one of the basic issues of security. Respondents, as a rule, name economic weakness as a source of social problems (especially in the groups of Tbilisi). The nepotism and unfair rules of the game, whereby people closer to the government benefit more, create systemic economic problems in the country. Accordingly, the stresses caused because of economic problems have not only an economic nature, but often include a problem of rule of law and justice. For many, this is the central issue of the theme of security. The problem of unemployment, in the opinion of respondents, causes also the problem of physical security. The problems of economy are closely connected with a problem of quality of the jobs as well. The qualifications of the work force and available jobs do not match each other. This fact, in the opinion of respondents, also emphasizes the systemic problems of the economy.

[27]As a reminder, other focus groups have been conducted in Akhaltsikhe and Zugdidi. These two cities have been chosen for the reasons, that the citizens of Armenian nationality compactly live in Akhaltsikhe, and the city of Zugdidi is the first city on the border of Abkhazia, and it has been expected, that the perception of security in these two cities was distinctive from the perception of the Tbilisi population.

3. In groups of Tbilisi, the supremacy of law and justice converge with the security of identity. These two themes are united, as respondents replace the supremacy of law by the concepts of justice and "equality". Respondents see the problem of rule of law and justice everywhere: in economy, in physical security, etc. The main problem for the respondents is the problem of injustice, which is encountered everywhere.

4. The possibility of the foresight of the future is the principal problem for the respondents of the regional groups (Akhaltsikhe and Zugdidi). In their opinion, the Russia factor is independent, and exists separately from other problems and creates a threat to the physical existence of the population. On the other hand, the fact that the policy of Russia toward Georgia developed into the format of war causes a feeling of an unsolved state of health, education and other securities.

5. In both peripheral groups the major cause of problems is the asymmetric development of the country. The problems of education and health, even financial problems, cannot be solved at the local level. For example, in Zugdidi groups, the problem of education was obvious, and it certainly has an economic basis. However, it also has a purely infrastructural nature, which emanates from asymmetric development of the country. For an inhabitant of Zugdidi the problem might be the absence of money for sending a child to study in Tbilisi or another city. On the other hand, there is the problem of a lack of skilled teachers in place, in Zugdidi secondary schools. The same situation is in the health system that was already mentioned.

Five focus group surveys held in Tbilisi produced different results. For instance, the first two groups shared the stress connected with the economic problems, since a heavy financial situation creates real problems for the respondents, both in health care and economic development. Despite this fact, in the same groups, stability, physical security, and the supremacy of law and justice have been named as the problems which cause other problems. The problems of order and stability are connected with the problems of physical security,

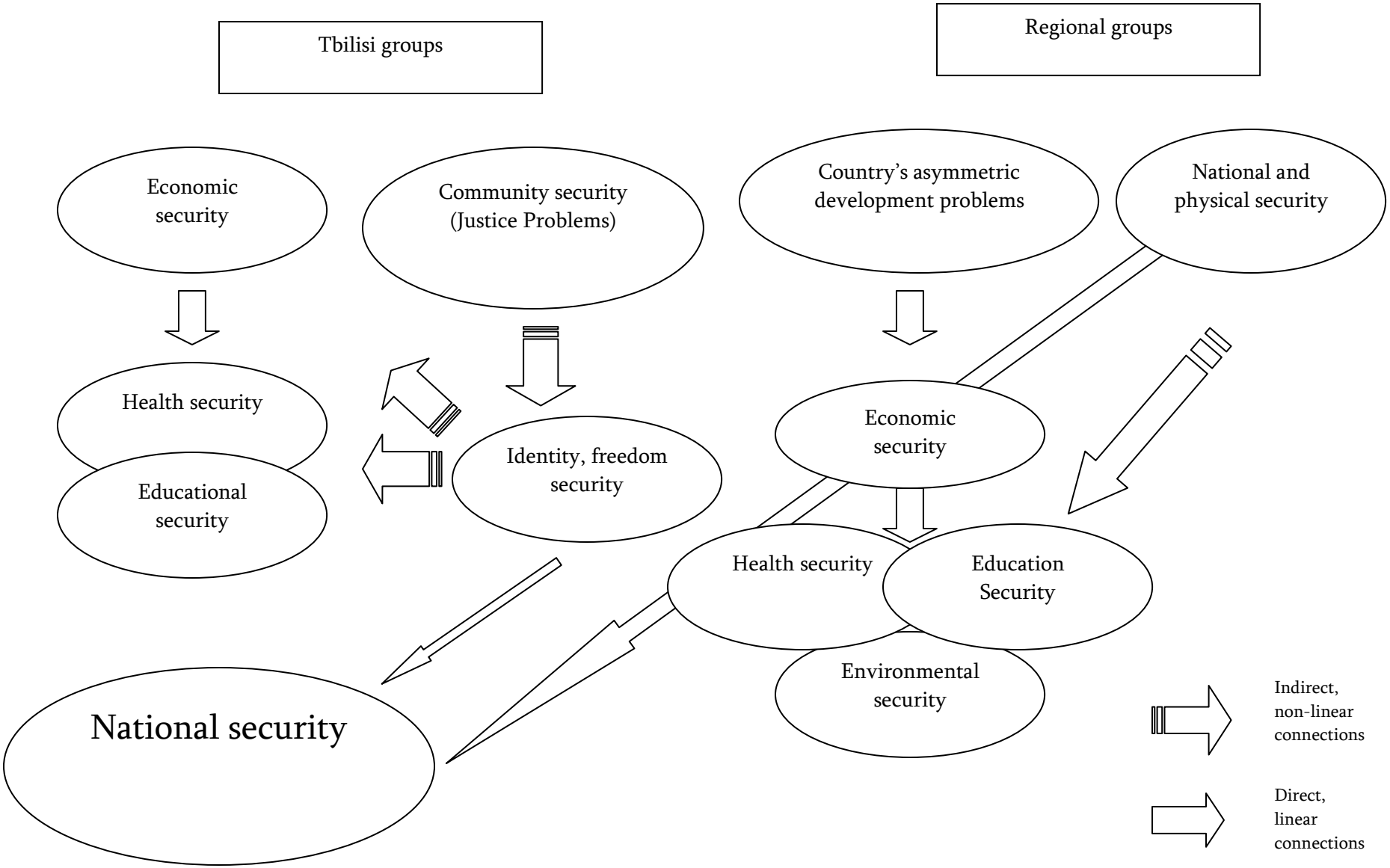
We have marked out two factors in the hierarchy of problems/stresses:

1. The acuteness/urgency of a problem
2. The nature of a problem, that means the problems causing other problems, or the factors, which emanate from other factors.

Four groups have been marked out according to these principles and methods

1. Justice / supremacy of the law / order/stability.
2. Economic condition
3. Health
4. Other problems

Schematically, problems were distributed as follows**:**


Tbilisi groups
Regional groups
Economic security
Community security (Justice Problems)
Country's asymmetric development problems
National and physical security
Health security
Educational security
Identity, freedom security
Economic security
Health security
Education Security
Environmental security
National security
Indirect, non-linear connections
Direct, linear connections

For the part of Tbilisi, in the top of the scheme are the problems of (1) economy and (2) justice. These two problems cause the stress of an identical scale at an identical level. In addition, it is very important to note, that one does not essentially ensue from another; both groups of problems exist independently, and it is possible to say that they are causing stress independently from each other. Justice, supremacy of law, the disdainful attitude of the government to people and their problems - are as important for the population as economic problems.

The problems of equality of rights and rule of law (supremacy of law) indirectly cause a feeling of vulnerability which is the reason for problems of national identity (sovereignty of the country, physical security), health care, and education.

With the same success, the respondents connect the general problems of health and education with the theme of economic security, and accordingly, they see the reason for health and education problems in the economic problems of the country.

Herewith, nonlinearly, the theme of national security is in connection with other themes, in particular, with the problems of education, health, and environmental protection.

However, the main difference in the regional groups from the groups of Tbilisi is that, in the opinion of respondents, problems of education, health, and environmental protection are in direct connection with the asymmetric development of the country. This problem, together with the issue of the national (and physical) security (Zugdidi borders Abkhasia, and Akhaltsikhe, due to Armenian population, also fears the conflict), top the list of the problems in the regions. and in addition to this, respondents from the group in Akhaltsikhe are confident that the financial potential of the country should not be distributed only on the capital.

In conclusion, it is possible to say that:

1. The respondents of Tbilisi groups worry about the problems of justice, health, educational, economic, and physical securities.

2. A majority of the respondents think that the problems have a systematic nature, and incapacity of the system is the main problem for national security, including issues of education and health care.

3. The problem of justice is being associated with the security of identity, the supremacy of law, and equality. These problems have been revealed as one large group of issues, and they seem to be the fundamental problem for the respondents. Community security is the main source of stress for the respondents.

4. Health security is the most urgent for part of the respondents, both for Tbilisi and regional groups. However, the same respondents argue that the weaknesses of the system of public health are caused by a wrong policy, unused available resources and a low quality of governmental management (Tbilisi), or by asymmetric development of the country (Regions).

5. Economic, health, and educational problems and stresses connected with them can be solved in the case of systematic positive changes. The systematic changes are being understood by the respondents as the change in the social/ collective consciousness of citizens and governmental management.

6. The respondents do not have any rational vision of the future. While speaking about the future, they speak about the necessity of solving their current problems. They have a certain nostalgia for the past, but very insignificant.

7. The regional population directly connects the factor of Russian policy to the national security, but in Tbilisi a political crisis, problems of injustice, and inequality, are being added to it.

Summary of Group Results in Each Field of National Security

Personal security

Personal security aims to protect people from physical violence, whether from the state, or external states, from violent individuals and sub-state actors, from domestic abuse, or from predatory adults. It involves the legal and uninterrupted enjoyment by a individual of his or her life, health, dignity, and reputation.

In The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, personal security is combined with the right to life and liberty. In full, the article reads, "Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person." It is interesting to see how respondents perceive the definition of personal security and what problems emerge in the social services that should determine and guarantee personal security.

"I am totally unprotected"… [Tbilisi, age group: 26-35]

Part of the audience expressed the feeling of being unprotected. Various factors were stated which caused the sense of being defenseless. A majority of the respondents stated that an unstable and unsecured situation in Georgia creates a dangerous atmosphere for living peacefully. The dangerous atmosphere is itself created by the unstable political situation; a clash of positions in the political spectrum as well as in society. The unstable situation generates the fear that people have of free movement at night; mothers are frightened to let their children go out freely. The sense of unforeseen contingency, the feeling that anything may happen at any time, induces the moral destruction of society and is increasing a feeling of isolation.

Another part of the respondents emphasizes the difference between the period when Eduard Shevardnadze was president and the current situation. The difference is visible in a positive way. The respondents complained about an aggressive attitude from the side of law-enforcement bodies and in some cases, respondents indicated their ineffective activities. Respondents underline the recently increased numbers of thefts and burglaries, which they link to the current unstable political situation in Georgia.

> *"If this demonstration continues, it will transform into criminality, won't it? This expression of protest is so dangerous that we might miss the period of Shevardnadze's presidency." [Tbilisi, age group: 26-35]*

The determining factor of personal security varies according to the social status of the respondents. Respondents who emphasized problems of unemployment and poverty linked personal security to economic problems and unemployment. On the other hand, respondents who have a stable income and do not have unemployment problems talk about feelings of being unprotected due to the unstable internal political situation.

> *"You let the children out without being sure if they will come back or not" [Tbilisi, age group: 36-55]*

Some of the respondents do not associate government, police, or other institutions as being responsible for their personal security. They consider that nowadays an individual should himself/herself take care of life and protect it.

> *"The State cannot care about everything, you should care about yourself."[Tbilisi, age group: 15-25]*

While talking about behavior and the role of police in defending the personal security of citizens, respondents' attitudes varied in several directions: (1) Part of the respondents do not rely on police at all and even accuse them of abusive behavior and humiliation. They named several cases of unlawful behavior of police officers and condemned them. Based on their evaluation we may simply say that in some cases police jeopardizes personal security.

> *"Police is out of control due to the extreme power given to them" [Tbilisi, age group: 15-25]*

Their negative attitude is caused also by the delayed reaction on criminal cases from the side of police.
(2) Another part of the audience expressed more or less soft criticism towards police. The problem they stated was the fact that police become more politicized and disorganized recently.

(3) Another part of the respondents draw parallels between the image of police from 5 years ago and the image of police now; they highlighted significant improvement in police structures and personal security.

The issue of personal security was discussed in focus groups and one of the main problems revealed was the fear of **war.** The feeling of the constant threat that one day the situation that occurred in August will happen again was expressed during every group discussion.

The various cases recalled by respondents reveal that not only the unstable internal political situation jeopardizes personal security, but abusive and aggressive behavior of teenagers and adults as well. The cases about abuses committed by teenagers were named several times. It creates a fear for parents to let their children go to school, and when schools are not protected, the life and freedom of their children is not protected either.

> *"At school a boy used a knife towards his classmate because of a girl issue, and my son was standing nearby watching this. I was terrified when I learned about it; should I not let my child go to school?" [Tbilisi, age group 26-35]*

When the issue pertains to the security of children's lives, the role of police and providing a safe environment is required to be on the highest level of security.

While discussing teenager issues we logically lead to problems related to drug usage. Respondents stated that drug usage has been increased recently, particularly among girls. Unemployment was named as a major causal factor of drug usage.

> *"Because of unemployment, boys, in particular, become addicted to alcohol and drugs." [Tbilisi, age group 26-35]*

Mental problems, modern style of life, economic problems, and unreasonable usage of leisure time were also named as other causal factors of drug usage.

> *"Without money you can't provide a job for your child, can't let your child try out for a sport; due to this, children mainly stay outside and learn many bad things."[Tbilisi, age group: 36-55]*

The widespread and visible drug usage (in the residential buildings, near schools) of course creates an extremely unsecured environment for people leading normal lifestyles. In some cases, law enforcement bodies were blamed for not controlling people who distribute/market drugs and for their inaction towards such issues.

> *"You can find syringes thrown everywhere; it is extremely dangerous as children watch how others make an injection" [Tbilisi, age group 15-25]*

Some of the respondents are more or less understanding towards drug users. They consider that drug users should be treated as ill people; however, part of the audience directly linked drug users to criminals. They consider that drug users lose their sense of humanity and are dangerous for personal security. The loose control of drug users from the side of the state was named as one of the problems in social services of personal security.

It is also important to underline the linkage between the generations and drug usage as behavior. According to the some of the respondents, the new generation is uncontrolled and stimulates drug usage.

Solutions and ways to decrease such high drug usage levels, particularly in the new generation, were proposed mainly in two directions: (1) Distributors of drugs should be charged relevantly and (2) the role of religion should be increased. Some respondents put forward the religious and spiritual resolution of drug usage problem.

> *"You can't recover drug users by force. The Patriarch's program for drug users was created in a way that drug users can go there by their will only, without any force. " [Tbilisi, age group 15-25]*

Drug usage is so much extended that, for example, everyone knows who is using drugs and who is distributing drugs in their district.

The issue of loose law was also highlighted as a problem of personal security. The fact that constitutional rights are abrogated directly hinders personal security.

It is interesting to see the differences of attitudes and perceptions regarding personal security in Akhaltsikhe. Lifestyle and attitudes usually differ significantly between Tbilisi and other regions.

The understanding of personal security in Akhaltsikhe was linked to violence and the inability to defend oneself from violence.

The personal security is mostly stabilized in Akhaltsikhe. Criminality, robbery and abuses are very rare. The work of the police in Akhaltsikhe was viewed positively. The significant improvement was mentioned as the most remarkable success of the police. The number of criminal cases has decreased

significantly, and in this regard, it is logical that expectations about police defending personal security are very high. Respondents in Akhaltsikhe revealed trust towards law enforcement bodies and highlighted a peaceful rhythm of life in Akhaltsikhe.

> *"We are peaceful people. Akhaltsikhe has always been a peaceful city and it is so now. " [Akhaltsikhe, age group: 25-36]*

The tendency of having a high level of personal security in Akhaltsikhe was characteristic of every group discussion. The only live case of problems regarding personal security named was the period of Zviad Gamsakhurdia. In several cases respondents recalled this period as the only case of threatened personal security which itself tensed problems of relationships between Georgians and representatives of national minority groups.

Free movement at night was stated as one of the priorities that Akhaltsikhe has in terms of personal security.

In relation to personal security, the problem of drug usage exists as a minor and even unnoticed problem. Such cases appeared to be so rare in Akhaltsikhe that no examples or comments were made about it. The reasons of such a low number of drug users were identified in several ways (1) the city is small, (2) the people have very low salaries, the majority of them are self-employed or work in governmental structures, and they have no money for drugs.

The understanding of personal security in Zugdidi was expanded and linked in relation to police; how police protect the security of the people.

The fear of sharing information with police was firstly named as a problem of personal security. The anonymity in such cases is not guaranteed and usually people prefer to say nothing than to live with the fear that in case of something police might not protect them. Consequently, this fact decreases the initiative of people to apply to police or cooperate with them; no trust means no trial.

The respondents revealed the condition that ordinary people defend themselves, their relatives, and their neighbors from criminals, as they see police as being a helpless structure, and named cases describing the inability of police.

Respondents very often mentioned the violent activity of police officers towards arrested citizens. Respondents were very well aware that such violent activity towards arrested persons, no matter how guilty they are, represents unlawful behavior and in this regard creates a threat to personal security. All these facts induce the perceptions that the police are using exaggerated power towards people, and that is directly linked to the personal security issue. Such behavior from the side of police officers was explained by respondents in a very comprehensive way and was argued variously. Some of the respondents reasoned the problem of the mentality of the Megrelian people in understanding the importance of cooperation with police; moreover, some considered that low education level and unprofessional police officers are the main reasons of their unreliability in the view of people.

Despite these negative statements, positive attitudes were also stated. The facts that people can freely walk in the streets and that the number of criminal cases decreased significantly were named as positive sides of law enforcement bodies. Some respondents see police as fully satisfying all the needs of societal security, yet still indicate the rude manners of police officers:

> *"They use power in an awkward way: 'I have this position so be afraid of me'". [Zugdidi, age group: 15-25]*

According to statistical data, Zugdidi has a high rate of drug users. It is interesting to see the attitudes of people living in Zugdidi towards drug usage and threats related to it. The main factor explaining the reason of drug usage was the easy accessibility to drugs in Zugdidi. Due to the proximity to a conflict zone, it is mostly a less controlled area and **smuggling** is the most alarming problem that this region generally faces. In this regard, resolving the problem of drug usage is directly linked to cutting the access ways to drugs, which is a peace and political security problem itself and is not easily resolvable. Another reason for such wide drug usage was the image of "coolness" that drug usage had and still has in the view of young people.

> *"Being a drug user means being cool in Georgia" [Zugdidi, age group: 15-25].*

Despite these attitudes, the majority of respondents consider drug usage as a form of illness, but some respondents enlarged this issue and added that these "ill people" usually transform into criminals, which threatens personal security in society. Moreover, the issue of the "spoiled" generation was mentioned as one of the threatening factors, because teenagers and adults take after each other and this of course creates tensions.
Some respondents mentioned signs of improvement regarding the problem of drug usage.

> *"The number of drug users has significantly decreased. Before you could hardly find a place in a district where they were not standing, syringes were thrown everywhere." [Zugdidi, age group: 36-55]*

The concept of personal security was understood and spread over different ways of perception. The four major factors were outlined by the respondents: (1) The role of police as a social service which should guarantee personal security, (2) The tendency of drug usage as one of the threatening factors towards personal security, (3) Free and safe movement around the city, and (4) threats that exist at schools and the general segment of uncontrolled teenagers and adults.

All these factors were widely discussed by the respondents and lead to the formation of different attitudes. During evaluation of police and its role in personal safety, improvements were highlighted as compared to the period of 5 years ago, but important negative aspects were also emphasized, such as the inability of police in implementing its responsibilities, and their rude and unlawful behavior towards detainees.

Respondents in almost every group discussion indicated a newly emerged fear of being unprotected. Recently increased numbers of crimes, burglaries, and robberies provoked anxiety in respondents in terms of freely moving around city and letting their children out without worry. In general, the increased fear was explained because of the unstable internal political situation which itself created a favorable atmosphere for criminals. Economic problems and unemployment also contribute to this process. This issue is logically followed by the problems that exist in creating a safe environment for teenagers and adults, as well as in uncontrolled environments at schools and the constant fear of parents who do not usually have enough time to control every movement of their child. Finally, this logically leads to the problem of drug abuse, which is a highly alarming factor in Tbilisi and Zugdidi. The drug abuse problem was linked to a lack of several social services: which related to the uncontrolled area by the state that leaves "black holes" for drug users and distributors, as well as incorrect and unprofessional treatment towards drug users and inability of police to arrest distributors.

Community security

The sense of community security encompasses protection of people from the **loss of traditional relationships and values.** It assumes **protection of human rights**, particularly of **ethnic and religious minorities**. The term community security is widely understood as "justice" and "human rights". Problems that might be seen in community security are originally stated as **disappointment** when individuals in the state find that for all the promises made to them, they and the community around them are not better off, when an **unbiased trusted source of information is not available**, when **rights of minority groups are not equal to the majority population,** and when **inclusion of civil society is not visible.** However, the understanding of community security by respondents slightly varies from the one stated originally and is given in a more detailed and wide nature based on the analyzed perceptions and attitudes derived from the participants of Focus Group Discussions.
The respondents highlighted the syndrome of unprotected human rights. Several determining factors were brainstormed to find out what particularly shapes the syndrome of unprotected human rights. A low level of knowledge of human rights is one of the major reasoning factors that create the trend that people are unable to defend their rights.

> *"People don't know what rights they have and where they should protect their rights and to whom they should apply. Today I work but tomorrow I might be fired without any explanations."[Tbilisi, age group: 26-35]*

In fact, low levels of awareness and knowledge of human rights induce the inability to seek for ways of protecting human rights. This problem was mainly discussed in terms of employment – labor rights. The fear of losing one's job and the nonexistence of ways of protesting this fact were postulated as the most alarming problems that everyone might face one day. This problem was deeply analyzed as discrimination. Part of the audience stated that their labor rights are discriminated by age and their position (what political attitude they have). Professionals after 35-40 usually face the risk that they might not find a job due to their age.

> *"Only adults under 28 are accepted in the business of distribution, I have been working in distribution for 10 years and I should not live in fear that at the age of 33 I won't be acceptable for another working place." [Tbilisi, group 26-35]*

In terms of abrogation of labor rights and the "institution of patronage", - behavioral corruption was also highlighted. It is hard to obtain a job if you do not have a relative or friend in the field. Some part of the audience indicated unlawful and unfair reimbursement of salaries to the employees. The fact that rights are not equally distributed between employer and employee was seen as abrogation of labor rights.

The issues of community security and social services that guarantee community security were linked to several important and active concerns. Let us firstly discuss problems associated with **free expression of ideas**. Right to free expression was usually ranked as one of the main problems after labor rights. Expression of ideas and attitudes was strictly associated to the fear and danger that might follow freely expressing opinions and positions. The will of expression is high but fear of negative consequences is even higher.

> *"I have my political opinion, want to go outside and say what I want, but I am afraid, because I might be harmed either by stones or rubber bullets". [Tbilisi, age group 15-25]*
> *"If you say the truth, you might be arrested." [Tbilisi, age group 15-25]*

Law and justice as a social service of community security carry increasingly important value. Almost each respondent raised the problems related to law, legitimacy, and the unreliability of courts. In general, attitudes towards justice were unilateral: *"There is no justice in Georgia"*. The nonexistence of social services to protect the law and prove your innocence was indicated as one of the major problems of the justice system. Herewith it is important to know that some part of the audience reached the conclusion that society itself is not formed relevantly to protect the law and respect it.

> *"Legislation is not lawful, law is not suited to people. In Georgia the verdict is usually reached by a call from upper spheres." [Tbilisi, age group 36-55]*

However, the problem lies not only in a lack of rule of law (judicial system), but in indifferent attitudes of society towards law and the supreme nature of law. The society is not established in a way to guarantee equity towards law.

> *"Every problem nowadays is related to society. The Soviet mentality creates problems in the transitioning process to democracy. " [Tbilisi, age group: 36-55]*

Social assistances as one of the social services for community security were named by some of the respondents, particularly in terms of eliminating or decreasing social assistances for large families and pregnant women. This was directed as a complaint towards the government for inadequate distribution of social assistance.

> *"As mother of three children I used to receive 15 Gel, but now it is abolished" [Tbilisi, age group: 26-35]*

The problems related to brain drain, teenage difficulties, and indifference towards Georgian national resources were additionally named as problematic factors for community security. Although few respondents mentioned the issue of social inclusion, it was still brought up in the way that there is no initiative from the side of society itself. On the other hand, respondents added that there is no promotion of social inclusion from the side of government.

> *"People should express initiative; state can't be responsible for everything."*

It should also be noted that one of the important postulates of community security is security of identity, which was not an active theme of the discussions since human rights and justice issues mainly overloaded the community security issue. However, a small part of the audience mentioned the fear of losing national identity and presented it as one of the major threats in Georgian reality. This factor was grounded by the fact that the young generation is not touched by the ongoing political occurrences.

> *"Nowadays the young generation doesn't t even worry, for example _ about the war which happened in August. When we were at their age we really did worry." [Tbilisi, age group: 36-55]*

A very different picture appeared in Akhaltsikhe compared to those problems revealed in Tbilisi regarding community security.

The conditions related to human rights in general were estimated mostly positively in Akhaltsikhe. No problems regarding the free expression of ideas were revealed. The sense of respecting each other's

ideas and living in a more civilized society created a favorable environment for the implementation and protection of human rights.

> *"There are some cases when human rights are abrogated, but now there are some institutions which oversee such cases." [Akhaltsikhe, age group: 15-25]*

Having friendly and good relationships between Armenians and Georgians was in the spotlight during discussions. Access to social services is equal for Armenians and no cases of abuses were mentioned.

> *"Normally Georgians receive education in the same way Armenians do, no one is making any distinction" [Akhaltsikhe, age group: 15-25, Armenians]*

However, with issues referring to law and justice, the situation in Akhaltsikhe did not appear as perfect as in the case of human rights. Some part of the audience expressed dissatisfaction towards the judicial system in the way that not everyone is equally treated and the supremacy of law is not protected relevantly. Respondents indicated slight improvements in terms of the judicial system but pointed out that some problems stay unresolved.

> *"I am very dissatisfied, unfair judgments are often made, they can hardly make a distinction between who is innocent and who is guilty" [Akhaltsikhe, age group: 15-26]*
> *"We do stream towards European standards but still we have courts similar to the ones during the Soviet Union" [Akhaltsikhe, age group: 15-26]*

Despite the friendly cohabitation of Armenians and Georgians in Akhaltsikhe, an interesting issue was revealed in regards to a clash of positions. During the tense political situation in Georgia and particularly during the period of the August war, the "clash of positions" has been caused due to the pro-Russian attitude of Armenians.

> *"We Armenians are unfairly judged, the debates are often about the position of Armenians, and Georgians say: if we want Russia why do we live in Akhaltsikhe and etc… I was born in Akhaltsikhe and what happens in politics is not my business." [Akhaltsikhe, age group: 15-26, Armenians]*
> *"During the war Armenians argued that Georgians deserved that Russians broke war."*

Such contradictions of positions between Georgians and Armenians arise mainly in periods of tense political situations, which create the background that the relationships between them have the nature of a "mine"; until these relationships are touched by external factors, cohabitation goes smoothly, but as soon as political instability rises, disagreements escalate.

One important factor **complicating relationships among Armenians and Georgians** is the lack of a connection among Georgian and Armenian villages due to the language barrier.

> *"In Akhaltsikhe we live together, but Georgian and Armenian villages don't have communication among each other. In villages of Akhalkalaki Armenians don't speak Georgian; mostly, these people have conflicts with Georgians as they don't understand each other." [Akhaltsikhe, age group: 26-35]*

Some part of the audience in Akhaltsikhe indicated **Immigration problems** in community security, as a majority of young people migrate to Tbilisi or abroad to work. Herewith migration from other cities

and villages was also indicated as a problem because migrants from Kutaisi, Zestafoni and Tbilisi take working spots in Akhaltsikhe.

> *"Migrants in Akhaltsikhe are mostly employed as they either have relatives here, or are refugees, or someone from Tbilisi appointed them" [Akhaltsikhe, age group: 36+55]*

Community security in Zugdidi was understood as **free expression of ideas** and **justice**. In this regard, the audience was conditionally divided into three groups:

(1) Part of the audience stated that those who are weak have no strength to express their own ideas or protest. The tendency of inability and turning a blind eye on crime due to fear was mainly indicated as a problem in community security.

> *"There are many cases when crime is committed and you know who did it, but you can't say because you are afraid" [Zugdidi, age group: 15-25]*

(2) Some part of the respondents expressed indifferent attitudes towards free expression of ideas as lack of relevant actions is visible.

(3) Another segment had a sense of complete satisfaction in terms of free expression and did not indicate it as a problem or threat of community security.

> *"I think that Georgia is a democratic state and everyone can express their own opinions and positions freely." [Zugdidi, age group: 15-25]*

The problem of the availability of trustworthy information was also mentioned as one of the problems in community security, as media was estimated as loose and biased.

The issue of human rights was spread mostly in terms of the socially unprotected parts of society.

> *"Healthcare services and medicines are very expensive, so some privileges should be created for socially unprotected people" [Zugdidi, age group: 36-55]*

The problems related to justice and the law were broadly linked to a main issue: nepotism. This refers to the tendency of inequality towards law. In general, these factors ground the negative attitudes of respondents, that the judicial system in Georgia is not lawful and should be changed completely. The inability to respond and react on unlawful occurrences explains why respondents see that justice cannot be found in court.

The role of civil society was also raised as one of the social services determining community security. The estimation of civil society inclusion has a similar tendency in Zugdidi as it was revealed in Tbilisi and Akhaltsikhe. The inability and inaction of society was criticized but was also justified due to the expectations of disappointment.

External and internal political security

Fear of war

Three basic aspects have become known concerning issues of political security: fear of war, and fear of internal and external dangers.

Actualization of the problem of fear of war has happened after the August developments, though the feeling of danger has existed in people during many years, especially in the regions bordering Abkhazia. Now people have a fear of war, and connected with it, they have a feeling of instability:

> *„I have a permanent fear of war after the August war". [Tbilisi, 26-35 Age group]*

A certain part of the population had a feeling that it is under permanent risk, which will never be overcome by the inhabitants of Georgia: and that aggravates the urgency of the issue as all this develops not into fear of a single instance which can be overcome, but into constant anxiety, on the background of which generations grow up, for which war and violence became already a constant occurrence.

> *„I don't have a fear anymore. I have gotten used to the war after Abkhazian developments. However, I am always stressed because of rallies. It is a wrong time for rallies, when Russia is waiting for even a small reason for intervention." [Tbilisi, 26-35 Age group]*

On this background, any appeasement of the situation is perceived as a temporary occurrence, before the next escalation that does not enable one to calm down.

> *„We live at the border of Abkhazia, Russian troops are near us and we are afraid of intervention"[Zugdidi, 36+ Age-group]*
> *„Our internal problems are Abkhazia and Osetia. We live on a border and we are afraid". [Zugdidi, 36+ Age group]*
> *„Our fear is permanent. We usually hear firing and people are awake all nights long" [Zugdidi, 36+ Age-group]*

Feeling of instability reasoning from external factors

In general, the issue of political security is aggravated by the fear of external danger, as it is impossible to feel at ease if you have unresolved attitudes. In the direction of the general democracy and adjustment of external attitudes, the government receives a negative estimation. The society estimates foreign policy as absence of attitudes.

> *„When you have such bad relations with a neighboring country, how is it possible to consider that you do not have external problems? Since Zviad Gamsakhurdia up until today, everyone has made mistakes, nothing good occurs. " [Tbilisi, 26-35 Age-group]*
> *„The level of democracy in Georgia is so low, they make mistakes every minute. The aspiration to the West is also a problem, since because of this, you lose a neighboring country with which you lived together during so many years. " [Tbilisi, 26-35 Age-group]*
> *„It is important for the country to have good relationships with neighbors in order to feel safe." [Tbilisi, 56+ Age-group]*

In the opinion of a society, this striving of the government for the West is carried out in the wrong way, which definitely irritates Russia and aggravates the situation even more.

> *„The quest for the West should be proper, instead of strained. In my opinion, Russia is again waiting for a moment to intrude in Georgia; it in every possible way tries to force us to refuse the West and to choose it. " [Tbilisi, 26-35 Age-group]*

However, except for the wrong position of the government, all this is estimated as a game of greater countries where Georgia is an object of experiment; and proceeding from a consistency or inconsistency of these countries, current processes in Georgia are defined.

All this is perceived as a process, which will never be influenced by Georgia or its government. It will always play the role of a marionette. That is further aggravated by internal disorders and weakens the influence of Georgia on its own future even more. For the population of Georgia, the prospect of how Georgia may become dependant on itself is foggy and not clear.

> *„In our country, experiments of other countries are operated. Everybody knows that in Georgia, there is a war between two greater countries and the winner's president will rule. We are a small country and should be either with one country or with another. " [Tbilisi, 36-55 Age-group]*
> *„Everything is decided with relation to foreign policy, and this process is irreversible and goes in the chosen direction. The only thing we can do to rescue our country is to support the Patriarch. " [Tbilisi, 36-55 Age-group]*
> *„If we solve internal problems and start to listen and respect each other, if the nation will not be separated, we can solve external problems. " [Tbilisi, 36-55 Age-group]*
> *„We should protect ourselves. " [Tbilisi, 36-55 Age-group]*
> *„ Everything is caused by foreign policy, our situation causes this policy. Our location is the reason of such a policy. Everybody wants to control the oil pipeline. I do not know whether the opposition wants it or not, but accidentally or not they assist Russia. I am not saying that they are ruled by Russia, but the situation became well disposed for them. "[Akhaltsikhe, 26-35 Age-group]*
> *„The USA is the same. America ostensibly wishes to be a friend of Georgia, but there are many implied senses which it also wants. Two giants cannot divide small Georgia. We would not have a right to live our Georgian way of life and for our country. "[Zugdidi, 26-35 Age-group]*

There are various opinions on a correct choice of a direction. One part of society considers that Georgia is involved in a greater game in which it plays the role of a pawn and will be easily surrendered by any large player for achievement of higher priority purposes; for the other part of the population, during conversation about external attitudes, good and bad forces become known. This part considers that the actions of the West and America are directed not only by their interests, but also by the protection of interests of Georgia and the well-being of the Georgian people.

> *„It seems that the world in on our side. They support us financially or simply with flour or sugar. I think that there is not any danger. Everything is ok for the present moment." [Akhaltsikhe, 15-25 Age-group]*

Political stability

Political instability is considered as the protest caused by external factors, directed on the achievement of own purposes by other countries. All this is perceived by regions as untimely events that do not conduct Georgia to the improvement of a situation, and can cause deterioration of a situation.

„Internal disturbances are unacceptable for me, especially after war. " [Akhaltsikhe, 15-25 Age-group]
„I don't like these rallies. Everybody has his or her own reason. Their requirements should be satisfied, but without internal disturbances. " [Akhaltsikhe, 15-25 Age-group]
„I think that the problems can be solved by negotiations. " [Akhaltsikhe, 15-25 Age-group]
„I do not support disturbances in our country. I think that actions of the opposition are wrong. They hinder the development of our country. Anyway, if I were unemployed, I would not support them. " [Akhaltsikhe, 15-25 Age-group]
„They aren't guilty, but "the fortress opens from inside". [Akhaltsikhe, 26-35 Age-group]
„This is the policy of the government. The entire world laughs at us; you can see it on the Internet. " [Tbilisi, 36-55 Age-group]
„Misha has actually caused us to lose territories, maybe there was a provocation of Russia, but actually the war has been started by our president.." [Tbilisi, 36-55 Age-group]

Internal disorders, in the opinion of the society, are directed according to the interests of other countries, seriously harm the population, prevent progress of any areas, from the economic point of view destroy potential for any progress, and even further aggravate the investment environment and potential of investors, which are already spoiled because of war and the world crisis.

„Political stability is the issue of the day. " [Tbilisi, 26-35 Age-group]
„Internal stability does not exist at all, and that influences the order and peace; we don't have investments any more, foreigners are not coming. " [Tbilisi, 26-35 Age-group]
„ There is a bad situation, in fact it is internal war, they cannot negotiate, and our children suffer from it. It impedes education.
We could see what happened at the Police Office; intrusion into parliament during a session is democracy[28], and discharge of children is not democracy? None of them were proper steps. " [Tbilisi, 36-55 Age-group]

All the aforesaid also causes physical danger to the person, puts serious psychological pressure upon a society, which further influences any area, and aggravates a situation even more strongly, and makes it uncontrollable.

„The unstable situation causes depression, even has physical impacts, and all of this harms health". [Tbilisi, 26-35 Age-group]
"Yes, calmness and stability should be in the state, and further material well-being proceeds from this. " [Tbilisi, 26-35 Age-group]
„In addition to outside danger, we have a bad situation internally, and all of this influences an economic situation. It causes crisis, reduction of salaries, and firings." [Zugdidi, 26-35 Age-group]
„We have a very bad situation, which impacts everything: jobs, mentality, economics, and health. " [Akhaltsikhe, 26-35 Age-group]

Specificity of the regions from the angle of political safety

[28] This is in reference to intrusion into Parliament by the current president of Georgia Mikheil Saakashvili in 2003 that paved the way for his arrival to power.

In relation to political safety, cases of Akhaltsikhe and Zugdidi should be considered separately.

The major problem for Akhaltsikhe that became known is not only fear of war that undoubtedly exists in all of Georgia, but also the problems that become aggravated after war. This includes the issue of national minorities, in relation to which, open confrontation at the given stage does not exist, though this problem is seriously effected by other countries and their directed actions towards an aggravation of the conflict, during a tense situation in Georgia.

> *„ Akhaltsikhe is a multinational city, which causes strained attitudes between national groups. We have grown together and from their side discords can come, and it can be caused by disorders. These all comes from above, Tbilisi has the same situation, there are conversations about loss of territories, and there was a conversation on the possible loss of Javakheti. " [Akhaltsikhe, 26-35 Age-group]*

In addition, the case of Zugdidi, where the fear of war was aggravated after the August events, should also be considered as a special case. Constantly there is a general pressure, shootings, and expectations of the subsequent escalation. In addition, if for other regions war is more or less a past danger, for the city of Zugdidi it can be named a never-ending war; as in this region shooting is constantly audible and the city is in constant expectation of an aggravation of the situation.

By the assessments made in Zugdidi, the population of Abkhazia and frontier regions live in an epoch of constant war, and generations change in these conditions.

> *„In our village there is a constant pressure, we do not know when we will be attacked, shooting does not stop, and children are under constant fear. This problem is the most important. " [Zugdidi, 26-35 Age-group]*
> *„The youth of Sokhumi should not know so much about weapons. Now children know more about weapons than about games." [Zugdidi, 26-35 Age-group]*

Economic security

Several principal issues have been marked out concerning economic security:

Unemployment

The problem of unemployment was revealed in all groups as a rather pertinent problem. Many problems exist in this direction, for the resolving of which the society sees few attempts or concrete steps. According to respondents, in the given direction, the situation only worsens and there is no progress. There are neither workplaces, nor a work corresponding qualification or qualified personnel.

> *„We have a problem of unemployment. There are no jobs. " [Akhaltsikhe, 15-25 Age-group]*
> *„In my opinion, everyone should work by profession. It is difficult to achieve in Georgia. "[Tbilisi, 26-35 Age-group]*
> *„Actually, there are no workplaces, young people are jobless, and it already causes psychological problems and intensity. When a person in the age range of 27-30 years cannot find a job, he starts to think that he is unusable, and that influences his mentality. "[Zugdidi, 26-35 Age-group]*

> *„There are no workplaces. 80 % of the Akhaltsikhe population is workers, and there are many unemployed people. It not only because of the crisis, 60% of men used to work out of the region, and those who stayed, were engaged in something. Now the majority does not leave the city. There is a lot of labor force but there aren't jobs." [Akhaltsikhe, 26-35 Age-group]*
> *„I graduated from the faculty of sports in Armenia, and now I work on a building site. " [Akhaltsikhe, 15-25 Age-group]*

A very problematic issue is the existence of unacceptable jobs, and in spite of financial pressure, people are not lowering themselves to such jobs.

> *„You know, I've never worked by profession and I think that I am behind by 3 years and cannot work since I am not a good specialist, but there are a lot of places where one can get a job, but we aren't stooping to such jobs, for instance in the sphere of service, in supermarkets." [Tbilisi, 15-25 Age-group]*

Besides, for all desirable works, experience and qualification are required, but there is no opportunity to get experience; and there is also corruption in the sphere of employment.

> *„ Meanwhile Georgia is a place where if you do not have friends... It is very difficult to find a job. The state has not developed any programs, even for starting work by profession, or for assessing qualifications. " [Tbilisi, 26-35 Age-group]*
> *„Everywhere experience is required; they do not give you a chance to work, even for a short time, to get this experience. A large number of young people in Georgia are unemployed. " [Tbilisi, 26-35 Age-group]*

Differentiation of the society from the angle of income

In the judgment of the population, Georgian society, from the point of view of incomes, is divided by rich and poor classes, but the so-called middle class does not exist at all. That is caused by a wrong economical strategy of the government. The most serious problem is that the majority of the Georgian population is below the level of poverty.

> *„There is not a middle class; there are rich people and poor people. The problem of Georgia is that we have not established an economical direction yet. " [Tbilisi, 26-35 Age-group]*
> *„The situation is complicated; there are a lot of unemployed people. When in a country of 3 million 800 000 people are socially unprotected, it shows a lot". [Tbilisi, 26-35 Age-group]*

Economic strategy from the angle of business and finances

In addition, serious problems are found in terms of economic strategy, in conditions of passing economy. The society considers that the transition of the economy to a new stage is being carried out unplanned and is painful for the population. After the breakdown of the Soviet Union, there was a full destruction of the economic structure, and if now there is a reconstruction, it is not planned and inconsequential. In reality, agricultural and industrial fields were completely abolished; all economical activities were centralized in Tbilisi, and this is dangerous for the regions and their existence. Transition to the Western economic system is not going on a right course, since it is completely destroying the old system and not supporting the creation of a new one.

> *„We should have internal production. We should pay attention to our agricultural field. In my opinion, the big problem of Georgia is the problem of Tbilisi. If Georgia will continue this way, it will cause loss of territories." [Tbilisi, 26-35 Age-group]*
> *„ It is not the European culture; it is a problem of all society. In Europe, first, there is a standard of work. It is difficult to understand democratic values. We have a bourgeois education that is ostentatious of good breeding. " [Tbilisi, 26-35 Age-group]*
> *„This division has begun since we entered into capitalism. There is not an agricultural field any more. Earlier, the population of villages was farming tea, but now women prefer to be engaged in trade in other cities, than to look after cattle and the ground. Earlier, people were accustomed to good work and did not wish to do something else. I know a lot of people, who grow greens, sell them, and have an elementary work." [Zugdidi, 36+ Age-group]*

Nowadays business is under pressure, the investment sphere and development opportunities are very bad.

> *„But businessmen cannot do much, if they will be limited by the state. Certainly, they are limited. Thus, they cannot win the tender, as they do not have patronage. If the state will do everything transparently, then we will have both business and investments." [Zugdidi, 15-25 Age-group]*

The economic policy of bank crediting is negatively estimated as well. Instead of being the factor promoting business that will cause further development of the economy, it creates additional problems for the population, because of wrong planning.

> *„ The giving of credits was pernicious for Akhaltsikhe and for the entire country. The crisis has coincided with crediting, for small business it is impossible to cover these debts. It was an awful thing, and they have involved people and have ruined them. You can do nothing; you only try to earn a little to cover bank credits. " [Akhaltsikhe, 26-35 Age-group]*

Price policy, which exists in the country, and the ways of its settlement, are considered unjustified. In general, existing mechanisms of price formation are being considered inappropriate to the economic condition of the country.

> *„The rise in prices is a very big problem". [Zugdidi, 36+ Age-group]*
> *„Neither medicines, nor a visit to a doctor, are expensive, but our salaries are too low. It is social injustice. "*
> *„If we had 5000 Gel salary, we'd say that the prices are normal." [Tbilisi, 56+ Age-group]*

With regard to economic security, serious concern is caused by the situation after a crisis that aggravates already existing economic and social problems. Because of an economic crisis, the condition of employment has even further worsened.

> *„ Since the crisis began, all has worsened. The main thing is that before there was no crisis."*
> *"After the beginning of the crisis many people have been fired. Members of my family and friends have been fired. There were a lot of such cases." [Akhaltsikhe, 15-25 Age-group]*

In the people's opinion, besides the fact that the number of workplaces has decreased, the investment environment has worsened and the potential of economic development has decreased because of war and a world economic crisis.

> *„In general, the situation in Georgia is very difficult; investors are not coming any more.*
> *„If investors come, our budget will be filled, pensioners will get their pension. If not, then inflation will start. " [Tbilisi, 26-35 Age-group]*
> *„The reason of unemployment is the crisis. " [Akhaltsikhe, 26-35 Age-group]*
> *„ Here there is a very big problem, especially on the background of this world crisis during which employed people are already being fired."[Tbilisi, 15-25 Age-group]*
> *„The situation is very bad; it was more or less stable before the war. They speak about the world crisis. However, we have had a crisis and war dating from Shevardnadze's epoch. " [Tbilisi, 26-35 Age-group]*
> *„ If 50 persons worked before, 10 remained. " [Tbilisi, 56+ Age-group]*

Educational security

In general, educational security consists of the problems of several categories:

Problem of secondary education

The sphere of secondary education has both positive and negative tendencies. In general, it is assessed as better than higher education, as it is more accessible and pupils are under almost the same conditions, in comparison with higher education.

An arguable point is conformity of teacher's functions with their responsibility. If one part considers this fact as a curtailment of teacher's rights, another part considers it as an adequate change.

> *"Teachers have been deprived their rights." [Tbilisi, 26-35 Age-group]*
> *"Teachers have too many rights. It is a violation, when the teacher calls his pupil a moron or stupid." [Zugdidi, 15-25 Age-group]*

The education system does not keep up with the development of children, they've changed requirements, and in general it results in an education system which is inappropriate to modern standards.
In addition, in the case of secondary education, the problem of teachers comes to a light that is connected to an unworthy assessment of the teacher's profession and the deficiency of pedagogical education.

> *„We have problems with education that have increased now, the times have changed, children have changed... " [Tbilisi, 26-35 Age-group]*
> *„The profession of the teacher cannot be neglected. The pupil leaves the class because the teacher expels him. Pedagogical education does not have an appropriate place, nobody pays attention to children's mentality, and the Soviet methods are used again." [Tbilisi, 26-35 Age-group]*
> *„This society was formed during the Soviet Union, and Soviet education is useless for today." [Tbilisi, 26-35 Age-group]*

The retraining of teachers is the pressing question, as according to respondents, teachers were not retrained in an appropriate way. Not only can programs be considered not adapted to the Georgian reality, but also, teachers can be considered not adapted to the changed standards, which reduces their efficiency and productivity.

> *„I think that the level of the pedagogues is very low, they should be retrained. Maybe they have an education, but it is not a pedagogical one. " [Akhaltsikhe, 26-35 Age-group]*
> *„If you are a strong teacher you should know how to provide the necessary information to children. Today teachers are confused, as earlier they taught one subject, and now they teach different ones. Many teachers cannot solve some tasks, so how should they teach? Retraining is necessary. " [Akhaltsikhe, 26-35 Age-group]*

School education in the majority of cases does not give the possibility to receive that knowledge which the education system at the further stage requires.

> *„ Lessons are not conducted and children are compelled to prepare with private teachers to pass the National Examinations. They do not provide knowledge sufficient for passing exams. " [Tbilisi, 15-25 Age-group]*

There has been a system of corruption at schools until now.

> *„Yes. If you do not prepare, you will not get a mark. " [Zugdidi, 36+ Age-group]*

Problem of higher education

A major problem of higher education is the attitude that everyone wants to obtain higher education in spite of the fact that as of today the diploma of the Georgian highest institution guarantees neither work nor qualitative education.

After completing school there is no alternative, except higher educational institution.

Also in the section of higher education, the problem of imperfection is revealed, which first is caused by non-professionalism of the staff and centralization of higher education, in addition to the approach that in regions it is impossible to obtain good higher education.

> *„I think that everything is bad. Our lecturers have a low level of quality. In the 21st century, the level should be higher. "[Tbilisi, 26-35 Age-group]*
>
> *„Many people have higher education, but there are no work places. " [Zugdidi, 15-25 Age-group]*
>
> *"Everyone selects one profession; everyone wants to work in the bank. No one wants to be a dressmaker or something else." [Zugdidi, 15-25 Age-group]*
> *„After graduating from the university our young people cannot find jobs. It's impossible to find a job with our diploma. "[Akhaltsikhe, 26-35 Age-group]*
> *„The Diploma of Akhaltsikhe University doesn't mean anything. You are considered more educated if you graduated from the university in the capital and especially if you have studied abroad. "[Akhaltsikhe, 26-35 Age-group]*

In Georgia, the problem of higher education is also the fact that it is not planned with respect to the labor market, i.e., it does not satisfy the requirements of the market. From this point of view, it is possible to mark out several categories on which the education system should be based: the need for personnel of the specific profession, quantitative necessity, and qualification. However, today the educational system does not meet these requirements.

> *„ It is not necessary to admit so many students into the universities. 29 000 people put in applications and 27000 should be admitted" [Akhaltsikhe, 26-35 Age-group]*

> *There are required professions that we do not have. But there are also such professions that aren't required [Zugdidi, 15-25 Age-group]*

Coming from the abovementioned, expectations of Georgian education are being decreased; the Diploma loses its value and is not associated with a valuable document.

> *„Even if you bring a 6-month certificate from abroad, you are considered a good specialist." [Akhaltsikhe, 26-35 Age-group].*

It is possible to consider that the reform and introduction of the system of the National examinations helped solve a problem of higher education, which helped to eradicate corruption in this system.

> *„The situation of admission to a higher educational institution is better. In the times of my children, 18000 were needed for admission, but now they can be admitted by themselves. " [Zugdidi, 36+ Age-group]*

Problem of vocational education

During conversation about the problem of higher education, the problem of a non-existence of its alternative was mentioned. As of today, people who want to study after obtaining a secondary education have no alternative.

> *„We do not have a sufficient number of higher institutions. People should obtain a vocational education, they should learn to work on wood, tile, etc. " [Akhaltsikhe, 26-35 Age-group]*
> *„Maybe, we do not have the specialists. There are private enterprises that hire people. " [Tbilisi, 36-55 Age-group]*
> *„ Parents think that their children must study in higher educational institutions, but what should the teacher do, if the child does not have abilities?" [Zugdidi, 36+ Age-group]*

Besides the deficiency of vocational schools, there is the problem of their improvement, with respect to the requirements of the labor market. The demand for young personnel grows, apparently because elderly people are trained on the old standards and their knowledge does not correspond to contemporary requirements.
In addition, educated staff do not have the possibility of obtaining additional skills and knowledge, which are required for their profession.

> *„ Earlier, education was accessible for all. Everybody has a diploma. People should be retrained. Every taxi driver says that he has two diplomas. " [Tbilisi, 56+ Age-group]*

> *„My mother wanted to find a job. She is 40 years old and she was told that only young professionals were needed. " [Akhaltsikhe, 15-25 Age-group]*
> *„Retraining of professors- pedagogues is necessary." [Tbilisi, 26-35 Age-group]*

Problem of inaccessibility of education

The problem of the inaccessibility of education is considered from the financial point of view, both in the case of secondary and higher education. From conversation about secondary education, a basic problem is the cost of textbooks.

> *„We have to buy textbooks. Each book costs 10-17 GEL. " [Akhaltsikhe, 26-35 Age-group]*
> *„There is the problem of the purchasing of textbooks, it is too expensive. There is a category of parents who have not let their children go to school because of an absence of money; 120 GEL are necessary for the purchase of books, writing-books, pens, pencils, etc."*
> *" [Tbilisi, 26-35 Age-group]*

Besides the cost of the books, secondary education is getting more expensive because of its low quality, i.e. schools do not give satisfactory education in some subjects and a question about the training of children outside of the school system is raised, which is connected with additional expenses.

> *„The situation is very bad from this standpoint. You could not train your child without money. " [Tbilisi, 36-55 Age-group]*
> *„ The study of foreign languages is performed very weakly. English and Russian are studied at a very low level" [Zugdidi, 15-25 Age-group]*

> *„Education is connected to economical security. If I were economically stronger, I would receive the education, would study the computer. " [Akhaltsikhe, 26-35 Age-group]*

Children need to obtain additional knowledge for admission to higher educational institutions.

> *„Lessons are not conducted in the schools and children are compelled to prepare with private teachers in order to pass national examinations." [Tbilisi, 15-25 Age-group]*

The problem of the inaccessibility of education is revealed in greater scales in the case of higher education, since after the reform, there is no free education, although the society sees both positive and negative sides to it. In general, the increase of the prices for higher education, with the purpose of the improvement of its quality, is comprehensible for a part of the population.

> *„ I can say only one thing; secondary education must be free. In the case of higher education, if it will be free, then there will be a poor quality of education. For qualitative higher education, money is needed, but the state cannot take this upon itself. " [Tbilisi, 26-35 Age-group]*

The cost of higher education becomes an even unhealthier factor because it occurs among the differentiation of entrants, with respect to their financial status, and there is no financing or allowances from this point of view.

> *„A person cannot receive education if he does not have a job. If he does not get the grant, tuition fee costs 4000 GEL per year. However, if a person does not live in Tbilisi, he also needs to rent an apartment. Because of this, many talented people cannot obtain an education. " [Zugdidi, 15-25 Age-group]*
>
> *„Some of them are talented, but do not have money" [Akhaltsikhe, 26-35 Age-group]*
> *„1800-2000, 2500 is too difficult to pay. Education and health protection should be free-of-charge in a normal state. " [Zugdidi, 36+ Age-group]*

Problem of inefficiency of educational programs

The imperfection of educational programs is one more serious problem of the system of education. There is still the Soviet approach, which is outdated and ineffective. The existing educational programs do not justify themselves. They are chaotic and inadequate to modern requirements, and they are not adapted to the Georgian reality.

> *"European education is necessary, but we should take only the positive parts from it. " [Tbilisi, 26-35 Age-group]*
> *„The world develops, and we should also..." [Zugdidi, 15-25 Age-group]*
> *„We have an absurd program. Teachers make summaries by themselves, to provide children with understandable information. " [Tbilisi, 36-55 Age-group]*
> *„ I study in the ninth grade, the reform started when I was in the seventh grade. We have learned Religion, Jurisprudence, and History with one textbook. We have learned natural sciences by semesters. We studied Physics 5 times a week during a month; we physically had no time to learn it and in the second month, we forgot everything. " [Tbilisi, 15-25 Age-group]*

The transfer into the European education system, without adaptation, caused a change in the subjects of study of the national education system.

> *„ I think that if today is the 21st century, it means that taboos should be removed. There were many good literary works, which were excluded from the program. "The Knight in the Panther's Skin" which was studied in the ninth grade, is not studied any more. " [Tbilisi, 15-25 Age-group]*
> *„ We have the holiday of "Deda-ena" (mother tongue) but this book does not exist any more. " [Tbilisi, 36-55 Age-group]*

Environmental security

Ecological security has not been considered as an actual problem. It is possible to tell that in comparison with other problems, it is minor. But in connection with ecology, many problems have been revealed, the decision pertaining to which is very important as the ecology is in direct connection with health security, and this has been noted as one of the major issues. Accordingly, it is possible to tell that ecological security is very important in association with the safety of health. In consideration of ecological safety, air pollution has been mentioned, because of the evolved number of machines, especially old ones, and of poor-quality fuel.

> *„Our market is cheap. Second-hand cars are coming from Europe and the environment is being polluted."[Tbilisi, 36-55 Age-group]*

> *„We should control the import of fuel. I know that control doesn't exist."[Tbilisi, 36-55 Age-group]*

The problem of **garbage dumps** is very topical. Most of the respondents have noted and have approved the refuse bins, which were fixed in the city. Elements of improvement of the situation connected with dust have also been positively estimated.

> *„We live on the first floor, and there was terrible insanitariness. We have closed the refuse chute with our neighbor, and have stood up the refuse bin. " [Tbilisi, 26-35 Age-group]*

However, the problem is not the garbage dump or a shortage of refuse bins, but the mentality of people; a lack of comprehension by people of the fact that they should not pollute the streets. The indifferent attitude of the society to the cleanliness of the city causes the picture which exists today. The majority of respondents consider it as an output from a situation imposing penalties. However, the major part adds that until the society grows at a level of consciousness and culture, the problem of the pollution of streets will always be topical. The role of education in the growth of consciousness has been mentioned as well.

> *„I like that garbage bins have been put out, but a lot of them have been broken. It specifies an attitude of the population, which is why we are on the verge of an ecocatastrophe. "[Tbilisi, 36-55 Age-group]*

> *„The problem of refuse bins is more or less solved, but another problem is in mentality. "[Tbilisi, 36-55 Age-group]*

> *„New bus stations are also good. Many parks are laid out, but people do not look after them. This is the problem of mentality, which won't be solved by any president."[Tbilisi, 36-55 Age-group]*

> *„Litter bins are good, but until Georgians will learn to throw paper, cigarette-butts, and so on into the litter-bin, nothing will change. " [Tbilisi, 56+ Age-group]*

The problem of control was revealed as well. The best decision would be the implementation of standards of the same high level as in the developed countries; for example, establishment of dust-processing plants.

> *„ I watched on TV how the Gldani district garbage dump, 200 meters from the population, was burning. I assume it could and should be located far away from the population..."[Tbilisi, 15-25 Age-group]*

> *„ In developed countries different types of garbage are being thrown out separately. For instance, plastic garbage and paper are thrown out separately, for further recycling. "[Tbilisi, 15-25 Age-group]*

The problem of the quality of **food products** was also revealed during the conversation about ecology. Ecologically contaminated production causes health hazards, and it is a direct threat for the security of health.

> *„We face problems concerning products. I heard that in butter up to 80 % of bacillus was discovered."[Tbilisi, 15-25 Age-group]*

A certain part of the audience has noted that existence on a market of unhealthy production has been caused by unchecked imported production that not only creates danger to the population, but also impedes local manufacturing. It is a responsibility of the state that it should provide the existence of a healthy production in the market, by its thorough checking.

Together with the problem of air pollution, the problem of **felling forests** was revealed**,** both in the cities and in the villages. This question became especially urgent during the August developments, when the Borjomi forest was bombed. The problem of the destruction of forests is topical for Akhaltsikhe.

> *„Many trees are cut down; soon there will be no trees. They are fishing by current and soon it will disappear. " [Akhaltsikhe, 26-35 Age-group]*

Forests are not protected properly, which causes winds and a shortage of air. There is no system which would control felling trees, and which by itself would contribute to the eradication of poaching.

> *„ It is possible to cut trees, but there are categories of trees which cannot be felled. It should be controlled, fertile trees should not be cut down, but only old ones. And young trees should be planted." [Akhaltsikhe, 26-35 Age-group]*

All of this can cause ecocatastrophe.

> *„ People were coming here for vacations. Now there is no forest. It was cut down. Everything is flowing to Azerbaijan, Armenia, and Turkey; don't they have their own trees?" [Akhaltsikhe, 36+ Age-group]*

The problem of dust is topical for Akhaltsikhe. In the city, there is no infrastructure by means of which it would be possible to solve the problem of dust, which does not allow the possibility of normal life. In essence, the incorrect planning of roads is called the reason that causes dust.

> *„All of this is caused by wrong management. Asphalt should be laid with little slope and should have a gutter on one side. If you walk near the School #5 in the rain, you will need to take a shower approximately 8 times. When water pours over the asphalt, it makes it get out of order with time." "[Akhaltsikhe, 26-35 Age-group]*

Despite the fact that ecological security was not revealed as a topical and urgent problem, without solving the ecological problem, health security and people's welfare inevitably run the risk.

> *„If there was not a clean environment and pure water, nothing would have a price. If I had financial abilities, I would arrange everything, but without water, I couldn't do anything."[Zugdidi, 36+ Age-group]*

> *„We should protect nature, but we destroy it with our own hands. " [Akhaltsikhe, 26-35 Age-group]*

Analysis

Social programs and executive institutions

The awareness of the populations of Tbilisi, Zugdidi, and Akhaltsikhe on social programs is not developed on a homogeneous level. The Tbilisi population is better informed on social programs, some information is known to the Zugdidi population, and the population of Akhaltsikhe is less informed. The "Program of employment" is well known for all regions. The population of all regions negatively estimates this program as there was a payment of "salaries", but in reality, a very low percentage of the population has actually been employed.

> *„I've gone to Aversi pharmaceutical center, but they only put a stamp in my document and thus I received money". [Tbilisi, 26-35 Age-group]*

The major priority for the population is not to get money "for nothing" from the government, but real retraining and employment.

> *„Retraining of personnel should occur seriously. There are such spheres, for example metallurgy, which likely one century from now will not exist in Georgia. In such spheres there should proceed a retraining of personnel. " [Tbilisi, 56+ Age-group]*

The program of "Overcoming of Poverty" is similar in awareness to the "Program of Employment". Within the limits of this program, there is a rendering of assistance to families below the verge of poverty. In general, the program is assessed positively, but the population of all regions specifies a wrong and unfair system of the estimation of level of poverty.

> *„If you have shampoo at home, it means that you are not poor… if at your house you have elementary things, help is not due to you".[Tbilisi, 26-35 Age-group]*

It is necessary to note, that within its limits the program of "Overcoming of Poverty" is helping to hire people for work, but also from this point of view the population has certain suggestions. The offers of workplace should be carried out according to a specialty and education.

> *„ ... I was called and offered work as the conductor. My neighbor, a highly educated former teacher, was offered the work of street cleaner. Profession should dictate employment. "[Tbilisi, 26-35 Age-group]*

The population knows about the program of "Cheap Insurance" only through hearsay. The detailed information about this project is not carried to the audience. However, people who took participation in this project are not satisfied by it, as this insurance covers only extreme accidents.

> *„For instance, if an operation isn't very urgent or you were not injured in an accident, the insurance does not cover your expenses. "[Akhaltsikhe, 36+ Age-group]*

The population of Zugdidi is well familiar with short-term social programs. There are programs that are carried out under the initiative of private persons and have no structured character. It is possible to tell, that they are more spontaneous actions dictated by certain circumstances, for example pre-election campaigns for "getting on the good side" of people.

> *„Short-term programs are being conducted. They distribute different things. They always give out something before an election. Logically, therefore, people constantly demand elections. " [Zugdidi, 15-25 Age-group]*

The populations of Tbilisi and Zugdidi most positively estimate the activity of the fund "Iavnana". Free Ambulance also is positively assessed by the population of Tbilisi.
The population of Akhaltsikhe is more familiar with programs of agricultural development. Apparently, from conversations with the population, this theme has the highest priority for the population of the Akhaltsikhe region.

> *"'Care' and 'Elcana' are the organizations that do various things in the field of agriculture. They raise new sorts, distribute seeds to the population. They raise new breeds of cattle." [Akhaltsikhe, 26-35 Age-group]*

A wide range of programs on public health services were named by Tbilisi respondents. NGO's carry out actions against AIDS and drug addiction. Mothers of many children and disabled people receive help.

> *„The NGO helped me so much when I had a newborn child. The aid included pampers and all hygienic means... It was one-time aid". [Tbilisi, 26-35 Age-group]*

The population knows such organizations as UNICEF, USAID, Red Cross, and Save the Children.

> *"There is serious work carried out on treatment of tuberculosis which is financed by the UNO and Red Cross. " [Tbilisi, 36-55 Age-group]*

The population positively reacts to the international organizations. They named such organizations, as the World Bank and **Fund for Democracy and Development**, from which they wait for support. In general, national security and development of the country are the highest priorities for people, and any organization or program that will execute these missions will be acceptable for them.

> *„No matter, whether it is the World Bank, Fund for Democracy and Development, or the private person, the main idea is that progress of specific industries is carried out"[Tbilisi, 36-55 Age-group]*

The general attitude toward NGOs and international organizations is positive. The population receives help from them not only in the sphere of public health services, but also there is an infrastructural rehabilitation conducted; the population receives products, fuel, etc…

> *„I am very happy with the work of NGOs. They finance rehabilitation of the irrigational system and do a lot".[Akhaltsikhe, 36+ Age-group]*

The greatest priority of the work of NGOs is given to the spheres of education and one-time actions of assistance. The population of all regions first waits for the support from the government and then considers them. Based on the initiatives proceeding from the authorities, there will be further support of investors and international organizations.

Activity of the society in submitting initiatives to the authorities is rather low. The population understands the importance of the role, but the level of their trust for authorities is not so high, or their initiatives remain only at the level of ideas.

> *„We have a park where children usually play, but there is very bad traffic. We have addressed the patrol, and police, but we have not received any results."[Tbilisi, 56+ Age-group]*

> *"I hear only conversation, but I do not see any actions." [Zugdidi, 15-25 Age-group]*

The society expects from authorities most of all the formation of new workplaces. In addition, the level of the expectations of investors is very high. Economic growth connects the population with the further strengthening of all spheres of security and reconnection of the lost territories.

> *„Most important is the national economy. It seems to me.... No, I am sure. When the economy will be developed, there will be a health; there will be an opportunity to receive education. And then clever people will do everything correctly." [Zugdidi, 15-25 Age-group]*

Prioritization of security concerns and feasible social services

Prioritized security issues have been identified during conduction of the focus groups. Due to the fact that the respondents did not have firmly formulated approaches, priorities were defined in two main directions: important issues that are specific to the region, and actual security issues, solving of which is very important, especially nowadays. We will highlight each approach separately, both in terms of Tbilisi and the regions.

According to the specificity of each city (regional center), priorities were defined as follows:

Akhaltsikhe	Zugdidi	Tbilisi
1. Economic security	1. Economic security	1. Economic security
2. Health security	2. Educational security	2. Health security
3. Political security	3. Political security	3. Political security
4. Community security	4. Health security	4. Community security
5. Environmental security	5. Community security	5. Educational security
6. Educational security	6. Personal security	6. Environmental security
7. Personal security	7. Environmental security	7. Personal security

This order of security priority issues was defined by the specific problems that were stated during focus group discussions. However, there were some similarities and differences in the vision of problems and, correspondingly, priorities were distributed in a similar way in some cases.

Economic Security is not an exception for one city only, as the majority of respondents in Tbilisi, Zugdidi, and Akhaltsikhe believe that Economic issues are the biggest priority. According to their understanding, economy provides well-being of the population; it supports development of the region and prevents migration.

Health security was listed on the top of the priorities, because of the respondents' general attitude towards this subject. In this case, priorities were identified in terms of cause and effect; in particular, they defined health as the most important issue for the existence of a human being.

Political security holds the third place for all three cities. This issue is especially important for today, as it has an influence upon people's well-being by both internal and foreign political developments. A majority of the respondents declared that this issue has to be resolved in Georgia first.

In case of Zugdidi, the problem of Political security is acute. Nearness to the conflict region has engendered eternal fear of war in people. The population of this city has lost the feeling of stability and security. Accordingly, none of the security issues are as important as Political security.

Political security is specific for Akhaltsikhe, as it is a frontier region. The population of this region is multi ethnic and inner instability is a great threat for them; a threat which can cause the revelation of the differences among nationalities, provoke conflict situations, and even appeals of separation. This problem is more pronounced during any kind of destabilization.

The reason why **Community security** is on top of the priorities is based on concerns about human rights, justice, equal opportunities for each member of society, etc. Moreover, community security is connected with other security issues, as it is important to have equal opportunities in terms of education, healthcare, financial security, business activities, employment, etc. Community security was discussed in Tbilisi and Zugdidi in connection exactly to these issues, as one of the most important conditions of people's well-being. It was defined as one of the factors which determine the development of a democratic society, where every citizen has the right to express his personal opinion and position and is protected by the law.

In case of Akhaltsikhe, the issue of ethnic minorities has been revealed, as this region is multinational. However, Armenians, as well as Georgians, rely on the positive experience of living together and see problems of such kind only on individual levels; none of them consider this issue as the problem between two nations. While ethnic groups co-exist well in the city, there are villages where Georgians and Armenians do not have any contact; they have a problem of communication, as well as problems related to the language barrier. In general, the respondents were very proud that Akhaltsikhe was called a place inhabited by the most peaceful people.

Educational security holds a relatively lower position, and follows other priorities. In Tbilisi, respondents think that a well-educated work force meets the requirements of employment.

The populations of Akhaltsikhe and Zugdidi have a very traditional attitude towards **Educational issues**. A majority of the respondents feel that the importance of education for regional development, especially in terms of vocational education, appears to be the most successful social investment for them.

Environmental security was mentioned as less important in comparison with other security issues, because of the social, economic, and political situation in Georgia. However, environmental problems are also significant as they cause hazards to the population's livelihood. In cases of Tbilisi and Zugdidi, the most vital is the problem of landfills. In case of Akhaltsikhe, it mainly concerns potable water, which is very dirty, and people constantly face the problem of clean water. The issue of forests is also very important. A majority of the respondents define ecological problems not as a general problem that needs to be fixed, but in terms of the negative effect, that causes problems in their everyday life.

Personal security issues were named as less important according to the priorities of respondents, as the solving of these problems is based on the issues concerning all other major issues (Economic, Political, Community, Health, and Environment). Also, all the respondents have a feeling that today they are more protected by the police, than earlier. From this point of view, improvements are being observed in the country. Moreover, the respondents named Akhaltsikhe as a place inhabited by a very peaceful population, thus this issue is not very important for them.

Directions of Future Social Investments

While talking about Social investments, the respondents raised quite different priorities during the focus groups. The highlighted issues are very important for the population nowadays and solving of these problems is more important for them than any other security issues.

Feasible social services in Akhaltsikhe

1. Economic security
2. Educational security
3. Health security
4. Environmental security
5. Community security

These five security issues were determined to have a priority, in case of Akhaltsikhe, as the most urgent and important for social investments. For each priority issue respondents named approximate social programs, that, according to their opinion, corresponds to the needs and interests in Akhaltsikhe and the whole region for the present.

Economic security

For improvement of the economical security issue, the respondents determined three main directions: employment, poverty reduction, and maintenance of roads and infrastructure.

These priorities became more concrete in frames of particular social programs.

1. **Development of agriculture**

   It is important for Akhaltsikhe to receive investments for the purchase of equipment and necessary row materials, for arrangement of the irrigation system and, in general, for arrangement of irrigation and drainage services.

2. **Renovation of factories**

   In this direction, it was considered necessary to renew the existing factories that could continue operation in case of investment. These are:

   – Cannery
   – Bread Factories
   – Winery
   – Distillery
   – Sport equipment factory

3. **Welfare of the region**

   Rehabilitation of roads and infrastructure will stimulate the connection of Akhaltsikhe with other regions of Georgia.

4. **Financial Aid**

   Respondents consider that this type of social program should be planned and implemented in a correct way, and the right selection of a target audience is very important. Especially important for them is the social groups under the edge of social poverty. It should be mentioned that the issue of employment is more important for the respondents, since they do not consider that any kind of financial aid can have a serious impact on the perspective development of the region.

Educational security

1. Granting education

According to opinions expressed by respondents, this type of social program should be aimed at full or partial financing of pupils and students.

2. Support of vocational education

Investment of vocational education supports creation of potential in professions, which is necessary for the region and could partly have influence on the development of the economy in the region and prevent migration to big cities.

3. Professional Retraining

The issue of professional retraining is a very important issue, as far as development of educational systems in the region depends on the professional level of teachers and lecturers. The specialists of this field do not follow all the changes that were made in this field systematically. That determined the necessity of short-term and long-term retraining programs in Akhaltsikhe.

4. Welfare of kindergartens, schools and universities.

In this direction, it is important to create appropriate environments for the development of children and youth. Renovation and inventory of buildings is very important, as is the creation and rehabilitation of libraries and supplying them with books.

5. Exchange program for pupils and students

In this direction, it is important to inform youth about existing programs and promote them with full or partial granting.

6. Consultation centers

The aim of consultation centers will be informing the population about human rights, business news, etc.

Health security

1. Financing emergency surgery

It is important to provide social investment, the aim of which will be financing emergency surgery, through direct financing or corresponding social programs and insurances.

2. Creation of drug users rehabilitation centers

This type of center has regional importance.

Aid for disabled people

One of the priorities for respondents in the health security issue was aid for disabled people, that can be aimed at buying them expensive inventory and medicines. This type of program may be short term or even one time activity.

3. Welfare of hospitals and medical centers

The problem of new equipment and high-qualified specialists was considered urgent for Akhaltsikhe.

Environmental security

1. **Sanitation of the city**
Existence of a special service that will take care of sanitation in the city and in the regions in general is considered very important. This also concerns taking care of rivers and irrigation channels.

2. **Defense and refreshment of forestry**
This kind of social investment may be a single activity, as well as a formation of some kind of service, that will control and permanently take care of forestry.

3. **Maintenance of water system**
In this field, most important are the issues of potable water, irrigation canals, and sewage systems.

Community security

Despite the fact that the issue of Community security was not considered one of the priorities of the focus groups, the respondents included it in necessary social programs for Akhaltsikhe. They believe that it is important to create an environment for children and youth development and self-realization.
In this direction, several concrete ideas for social programs were named:

1. Renovation of the state theatre and puppet show
2. Renovation of stadium
3. Creation of entertainment parks
4. Building of youth camps in the whole region

Social investment in Akhaltsikhe did not apply to Political security and Personal security. The reason for this was named to be the importance of these issues; these issues have national importance, and the first five issues were considered more important for the region.

Feasible social services in Zugdidi

1. Economic security
2. Health security
3. Educational security
4. Environmental security

Economic security

1. **Employment social programs**
Employment is the most important motive for execution of these social programs, i.e. the assistance in various business activities is very important for the respondents. In addition, resolution of these problems will help to solve other problems as well.

2. **Tourism development**

Social investments for tourism development could be used for rehabilitation. Infrastructure, training of guides, and launching of informational campaigns, will attract tourists to this region, as this region is very interesting for tourists from a historical point of view.

3. Renovation of factories

According to the respondents, restoration of local factories and rehabilitation of manufacturers of raw material are very important.

4. Dam rehabilitation

In the region, there are resources for setting a dam, and investments there will enable the region to be independent of other regions.

5. Business financing

Development of local business is very important for the region. Special benefits can be implemented for small business, business consultations etc.

Health security

1. Rehabilitation of medical institutions

Social investment can be used for the arrangement of hospitals, diagnostic, and recreational centers.

2. Financing of medical service and preferences on medicines

Some criteria of preferences can be developed, with the purpose of identification of social programs for certain groups of society. There can be programs, which will fully cover all the expenses, but a long-term program can also be planned, which will provide certain options to cover medical expenses during some period of time (minimum 1 year).

3. Accomplishment of shelters

Social program can render one-time assistance to elderly people's homes and provide them with all basic, necessary stuff. The establishment/ development of children's homes within the frameworks of a special program, with high-qualified personnel and corresponding equipment, is also necessary.

Educational security

1. Inventory of primary schools

Creation of a good environment for education is very important for the local population; therefore, social investments for inventory of public schools are very important for the population. The issue of financing for textbooks, especially for elementary schools, can also be outlined. Providing schools with transport is very desirable for the entire region.

2. Preferential programs for young people

Social investment from the angle of education can be divided into two types of programs: (1) basic programs, for teaching foreign languages and PC usage and (2) special programs for children and adults for popularization of certain specialties (Natural, Social sciences etc.)

3. Retraining of cadres for schools and higher educational institutions

As in other regions, Zugdidi also has the problem of retraining teachers/ lecturers. A special program for this purpose can cover not only Zugdidi, but also the entire region.

Environmental security

Investment for the launching of various campaigns will increase people's self-consciousness "not to litter their own city".

Feasible social services in Tbilisi

1. Economic security
2. Health security
3. Educational security
4. Political security
5. Environmental security

Economic security

1. Employment program

This type of social program will assist interested people to find an appropriate job position according their profession and experience. In the frame of this program, an information base can be created which will provide an opportunity for companies and for jobseekers to collaborate. There are different social programs offering this type of service, but people are concerned about the lack of information and consultation on how to find the proper job. Moreover, there is the problem of trust in bureaucracy: they do not want to spend time and finances for preparing documentation. Thus, trust and transparency of the system needs to increase.

2. Renovation of factories

It is important for Tbilisi to bring investment for rehabilitation of factories and equip them with the latest technologies. Moreover, the renovation of infrastructure is necessary in order to assist the better functioning of each factory.

3. Business development

The investment in business development is essential, as there is a great need of accessible credit lines for small businesses and adequate consultations. This type of social program can have a long-term outcome and creates more job opportunities.

4. Preferential duties

In the frame of this type of social program, the main part of utility can be covered for the particular target group that unites people and families with a low social and economic level.

Health security

1. Financing medical services and Preferences on medicines

In the frame of this type of social program, the specific target audience will be provided with fully or partly financed medical service and will have special preferences for medicines. This program should fully finance emergency surgery and oncologic course of medical treatment.

2. Development of insurance system

It is important to contribute to the development of the insurance system, as it will guarantee to provide long-term medical service for different target groups, covering their expenses according to the conditions of the social program.

3. Rehabilitation of medical centers

These social programs can be focused on the renovation of hospitals, policlinics, and diagnostic centers. It is important to provide medical personnel with the latest equipment.

4. Rehabilitation center for drug users

Social investment can be the source of the establishment of a center that will provide people with necessary service and will promote a healthy lifestyle, especially with the young population.

5. Encouragement of medical personnel

For the reason that medical personnel are responsible for peoples' lives, they should have good salaries, but in case of Georgia, it is problematic. Thus, from time to time, medical personnel should receive bonuses for hard work.

Educational security

1. Inventory of primary schools

Social investment is necessary to rehabilitate infrastructure of primary schools and to create an environment for better education and self-realization of children.

2. Centers of vocational education

Investments for the establishment of centers of vocational education are essential for the people who need to change their profession, or need specific knowledge and skills to get the proper job position.

3. Granting education

It is important to provide the students with full or partial financial support. There should be space for sharing information about different opportunities for youngsters to continue their study and get the proper financial support.

4. Professional retraining

The respondents revealed two target groups for professional retraining (1) medical personnel that should be prepared to work with the latest medical equipment and need to have proper knowledge and skills for providing professional medical service. (2) And, it is essential to work with lecturers and teachers, to inspire innovation and knowledge.

Political security

One part of the respondents raised the importance of investments in the development of the military system in Georgia. In their opinion, there is a need for retraining of militaries, development of new programs, and providing militaries with the latest military equipment.

Environmental security

Investment to establish a waste-disposal factory was mentioned in the groups of Tbilisi, as there is a great need of this type of service, especially in the capital. This factory will be useful in terms of solving environmental problems in the city and will help to prevent the spread of different diseases.

Appendix 2 – List of Experts Interviewed

Alexander Kvitashvili, Minister of Labor, Health and Social Security

George Tsereteli, Chairman, Committee on Social Issues, Parliament of Georgia

Giorgi Baramidze, State Minister of Georgia for European Integration

Irakli Menagarishvili, Chairman, Center for Strategic Studies, Former Minister of Foreign Affairs and Vice-Prime Minister for Health and Social Issues

Eka Vashakmadze, World Bank (currently leads WB team of economists in Central Asia)

Koba Gvenetadze, IMF, Resident Representative of IMF to Azerbaijan, former Deputy Minister of Finance of Georgia

Vladimir Papava, Senior Fellow, Georgian Foundation for Strategic International Studies, Former Minister of Economy

Mother Mariam, runs hospice in Tbilisi and Bediani (South Georgia), leads one of the most successful monasteries in Georgia

Archil Gegeshidze, Senior Fellow, Georgian Foundation for Strategic International Studies, Former National Security Adviser to President of Georgia

Vano Vashakmadze, General Manager, Hotel Gudauri (the mountain resort not from Russian borders on the North; has a long history of cooperation with USAID funded projects in tourism and economic development areas)

Giorgi Kvavilashvili, Owner and General Manager of Terma Ltd. (imports heating and AC equipment)

Ani Jobava, Economist, International School of Economics, formerly with Eurasia Foundation

Vano Machavariani, Diplomat, Former Georgian Ambassador to Japan 2008-2009

Rezo Gigilashvili, Manager, Bagebi Real Estate Company, Former Official of Ministry of Finance

Nato Panchulidze, Ministry of Education/World Bank Project

Pridon Tsereteli, Editor, Local Newspaper, City of Chiatura

Jambakur Bakradze, Student

Guga Urushadze, Student, Georgian Institute of Public Policy

Alexander Visotski, Student

In addition, brief interviews were conducted with members of the local population—e.g., store owners, taxi drivers, farmers—in Sachxere, Chiatura, Signagi, Stepantsminda and Tbilisi.