



INSTITUTE FOR
**Sustainable
Communities**

Quarterly Report November 2007 – February 2008

Task Order Subcontract #: 1-3600-lb-011

Submitted by:
Matthew DeGroot, Program Development Officer
Institute for Sustainable Communities

Submitted to:
Anthony Bowyer, Program Manager, Central Asia/Caucasus
IFES

March 2008

About the Institute for Sustainable Communities

The Institute for Sustainable Communities (ISC) is an independent nonprofit organization that helps communities in existing and emerging democracies resolve problems while building a better future for themselves and the world. ISC give communities—and the organizations that support them—the training, advice, and grants they need to solve their own problems and shape their destinies long after ISC's work with them is finished. It focuses on environmental, economic, and social concerns, and on the need to address all three to succeed. To ensure that its work is successful, ISC involves different groups within a community, from the most to the least powerful, to encourage fair and lasting results.

ISC is based in Vermont, a state that values grassroots democracy and environmental stewardship, and it has international offices in Macedonia, Russia, and Ukraine. Since its founding in 1991 by former Vermont Governor Madeleine M. Kunin, ISC has managed international projects in more than 16 countries with support from individual donors, private and corporate foundations, and the U.S. government. The majority of ISC's employees speak multiple languages and many have advanced degrees in their fields of expertise, ranging from community and organizational development to pollution prevention and resource management. Its board of directors includes highly respected U.S. and European leaders from the government, nonprofit, academic, and business sectors.

All ISC projects are designed and carried out with the assistance of partners. This immeasurably improves the appropriateness, effectiveness, and permanence of the work they do together. Partnership also ensures that the benefits of ISC's projects are multiplied. For example, many community action projects are managed jointly with national nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), regional governments, and municipalities, which then share the lessons they learn with other communities. Over the years, ISC has been fortunate to work with hundreds of committed partners that teach as much as they learn.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction and Overview	4
Activities.....	4
Preliminary Results	6
Subcontractors.....	7
Monitoring and Evaluation	23

Introduction and Overview

The Institute for Sustainable Communities (ISC) signed task order subcontract 1-3600-Ib-011 with IFES on November 6, 2007, to support the latter's Election and Political Process (EPP) program in Georgia, funded by USAID Task Order DFD-I-00-05-00225-00. Under this subcontract, ISC agreed to assume responsibility for the execution of two of the six overarching EPP program deliverables: Task 2, Increasing Participation of Civil Society in the Election Campaign; and Task 5, Voter Education and Mobilization, Especially Among Traditionally Underrepresented Groups. ISC also agreed to serve as advisor and administrator for competitive subawards issued under the EPP program.

In coordination with IFES, ISC designed a range of activities to address these tasks and meet the objectives laid out in IFES' Task Order Proposal. Immediately on signing the task order subcontract, however, the political situation in Georgia changed dramatically. Subsequent to the government crackdown on opposition protests on November 7, snap Presidential elections were called for January 5, 2008. IFES' and ISC's activities needed to be accelerated, and also adjusted to fit the rapidly changing environment. In close consultation with USAID and IFES, it was decided that there was insufficient time prior to the Presidential election to conduct credible activities against Task 2. There was also increased concern on the part of USAID that due to the accelerated election timetable, voters would need more intensive education and mobilization activities than originally planned to be able to participate with confidence. Lastly, because of the closing of TV Imedi, one of the only counterpoints to state-influenced media in Georgia, USAID also expressed a desire to support media organizations and stimulate independent media coverage of the election campaign.

As a result of these concerns and priorities, it was decided that the entire pool of subaward funds – that had been set aside to support Tasks 2 and 5 – would now be made available to Georgian organizations during the Presidential campaign period to support Task 5, Voter Education and Mobilization, and the additional goal of stimulating independent media coverage of the election campaign.

Activities

Immediately after the events of November 7, ISC assisted IFES with establishing an office, recruiting personnel, and putting systems in place for the administration of subawards. ISC recruited and engaged a Senior Grant Manager and a Grant Officer, who began work in early and late November, respectively. Regional ISC grant administration specialists traveled to

Tbilisi from Kyiv, Ukraine, to train Georgian staff in ISC subaward procedures and assist in the conduct of the initial RFA competition.

In coordination with ISC, IFES released an RFA on November 14 entitled “Grant Competition to Support Independent Media Coverage and Voter Education Prior to the Presidential and Parliamentary Elections in Georgia.” IFES would award two categories of subawards under this competition: 1) 5 subawards in the \$25,000 to \$50,000 range to NGOs, journalism associations, or media outlets to support free and fair election coverage during the pre-election periods, and 2) 10 grants of up to \$15,000 to NGOs and media outlets to increase citizen awareness and citizen participation in the election process.

In addition to the RFA competition, ISC moved quickly to identify an organization with the capacity to launch an effective, compelling, and nationwide PSA and voter education/mobilization campaign in just six weeks. After soliciting bids on this work from 3 Georgian organizations, ISC selected Internews Georgia as the most qualified organization. Among other activities, Internews would develop television and radio PSAs; conduct a poster campaign on the right to vote; would hold a training for a cohort of regional journalists on organizing and moderating political debates; and would organize and facilitate live televised debates at 20 regional television stations across Georgia. In order to bolster the technical content of these debates and also allow them to serve an educational purpose as well as a political purpose, ISC also involved the Caucasus Institute for Peace, Development, and Democracy (CIPDD) to provide expert commentators on electoral procedure and forms of government during the regional debates.

IFES/ISC received 45 proposals in response to the Voter Education and Independent Media RFA. A team of 10 independent evaluators served as an Evaluation Committee that scored the proposals according to set criteria, and made funding recommendations. Based on these recommendations, and in consultation with USAID, IFES and ISC decided to make 13 subawards under the subject RFA, for a total of 15 subrecipients including Internews and CIPDD. A summary of the activities of the subrecipients can be found in Appendix A. In total, the subrecipients received in excess of \$400,000 to support voter education and mobilization, and independent media coverage, during the Presidential and Parliamentary election periods. Ten of these 15 subawards would cover both election periods, while 4 would conduct activities around the Presidential election only and 1 around the Parliamentary election only.

Still cognizant of the goal of targeting traditionally underrepresented groups, IFES and ISC selected 6 subrecipients (40% of the total) whose activities would be targeted exclusively or substantially on the national minority Armenian and Azerbaijani populations. An additional 3 subrecipients (20% of the total) conducted activities that reached, among other target groups,

refugee and internally displaced populations in the Samegrelo and Shida Kartli regions. Another subrecipient targeted youth and first-time voters for a significant portion of its activities. In total, 75% of the subrecipient pool focused their efforts exclusively or substantially on traditionally underrepresented groups. Regardless of their focus, all 15 subrecipients were required to exercise gender inclusiveness and many showed an even balance of male and female participants, even in areas where this has traditionally proved problematic.

Preliminary Results

- Collectively, the subs produced and distributed over 500,000 printed materials – 1 for every 6 registered voters in Georgia – containing technical election information and information on the candidates in 5 languages: Georgian, Armenian, Azerbaijani, Russian, and Ossetian. These materials covered voting procedures, voter list issues, election law, the plebiscite and the Law on Referendums, candidates and their platforms, and how to identify and report violations and fraud. In many cases, these materials were distributed door-to-door by hundreds of volunteers.
- Over a hundred local and regional journalists received expert training in covering election issues effectively.
- Dozens of radio and television PSAs, news reports, and special programs were produced and broadcast in every region of Georgia.
- The live televised debates conducted at 20 regional television stations were well received and highly successful – in the majority of cases, this programming represented the only locally produced/broadcast election-related television content during the entire campaign period.
- There was record or significantly increased voter turnout among traditionally underrepresented groups. Participation in the Kvemo Kartli and Samstkhe Javakheti regions exceeded that of any previous election. The reliability of this turnout data, and its relevance to these activities, however, is questionable.
- Several community leaders and service providers reported double normal turnout among refugee and IDP populations.
- Numerous project participants and beneficiaries provided anecdotal evidence of significantly increased ability on the part of the electorate to vote correctly, and identify and document when violations occurred.

Subcontractors

Following are summaries of the activities of the subcontractors engaged to implement Task 5 and independent media activities. The first two, Internews Georgia and the Caucasus Institute for Peace and Democracy (CIPDD), were identified through a limited competitive process, owing to the extreme time pressures involved. The remaining thirteen were selected through an open, competitive process open to all Georgian NGOs. Ten of the fifteen subcontractors have been engaged to cover both elections, while the remaining five covered the Presidential election only.

1. Internews Georgia (Presidential Only)

Following a closed bidding process involving three Georgian media firms, Internews Georgia was selected to provide a range of national media activities, including:

- Training for local and regional broadcast journalists on conducting political debates
- The production of television public service announcements and documentaries on the importance of voting and voting procedures
- The production of posters on the same topics, in Georgian, Armenian, and Azeri
- The organization and facilitation of a series of 20 regional televised debates to include representatives of the Presidential candidates and local politicians
- Creation of a special section of the www.media.ge website for housing election-related content and serving as a resource for voters.

Training for Regional Broadcast Journalists. The training was organized on December 3-5, 2007 and led by Dmitri Krikun (Ukraine). Co-training was provided by Ghia Nodia and Avtandil Demetrashvili from CIPDD. Twenty-four journalists from 24 regional (local) television stations took part in the course. The goal of the training was to teach the journalists/producers (future moderators of the political debates at partner regional stations) the basics of political talk-show production as well as professional standards of modern journalism. The course also covered key political issues identified as major topics for discussion at the debates: Presidential and parliamentary rule, constitutional monarchy, NATO and why Georgia's inclusion in the organization is important. The purpose of the topical reporting session was to prepare the talk-show moderators for the up-coming discussions, and equip them with the knowledge necessary to lead the debates in a professional and informed manner.

PSAs and Feature Stories. Internews produced 2 PSAs and 3 feature stories. The topics were selected in consultation with partner organizations including the Central Election Commission, and included:

- Privacy and the secret ballot (60-second PSA)
- Promoting voter participation (Every Vote Counts) (60-second PSA)
- Election procedures (5-minute documentary feature)

- Forms of governance (9-minute documentary feature)
- Plebiscite and referendum (5-minute documentary feature)

These PSAs and feature stories were broadcast multiple times both on national and regional television broadcast outlets.

Posters. Internews produced 2 posters which featured the graphic expression of the key message of the two PSAs, including 2500 copies per poster in Georgian, 400 per poster in Armenian, and 400 per poster in Azeri. The posters were disseminated in urban centers throughout Georgia with the help of 23 partner television stations on-site.

Documentaries and cross-programming. The documentary on the forms of governance was aired during the television debates right between the political debates and expert discussions/public education. All three documentaries were also used during the production of the television programs “Debating Society” within the framework of the Internews public education campaign supported by the Eurasia Foundation. Internews organized 23 round-table meetings with representatives of local central election commissions, CSOs and NGOs, lawyers, and community leaders at 23 regional centers. The meetings educated local communities on voting procedures, voter rights and responsibilities, forms of governance, and the plebiscite and referendum. The documentaries were aired during these community round-table meetings to push the conversation and discussion. The round-table meetings were recorded by 23 regional TV stations and were edited into 23 separate television programs, each aired by the relevant local station. The majority were aired in December with the exception of the final four, aired on January 3.

Live Regional Televised Debates. The centerpiece of Internews’ project was organizing live television debates at regional TV stations. Originally, Internews planned to hold debates at 25 local stations to ensure none were excluded. However, very soon after implementation started, two of the 25 stations (Kvemo Kartli TV and Radio Company-Rustavi and Sagarejo TV) refused to be the part of the initiative. These stations did not air any of the products listed above. At a later stage, 3 additional stations were excluded for the following reasons:

- a) Zugdidi “Odishi TV” – refused to organize a TV debate, explaining that because the National Movement representative was refusing to participate, the TV station also had no interest in organizing a debate
- b) Samtredia “Zari” – the National Movement representative would debate only with Zviad Dzidziguri (an MP, currently part of the opposition coalition – Gachechildze’s office). Since Dzidziguri resides in Tbilisi and could not attend the local debate, the National Movement party would not take part. Therefore, “Zari” also refused to participate
- c) Chiatura “Imervizia” - the station couldn’t take part due to an unexpected technical problem. Two days prior to the debate the station’s transmitter died. The debate couldn’t be recorded live; therefore, the political parties refused to take a part in a pre-recorded program.

Therefore, Internews organized TV debates at 20 regional TV stations in Georgia. The programs were divided into two parts: 1) representatives of the candidates debated politics and other issues related to the election, and 2) experts from CIPDD provided debate analysis and educational information on forms of governance and the plebiscite. The Internews feature on forms of governance aired a in between the two segments. All programs were aired live, and all took place between December 15 and December 30, 2007.

www.media.ge Online. Internews created a separate electronic news bulletin about media and elections in Georgia which was disseminated among all subscribers of www.media.ge and posted on the website as a separate page. In addition, media.ge team created a website (media.ge and elections) to organize online polling (<http://media.ge/elections/>) As expected, the results of the online polling did coincide with the outcome of the elections. It should be noted that in order to avoid any fraud and violation, Internews web master organized the polling in a way that only one user per IP address could place a vote. In order to ensure an informed vote, Internews posted bios and programs of all candidates, updated information from the election commission, the election code, and an archive and recent news bulletin. The website also features PSAs and documentaries, as well as all TV debates (video files) which can be viewed by users via a simple media player.

Results/Impact

The televised debates organized by Internews represented the only regional election programming offered by any of the 20 local/regional television stations. The stations reported that interest in and ratings for these programs were among the highest ever recorded in their regions. Through broadcast of the multi-language PSAs and features, and posters, Internews was able to reach voters in every part of Georgia, the only such campaign to demonstrate truly national coverage. By combining its efforts with a project supported by the Eurasia Foundation, Internews was able to double its output of video content and ensure that voters and election commissioners had access to accurate, timely information about correct voting procedures and processes.

2. CIPDD (Presidential Only)

CIPDD experts, lawyers and political scientists participated in the trainings of journalists and moderators from regional TV channels organized and carried out by Internews Georgia, and contributed to the production of documentaries forms of governance and the plebiscite. CIPDD experts participated in the regional TV debates. A lawyer and a political scientist participated in each of 20 debates carried out in different regional centers of Georgia. They were involved in the second part of the programs, right after the debates between local representatives of presidential candidates. Experts provided explanations on different forms of government, in particular about presidential and parliamentary forms of government, with a special focus on the social, political and legal aspects of transforming from one to the other. In addition, experts explained the legal underpinnings of the plebiscite and referendum, as well as issues related to NATO accession. In almost all cases they were asked to present their personal views on above mentioned issues and comment on the debates of local politicians.

All the debates were conducted live in front of a studio audience, which had a chance to pose questions to the participants. Viewers could also pose questions by telephone. Almost all incoming calls were positive to the participation of Tbilisi-based experts in the program and demonstrated the strong interest of local citizens in the issues discussed during the debates. The major problem encountered during the implementation process was related to the refusals of local representatives of presidential candidates to participate in the debates, thus making them less effective.

3. Ltd. Avantazhi, Project “Informed Choice” (Covering Both Elections)

Ltd. Avantazhi is a Kutaisi-based print journalism organization affiliated with three newspapers across Georgia, “Akhali Gazeti” (Imereti), “Samkhretis Karibche” (Samtskhe Javakheti) and “Spektri” (Kakheti). Activities included:

- Provided training for 25 journalists from all three newspapers in Gurjaani, 19-20 December 2007;
- Produced a special 8-page, full-color election-related newspaper insert for the abovementioned newspapers, containing over 20 articles written by the journalists who participated in the above training;
- Distributed 200,000 copies of the inserts/newspapers in three regions of Georgia: Imereti, Samtskhe Javakheti and Kakheti, both through regular circulation and door-to-door campaigns conducted by 75 teams of roving volunteers.

Journalist Training. Training for journalists of three regional newspapers took place on 19-20th of December in Gurjaani, Kakheti region. The main purpose was to give journalists special insight into election-related issues and prepare them for their joint work on the election-related newspaper insert. Specific topics included:

- Professional standards and ethics in Georgian journalism;
- How to cover elections;
- Journalistic skills applicable during election processes;
- Providing balanced information during elections, ‘white’ and ‘black’ PR in Georgian media; role of media during elections;
- Content of newspaper insert.

Newspaper Insert. 200,000 copies of the special newspaper insert were printed on December 30th and distribution took place from 31st of December through 4th of January 2008. The insert was distributed among the Imereti, Samtskhe Javakheti and Kakheti regions as follows: 80,000 in Imereti (50,000 Georgian and 30,000 Russian), 70,000 in Samtskhe Javakheti (50,000 Armenian, 5,000 Georgian and 15,000 Russian) and 50,000 in Kakheti (40,000 Georgian, 5,000 Armenian and 5,000 Russian). Articles covered the following topics:

- Voter lists;
- Election administration: duties, obligations, composition, etc.;

- Amendments to election legislation;
- Presidential candidates and their platforms, as well as whether they had equal rights in conducting their pre-election campaigns;
- Monitoring of pre-election processes.

Results/Impact

For many voters in the target regions, the insert was the only printed information they received about voting procedures and candidates' positions on the issues. Particularly among refugee, diaspora, and national minority groups, civic leaders reported record voter turnout – double that of previous elections – and attributed the strong showing to the efforts of Ltd. Avantazhi. Avantazhi journalists also served as election monitors, documenting violations of election procedures they had been writing about for the previous three weeks, and followed up with articles on the conduct of the elections and areas that need improvement in the future. All documentation regarding such violations was published and distributed by Avantazhi the day after the election – the only immediately available tabulation of problems identified the previous day.

4. Marnueli Social-Economic Development Foundation (Presidential Only)

Marnueli's objective was to provide voter education and legal consultations to the citizens of the Kvemo Kartli region of Georgia, and specifically to residents of the Marnueli district (the most populous of the seven administrative districts in Kvemo Kartli). The majority of the population of Kvemo Kartli is ethnically Azerbaijani. Summary activities included:

- Legal consultations, including a telephone hotline on voting procedures
- Seminars at the village level on the Georgian Election Code and the Law on Referendums
- The publishing and dissemination of election-related booklets in three languages
- Coordination with the local television and radio stations in producing and broadcasting a 10-minute feature on voting procedures, with a special focus on women and first-time voters.

Legal Consultations. Legal consultations were provided to groups of interested voters at Marnueli's main office as well as following each seminar conducted in the villages. The main topics included voting procedures; the additional voter list; PECs, their composition, rules, and procedures; plebiscite and referendum issues; filing complaints; vote counting procedures, and changes in the Georgian Election Code. The consultations were conducted by three experts. Out of a total of 125 consultations, 86 were conducted in Azerbaijani, 24 in Georgian, and 15 in Russian.

Telephone Hotline. Phone calls to the hotline were received before, during, and after elections. Marnueli fielded dozens of calls pertaining to voting lists, voting procedures, the plebiscite, and

the rights and obligations of PEC members. Hotline operators were available in four languages – Georgian, Azerbaijani, Russian, and Armenian.

Seminars. Village seminars were conducted from the 18th through 27th of December, 2007. Of several hundred participants, 36% overall were women; 76% were Azerbaijani, 9% Georgian, and 15% Armenian. Main topics of discussion included voting procedures; unified, special and additional voter lists; composition of PEC and rights and obligations of its members; active and passive voter rights; the plebiscite. The target groups consisted of national minorities, first-time voters, women, PEC staff members, and representatives of local governments.

Instructional Booklets. Marnueli produced and distributed 5,000 copies of an instructional booklet (3,000 in Azerbaijani, 1,000 in Georgian and 1,000 in Russian).

Media Outreach. Marnueli signed a contract with the local television station to produce a joint feature story on the election seminars, interviews with first-time and women voters, and election-related information. The program was prepared in both the Azerbaijani and Georgian languages and aired on the December 28, December 29, and January 1. A similar program was prepared for radio and broadcasted five times from December 27th to January 1st.

Results/Impact

Marnueli's efforts represented the only locally-driven NGO activities targeted at voter education and participation in the Kvemo Kartli region. By reaching thousands of voters in-person and through the media with information on voter rights and procedures, in multiple languages, Marnueli enabled national minority, women, and first-time voters in this region to make an informed choice in historical numbers.

5. Public Movement Multinational Georgia (Both Elections)

Multinational Georgia is an umbrella organization representing NGOs across Georgia working with 56 distinct ethnic groups and 18 diaspora populations. Their focus is on the rights of national minorities and increasing the participation of ethnic minorities and diaspora in public decision-making. With funding from SIDA and CORDAID, Multinational Georgia has an ongoing civic education initiative on fostering equal opportunities for equal participation.

Funding from IFES enabled Multinational Georgia to expand its efforts and focus on the election process in particular, with a strong emphasis on the national minority populations in Kvemo Kartli and Samtskhe Javakheti. Activities included:

Election Observation Trainings. Multinational Georgia carried out trainings of more than 200 election observers in 13 districts in Kvemo Kartli and Samtskhe Javakheti. They also prepared

a guideline fact sheet, in print and electronic format, for election observers that was used by an additional 400 observers and journalists on election day.

Voter Education Materials. Posters and pocket voter guides were produced in Georgian, Armenian, and Azerbaijani. One thousand guides in each language were distributed to village centers in the weeks preceding the Presidential election. An additional 6000 booklets on the Presidential candidates and their platforms were produced in all three languages and distributed through Multinational Georgia's network of local member organizations.

Telephone Hotlines. Hotline numbers were included in all posters and printed materials. Multinational Georgia fielded hundreds of calls with questions on voter procedures and election violations in three languages.

Public Information Seminars. A panel of experts conducted pre-election voter education seminars in the Gardabani, Aspinza, Rustavi, Marneuli, Adigeni, Akhaltsikhe, Akhalkalaki, and Ninotsminda districts in the Russian, Azerbaijani, and Armenian languages.

Results/Impact

As the only Tbilisi-based organization with widespread credibility among the national minority populations of Kvemo Kartli and Samstkhe Javakheti, Multinational Georgia was able to leverage its strong network of local member organizations to reach out to otherwise isolated and overlooked minority populations. Election officials noted record interest and turnout in these regions during the Presidential election. As a result of its organizational activities, Multinational Georgia has assembled a strong coalition of organizations dedicated to systematically preventing and/or documenting election violations in the coming Parliamentary election round.

6. Union of Democrat Meskhs, Akhaltsikhe, Samstkhe-Javakheti (Both Elections)

For the Presidential election, the Union's activities consisted primarily of two initiatives. The first focused on the training of election experts and monitors in the Samstkhe-Javakheti region, and the second on the preparation and publication of 5 special newspaper editions in coordination with the newspaper "Samkhretis Kabriche." This newspaper has a regular subscription distribution of 5,000, with an additional 5,000 sold through local newsstands and shops throughout Samstkhe Javakheti.

Training of Election Experts. UDM engaged a lawyer and a journalist to train 50 participants (journalists, local leaders, and interested citizens) in election-related law and procedures. Participants then served as election monitors and sources of information for local PECs on election day. Participants also received training in conducting public opinion polls, both

written and “live.” Polls conducted both before and after the election helped illuminate popular opinion on substantive issues and the Presidential candidates.

Special Newspapers. In cooperation with “Samkhretis Kabriche,” UDM helped journalists prepare special articles on election law, voter lists, the plebiscite and the Law on Referendums, common examples of electoral fraud, candidates and their platforms, and technical information regarding polling places and voting procedures. Four special editions of the paper were printed and distributed in the 2 weeks preceding the election – on the 24th, 26th, 29th, and 31st of December, with the final edition published on January 6th, the day after the election. The newspaper is published in Armenian and in Russian.

Results/Impact

As a local organization in touch with the concerns and questions of local citizens in Samtskhe Javakheti, UDM was uniquely positioned to prepare relevant and timely voter education materials for the majority ethnic Armenian population. By producing and distributing 50,000 newspapers in local languages in the period immediately preceding and after the election, UDM was able to reach voter blocs otherwise isolated from media coverage. Election commissions reported record voter turnout in this region. UDM is expanding its activities for the Parliamentary election by forming a coalition of local CSOs and NGOs working in all parts of Samtskhe Javakheti to increase the number of citizens it is able to reach.

7. Gori Civil Development Center, Gori, Shida Kartli (Presidential Election Only)

The CDC is located near the separatist region of South Ossetia, and works throughout Shida Kartli and some parts of the separatist region to foster community development and assist refugees and people displaced as a result of ethnic conflict. Refugees and IDPs, despite their right to vote under Georgian law, are an often overlooked constituency. Activities included:

- A small public opinion poll to assess voter knowledge of technical election issues and identify topics for PSAs.
- The development of eighteen 30-40 second radio and television Public Service Announcements broadcast locally and regionally in the pre-election period.
- The printing and distribution of several hundred posters based on the PSA topics in several regions of Shida Kartli and South Ossetia.

Public Opinion Poll. A small, representative sample of citizens was asked questions such as:

1. When do polling stations open and close?
2. Which documents are required to prove your right to vote?
3. Where should you vote if your address is not specified in your identification?
4. Can you vote on behalf of a family member if you have his/her ID?

5. How many candidates should you select on your ballot?
6. Do you watch local television programs?

The results of this opinion poll were used to identify deficiencies or gaps in voter knowledge regarding the election process, and then to prepare the PSAs.

PSAs. The following PSAs were produced and broadcast:

- The rights of physically disabled voters
- Election propaganda
- Voting on behalf of somebody else
- Police presence at the polling station
- Disorder at the polling station (fire)
- Attempts to take voting ballots out of the polling station
- Making your choice correctly (technically)
- Political agitation
- Marking
- What to do if you are not on the voter list
- Different ballots
- Plebiscite
- Identification card
- Propaganda
- Voters without addresses
- Gogi goes to the polling station late in the evening
- Voting at different polling stations

Posters. Several hundred posters based on the above topics were also produced and distributed in the Gori, Khashuri, and Kaspi districts as well as some villages located in South Ossetia. Each district was provided with 60 posters, with a large number placed at the main polling stations in Gori.

Results/Impact

By conducting opinion polling prior to the development of its PSA campaign, CDC was able to tailor its message to the specific needs of voters in the region. As one of the only NGOs working to educate refugees and IDPs on election-related, CDC was able to have significant impact on voter turnout among this group – double the turnout among this constituency against previous elections.

8. Journalists' Association "Post Factum" (Both Elections)

As of this writing, Post Factum's first narrative report had not yet been submitted (due March 15). Full details on its activities will be provided in the next ISC report.

Post Factum focused its efforts for the Presidential election on the refugee and IDP populations in Samegrelo and Shida Kartli. Activities consisted of the production and broadcast of radio programming on technical election-related issues, and a series of informational seminars for IDPs in both regions.

9. Radio "Atinati" (Both Elections)

Located in Zugdidi, Samegrelo region, Atinati conducted the following activities prior to the Presidential election:

- A public opinion survey conducted among Zugdidi voters
- Daily news programs; 11 per day, 2 of which are Russian-language programs;
- Radio program "Right to vote" aired every Tuesday and Thursday starting from December 18th through January 4th, and once per week after January 5th;
- Radio debates aired every Wednesday and Friday starting from December 18th through January 4th, plus one program after Presidential elections;
- PSAs aired daily from December 18th through January 4th.

Public Opinion Poll. In mid-December, Atinati conducted a public opinion poll on technical election issues to identify areas of concern. Of 410 respondents (223 women and 187 men), 18% were able to answer the poll questions correctly. 36% failed to get any correct answers, while 9% refused to answer the questions.

Daily News Segments. 5-minute news segments were broadcast 11 times daily between December 15th and January 15th, 9 per day in Georgian and 2 per day in Russian, for a total of 279 news segments. Each segment consisted of 3 parts: 3 minutes dedicated to election-related issues in Samegrelo, 1 minute dedicated to election-related issues in Georgia and 1 minute – to world-wide news. Issues covered in these segments included pre-election preparations in PECs; problems with the voter list; plebiscite; election administration – preparations in Zugdidi district PECs and DEC; work of branch offices of presidential candidates in Zugdidi district; local and international observers; preparations for election day; election results.

Special 30-minute Broadcasts. Seven special programs entitled "Right to Vote" were broadcast from 18th of December through 11th of January. Topics included:

- 18 Dec: role of elections in democratic societies; notion and definition of elections, active and passive electoral rights, principles of elections;
- 20 Dec: referendum and plebiscite; unified, special and additional voters lists;

- 25 Dec: election administration – composition, responsibilities, PECs and DECes;
- 27 Dec: local and international observers, their rights and obligations; representatives of candidates at PECs, their rights and responsibilities;
- 2 Jan: PEC layout, mobile box, registration book, voting procedures;
- 4 Jan: E-day, PEC activities before the beginning of voting process, inking, voters' registration, voting at PEC, voting with mobile box;
- 11 Jan: President of the country – his rights and obligations, particulars of presidential form of government.

Radio Debates. Seven radio debates took place at the radio station from 19th of December through 11th of January. Initially, the debates were 30 minutes long; however, at the request of the participants, they were turned into 45-minute long programs. Debates were facilitated by one journalist and a lawyer. Representatives of 5 presidential candidates (all but I. Sarishvili and G. Maisashvili) took part in these debates.

PSAs. Four PSAs prepared by Atinati's implementing partner were aired regularly.

Results/Impact

As the only viable and continuously operating independent radio outlet in Samegrelo, Atinati provides the sole source of broadcast information to a majority of the population of this region. By programming frequent, diverse election programming, Atinati ensured that the electorate in Samegrelo was informed and prepared regarding technical election procedures and the positions of the various candidates. Opposition and pro-government candidates alike lauded Atinati for its fair, balanced, and professional election coverage.

10. Association "Independent Journalists' House" – Batumi, Adjara (Both Elections)

IJH's activities were split into two parts, the Presidential election and the Parliamentary election. For the Presidential, between December 15 and January 10 IJH conducted the following activities:

- Seminars (working meetings) with distributors of special election-related newspaper;
- Publishing and distribution of the special issue of newspaper "Batumelebi" called "Elections 2008";
- Voter hotline

Seminars. Working meetings were conducted for the Batumi, Khelo, Shuakhevi, Keda, Khelvachauri and Kobileti municipalities. Total number of distributors present at meetings and eventually involved in the process of newspaper distribution was 123 (45 women and 78 men). During the meetings, distributors were briefed on: structure and content of the newspaper,

general information on elections and plebiscite, methods of distribution and general info on how to present themselves while distributing the newspaper.

Special Newspaper. 107,300.000 copies (101,300 Georgian and 6,000 Russian) of the newspaper “Elections 2008” were printed. Topics covered included:

- Why should we participate in elections;
- How to protect our votes;
- Situation before elections; article called “They never lie as much as before elections”;
- Several short interviews with voters – “Why I participate in elections”;
- Detailed information on voting procedures;
- Information on voters rights;
- Information on voters lists;
- Information on plebiscite;
- Full list of Batumi, Khelvachauri and Kobuleti PECs;
- Information on local organizations observing elections.

Hotline. IJH established a hotline for voters to call with questions about technical procedures and to report irregularities. Number of calls received before Presidential elections (from December 24 through January 4): 90. Number of calls received on January 5th: 265. Topics of the phone calls included questions on voting procedures and other related technical questions; inconsistencies in voting lists and inaccurately compiled voting lists; and violations during the voting process.

Parliamentary Election. In addition to replicating the above activities, IJH will work with self-governance organizations at local colleges and technical institutes to organize and educate youth and first-time voters. Among other activities, IJH will conduct a journalism competition in which university students will compete to produce the best election-related article for a small cash prize. The selected articles will appear in the special edition of Batumelebi that will appear in April or May.

Results/Impact

IJH produced and distributed over 100,000 copies of a special newspaper dedicated to election-related issues. On election day, a significant number of calls the IJH hotline received were from precinct election commissioners themselves – demonstrating IJH’s position as the authority on technical election questions in the Adjara region. By systematically documenting irregularities, IJH also laid the foundation for a fairer and more lawful Parliamentary election round.

11. Racha Lekhumi and Kvemo Svaneti Self-Governance Resource Center (Presidential Only)

The Resource Center is practically the only NGO operating in the remote and rather isolated Kvemo Svaneti region. Their activities consisted of:

- Training of 13 local trainers on election-related issues;
- Publishing of information bulletin for the door-to door distribution in the region;
- Meetings of trainers with 245 local community unions' members/info bulletin distributors.

Training of trainers. Thirteen local trainers from villages across the region took part in this training on 21-22 of December in Ambrolauri, conducted by training expert S. Stazhadze. Participants were briefed on all election-related questions which could be of interest of local population. They were also given information bulletins printed before the training for their further distribution among the region's population.

Information Bulletins. 20,000 impartial information bulletins were printed and distributed. This was done by 245 local community members trained by 13 trainers and also by local volunteers. The bulletins contained information on technical election issues, where and when to vote, and how to spot voting irregularities.

Distribution trainings. 13 trained trainers conducted meetings with 245 community union members in the Ambrolauri, Oni, Tsageri and Lentekhi municipalities. Community union members were also briefed on election-related issues and prepared in detail on how to answer voter questions. Community union members were provided with info bulletins which they eventually distributed door-to door (with the help of volunteers) in all villages of the region.

Result/Impact

The Resource Center was able to reach every village in one of the most isolated regions of Georgia with professionally prepared and presented voter information, tailored to the local context.

12. Center for Social Sciences, Tbilisi (Both Elections)

CSS is a media think tank specializing in the training of journalists and the production of material on professional and effective journalism. For the Presidential election, CSS conducted the following activities:

Training for Regional Journalists. CSS conducted a 5-day intensive training for 20 journalists from 13 cities across Georgia. The training covered information about constitutional reform

suggested by opposition parties; election-related legislation and possible violations of the electoral process; training on means of effective communication during election campaigns; and the identification of three essential topics requiring coverage by local media.

Workshops. CSS conducted additional 2-day workshops with groups of journalists from around Georgia on these same topics.

Coalition Building. CSS experts traveled to ten cities for coordination meetings with representatives of local media outlets, to ensure standardization in pre- and post-election activities.

Election Coverage and Plebiscite Manuals. CSS engaged BBC correspondent for the South Caucasus Matthew Collin to prepare a manual on covering election-related processes. CSS also contracted with a lawyer to prepare a detailed manual on plebiscite issues. Both manuals were distributed to all project participants.

Website and Inserts. CSS also established a website repository of all above materials and lessons learned. Journalists across Georgia continue to visit this site to access election-related information, training materials, and technical manuals.

Results/Impact

CSS is both raising the bar for professional journalism across Georgia and serving as a clearinghouse for vetted expert information on election-related issues and election coverage. Local and regional journalists throughout the country are making use of these materials to produce better quality print and broadcast material; and are coordinating with each other to ensure lessons learned in one region are replicated everywhere.

13. Television Lt. Kavkazia (Parliamentary Only)

Kavkazia required a substantial equipment upgrade to provide effective and independent election coverage. They have completed the purchase and installation of this equipment. For the Parliamentary election, they plan to air a special series of moderated debates, 3 per week for each of the 8 weeks preceding the election. Moderators will be chosen from among university students, civil society leaders, prominent journalists, and interested citizens. Panels of moderators will pose questions to parliamentary candidates and political party representatives in front of a live studio audience; telephone lines will allow viewers to phone in with questions of their own. Each debate will focus on a particular substantive issue. Several will be focused on and moderated by youth participants. Kavkazia's website is also being revamped to allow streaming video of these debates to be offered online.

Results/Impact: TBD

14. Ltd. Chokhatauris Matsne, newspaper “Guria News” (Both Elections)

Guria News implemented the following activities for the Presidential election:

Workshops/Seminars. Guria News conducted workshops in Chokhatauri, Ozurgeti, and Lanchkhuti (Guria region) with those who expressed interests in pre-election an election monitoring processes, and with representatives of the local NGO and media sector. At the workshops, experts explained in the details of election process, and also covered possible violations of this process. Experts touched upon methods of preventing of such violations before and after elections.

Consultations. The Guria News information/consulting center in Ozurgeti was daily, and specialists answered election-related questions and provided free consultations.

Brochures. Journalists at the center prepared printed materials for distribution covering the following topics: advice to media outlets and journalists working on balanced coverage of elections-related processes (“Role and functions of media”); voting procedures; and frequently asked election-related questions (examples: what is plebiscite, do results have binding force, when does the pre-election campaign stop, when do polling stations begin and end their work, which documents are needed to be able to vote, etc.). These brochures were distributed publicly by teams of volunteers throughout the region, wearing items of clothing making it clear they did not identify with any political party but rather were impartial observers.

Local journalism. Guria News conducted meetings and facilitated coordination of local journalists’ coverage of the election.

Results/Impact

Guria News represented the only impartial source of election-related information for citizens in the Imereti region. Beneficiaries frequently expressed equal amounts shock and appreciation for the fact that Guria News purported to support “democracy, not any particular candidate.” This impartiality leant credibility to its consultation activities and its printed materials, and resulted in widespread reliance on Guria News on election day to identify and report voting irregularities.

15. Newspaper “Kakhetis Khma” – Kakheti (Both Elections)

Kakhetis Khma represents a coalition of newspapers and journalists from the Kakheti region. A summary of their activities is as follows:

- Election-related articles printed in “Kakhetis Khma” before as well as after elections;
- Creation of “mobile groups” and their pre- and post election activities;
- Meeting with representatives of national minorities;
- Publication and distribution of election-related info leaflets in three languages;
- Radio programs “Your right” and “Election hot line”;
- Special e-day edition of newspaper “Kakhetis Khma”;
- E-day press releases;

Election-Related Articles. 17 articles and 48 informational news stories were published in the newspaper “Kakhetis Khma” before the elections. The main topics were as follows: what is plebiscite, voting procedures, voting lists and differences among them, why should we participate in elections, candidates’ programs and their background, first-time voters, possible violations of electoral rights, etc. A post-election issue of the newspaper was published on January 8th, 2008 and dedicated to the information gathered by mobile groups during e-day.

Mobile Groups. The purpose of the mobile groups was to: 1) increase public awareness on election-related issues as much as possible, and 2) increase media and society involvement into election processes. Eight mobile groups of 3-5 members each were created. Two meetings/seminars were conducted by a trainer invited from ISFED for the members of these groups. Topics discussed were: election administration, balanced and fair coverage of election processes, possible fraud/violations, voting procedures, etc. The mobile groups were active during election day: they were observing election process at ‘problematic’ PECs, moving from one village to another, providing local media outlets with information; and eventually prepared articles and press releases on violations observed. On 5th of January the radio station “Hereti” broadcasted live news received from the mobile groups on an hourly basis.

Informational meetings. Six information meetings were conducted for representatives of national minorities: Ossetians, Azerbaijanis, and Lecks. Up to 40 participants were present at each meeting, and an average of 70% were first-time voters. The purpose of the trainings was to increase their knowledge of voting procedures.

Leaflets. 23,775 copies of info leaflets were printed and distributed in Kakheti: 5,000 in Russian, 10,000 in Azerbaijani and 8,775 in Georgian. The leaflets were titled “Informed Elections: What You Need to Know,” and included the following questions and answers: who can participate in elections, what is plebiscite, detailed voting procedures, inking, video cameras at PECs, secrecy of vote, etc.

Radio programs. During the pre-election period - as well as after elections – radio “Hereti” aired two election-related radio programs: live political debates called “Hot line” (as listeners could make phone calls during the program) and a program called “Your rights”. Total number of programs aired was 45, and 7 out of these were aired in Azerbaijani. Topics covered in the latter program were: election code and news in election legislation, voting procedures and e-day, and

plebiscite and its comparison with referendum. On e-day radio “Hereti” was broadcasting hourly news prepared on the basis of information provided by mobile groups.

Special newspaper. Special issue of the newspaper “Kakhetis Khma” – fully dedicated to elections – was published in 5,000 copies and distributed from 31st of December’07 through 3rd of January’08 in 8 districts and 36 villages of the Kakheti region.

Real-time election coverage. During election day, the newspaper issued short press releases which were sent to all Kakheti based media outlets through SMS and e-mail messages. Press releases took the form of very short messages, covering mostly violations observed at different PECs.

Results/Impact

Kakhetis Khma, through a range of print, broadcast, and organizational activities, ensured that voters in the Kakheti region – of all ethnicities, and with a special emphasis on Azerbaijani citizens – were informed and prepared to participate in the election on January 5th. They also provided independent news coverage – the only media outlet in its region to do so consistently.

Monitoring and Evaluation

IFES/ISC personnel conducted site visits with every subrecipient in the 10 days preceding the Presidential election to monitor progress and attend trainings, seminars, and other events. Additional site visits were conducted with every subrecipient in the 3 weeks following the Presidential election. Subrecipients were required to submit detailed narrative and financial reports on their activities, including on their results and how they were measured.

While many subs conducted public opinion surveys prior to their activities, the better to design and organize them, few if any conducted such surveys after the election to measure the effectiveness, quantitative or qualitative, of their efforts. It was difficult given the time pressures involved to work with the subs to improve their M&E plans; however, IFES/ISC staff have emphasized the need to build such measures into their work plans. ISC has also provided all subrecipients with pre-designed and publicly available tools to facilitate this process, and expects that all subs will comply with this requirement during the next election round.

The summaries of subrecipient activity in Appendix A are based on the subs’ narrative reports, the observations of IFES/ISC personnel who conducted multiple site visits, and the anecdotal comments of project participants and beneficiaries.