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for Georgia

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**Georgia's Breakthrough in Agriculture
and Rural Development**

2020

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ENPARD

Georgia's Breakthrough in Agriculture and Rural Development



Improving Agriculture



Promoting Rural Development



Boosting Food Safety Standards



Increasing Export Potential



“We are delighted to be long-standing contributors to Georgia’s progress in agriculture and rural development and we look forward to continue working together with the Government, stakeholders and partners to improve living conditions and employment possibilities for the rural population in Georgia. Our objective is to empower local people to take the development of their communities into their own hands,” – **Carl Hartzell**, Ambassador of the European Union to Georgia.

“Agriculture and rural development stand high on the Government’s agenda given their social, political and economic significance. The Government’s work to revitalize the country’s rural areas are well supported by external aid. With EU assistance, under the ENPARD programme, Georgia has introduced a new vision in agriculture and rural development grounded on the best EU practices in this field. In the next years to come, we will continue to focus on increasing agricultural competitiveness and promoting local entrepreneurship, which will help improve employment and livelihood in rural areas,” - **Levan Davitashvili**, Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia.



Background

Agriculture has operated as a central thread inside Georgia's economic and social fabric, for centuries. Having played an important role throughout the formation of Georgia's statehood, it has also largely contributed to its economic growth. The sector, hit hard by the breakup of the USSR in the early 90s, has been steadily developing across the country in recent years.

Given that the agricultural and rural development sectors occupy a key role in boosting employment, reducing poverty and strengthening the country - reinvigorating the sector is now, more than ever, of particular importance. The Association Agreement (AA) between Georgia and the European Union (EU) signed during June 2014, has notably also fully entered into force. And the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA) has opened a potentially lucrative 500 million European consumer market door to Georgian products.

Under the EU-Georgia Association Agreement, Georgia is committed to promoting agricultural and rural development, especially via the adoption of a progressive attitude – and is practically helping the country converge toward EU policies and legislation; including sharing knowledge and best practice in rural development, in promoting economic well-being for rural communities and in enhancing central and local administrations. The Georgian government's commitment to revitalising agriculture is largely demonstrated by efforts made to increase relevant national expenditure, and applying swift structural and legislative reforms. The EU has been supporting the sector by way of the European Neighbourhood Programme for Agriculture and Rural Development (ENPARD) since 2013.

ENPARD has proven itself groundbreaking for Georgia-EU relations. The programme operates as a means of multi-dimensional support from the European Union to Georgia. One that helps the country focus toward European standards and quality of life through:



Capacity building of the government institutions involved in agriculture and rural development.



Improved employment and living conditions of rural populations with stronger farmers' cooperation, enhanced production quality and standards, and access to resources.



The promotion of diversified social and economic opportunities in rural areas, particularly for women and youth, all the while placing the environment and cultural heritage at the centre.

The total budget of the programme,
covering the period of 2013-2022 is
€179.5 million
≈ GEL 587 million

ENPARD I



€ 52 million
(≈ GEL 170 million)

EU launched the ENPARD programme in 2013 with the aim to increase agricultural competitiveness and reduce rural poverty in Georgia.

ENPARD II



€ 50 million
(≈ GEL 163 million)

From 2016, the second phase of ENPARD was launched to widen and deepen the agricultural and rural development measures initiated under the first phase.

ENPARD III



€ 77.5 million
(≈ GEL 253 million)

In 2018, the third phase was launched to further enhance competitiveness of agriculture, improve livelihood in rural areas and support environment protection and sustainable management of natural resources.

ENPARD I (2014-2017)

Origins and Early Achievements

After emerging from the Soviet Union as an independent state, Georgia lacked clear vision for its development. This particular developmental absence ultimately included the most crucial sector for economic empowerment and self-sustainability; agriculture. As part of a newly formed nation, where 53% of employed people made up the agricultural set-up, and with more than 70% of agricultural product imports (Oxfam), the sector's development was proving ineffective and essentially lacked direction, goals and a clear strategy.

In this context, a key ENPARD programme goal was to help Georgia adopt and implement a sectoral policy based on the most effective European and international experiences and practices. Hence, in 2015, with the financial support of the EU (under ENPARD) in addition to technical assistance programmes undertaken by international organisations such as FAO and the UNDP - the Georgian Government officially adopted its first **Strategy of Agriculture of Georgia** (2015-2020) placing the following main priorities of the sector's development at the centre of its rationale:



Empowering Farmers



Imposing the Mechanisms for Legislative Development



Institutional Enhancement and Capacity Building



Empowering Farmers Through:

-  Strengthening cooperation of small farmers to increase production and achieve economies of scale by establishing business-oriented cooperation forms, such as small farmers' cooperatives;
-  Establishing 59 district level Information and Consultation Centres (ICCs) to provide information, advice and training to farmers on best practices, new technologies, and demand/supply on both national and international markets.

Initial Challenges:

-  Small plots and individual farmers;
-  High costs;
-  Low production.

Large scale and voluntary cooperative-based agriculture is the norm in Europe, which helps pool knowledge, and reduce equipment and supply costs for farmers. In Georgia, on the other hand, farming takes place on small plots where each farmer works individually, yielding higher costs and more risk. With the launch of ENPARD, the EU has helped Georgian farmers benefit from European experiences by introducing tactics that help boost economies of scale and minimise agriculturally related expenditures.



Key Achievements:

ENPARD COOPERATIVES STRENGTHEN FARMERS ACROSS GEORGIA

Since the introduction of ENPARD in 2014:



15,000 farmers
registered in 1500 cooperatives



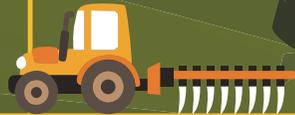
250,000 people
have received advice
on farming
through 59 Information
and Consultation
Centers



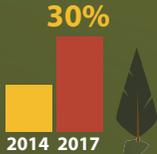
2,000 farmers
in over 280 cooperatives
benefitted from
direct EU funding



More than
8,000 farmers
received EU-funded
training on agriculture
and business management



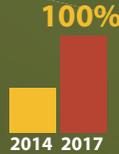
Studies on ENPARD cooperatives show:



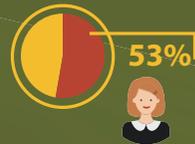
Cooperatives have increased their **NET INCOME**



Cooperatives have increased their **PRODUCTION VALUE**



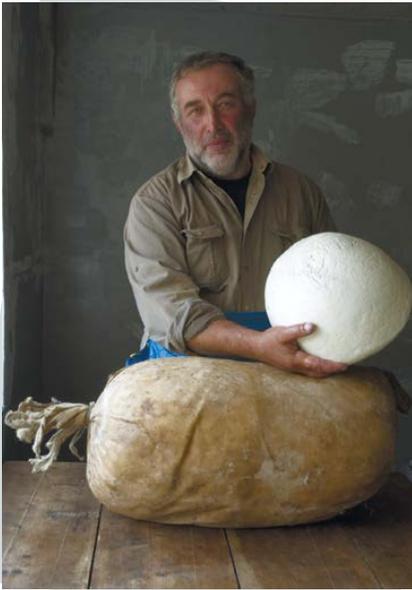
Cooperatives' **EMPLOYMENT** more than doubled



Over a half of cooperative members and employees are **WOMEN**

* ENPARD implementing partner organisations: Oxfam, Mercy Corps, People in Need, CARE International, UNDP Georgia.

ENPARD Spotlight



Cooperative “Alaznistavi”

“Our product is in high demand and we no longer find it difficult to sell” - EU-supported Guda Cheese cooperative.

Paata Abulidze is the head of agricultural cooperative ‘Alaznistavi’. In 2015, with the help of EU funds, Paata established a cooperative in Alaznistavi, located approximately 2,100 metres above sea level, in Alaznistavi, in the northeast region of Tusheti.

Today the cooperative comprises 11 members. The European Union allocated grant assistance worth more than 98,500 GEL to the cooperative. In partnership with Oxfam, Paata’s cheese-production factory was built for the cooperative with lighting and heating systems that are in complete compliance with EU Standards. The cooperative members underwent training sessions organised by Oxfam and Biological Farming Association ELKANA, which ultimately helped them achieve better management, results and impact across their business.

As a result, the tradition of Guda Cheese production revived in Tusheti.

ENPARD Spotlight

“Our cooperative members are responsible for taking care of the livestock, dairy production and for firewood assembly. The chief responsibility is given to the head herdsman, who is an experienced specialist, and whose role it is to manage the production of cheese and supervise the milking of sheep. An additional manager at the cooperative manages the production of cottage cheese. Other staff members clean the stalls where the sheep are milked, they are responsible for firewood, bake bread and cook, and so forth. Every member of the cooperative has their area of expertise, but at the same time each one of them is capable and ready to work collectively and interdependently”, Paata says.

The fact that suppliers, producers and sellers are united under a single business, gives the “Alaznistavi” cooperative a large advantage. After one year of the cooperative establishment, the average profit per member has more than doubled.

The only possible location for the production of Guda Cheese is Tusheti. The village’s distinctness goes back to its medieval origins and rock-dwellings, not to mention a certain species of grass that grows only there - and importantly the temperature differences from night and day-time are minimal. Each of these factors lead to first-rate quality cheese production. Tusheti’s prime location gears it with all the conditions needed to produce the most authentic Tushetian Guda cheese. Already bolstered by an EU endorsed and strictly certified Geographic Indication Certification - the cooperative is on course to being handed all quality labels it requires to become an export-ready product.



ENPARD Spotlight



Cooperative “Nagomari”

“Over half of the cooperative members are women. We have already doubled our land and expanded our factory in the last three years.” – EU-supported tea cooperative “Nagomari”.

The agricultural cooperative, Nagomari, was formed in December 2015. Soon after registration, Nagomari received EU Support via the ENPARD programme that allowed it to purchase equipment for the production of black and green tea and the rehabilitation of unused tea fields.

“With the project we realised how important is the cooperation and especially, connecting and working with solid, dependable partners and interested stakeholders”, - the head of cooperative, Nana Kirmelashvili says.

This merely marks the beginning of the process. The cooperative plans to strengthen tea culture in the village and is convinced that rehabilitation will result in increased production in the coming years. Nagomari has already employed a staggering 35 households throughout the rehabilitation process, across a single season. Now, people in the village have found the motivation to work in the tea sector and to further engage in the rehabilitation process. The cooperative is eager, motivated and enthusiastic when it comes to sharing its experiences. The main challenge for Nagomari is to upgrade its factory premises in close line with EU standards which will enable them to produce in safely and efficiently resulting in quality outputs. For this they count on garnering more support and resources.

In addition, ENPARD I envisaged the achievement of concrete results across the following areas:

-  Improved efficiency of institutions involved in agriculture, including capacity building to the Ministry of Environment Protection and Agriculture of Georgia (MEPA) and the Agricultural Cooperatives Development Agency (ACDA) and the Ministry of Agriculture of the Autonomous Republic of Ajara;
-  Regulated and developed geographical indications;
-  Improved employment and living conditions in rural areas.



Supporting the Ministry of Environment Protection and Agriculture through Imposing the Mechanisms for the Legislative Development

With the support of the EU's ENPARD programme, the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture and its line agencies have improved their performances and adopted key pieces of legislation to enhance agricultural competitiveness:

Key Achievements



Introducing the Mechanisms for Legislative Development

Law on Agricultural Cooperatives Development

- ✿ To strengthen management capacity and instate proper governance at registered cooperatives.
- ✿ To improve understanding among cooperative members on the definition and purposes of cooperative enterprises, and an increased sense of ownership of their cooperatives.
- ✿ To better manage the finances and benefits of business-oriented cooperatives.

Law on Seed certification

- ✿ To develop and adopt a seed certification system that considers one of the essential pillars for enhancing seed production.
- ✿ To improve agricultural productivity in Georgia.

Law on Appellation of origin and Geographical Indication

A product with appellation of origin and geographical indication features a unique taste and physical qualities and demonstrates exclusivity due to its production in a specific natural environment – rendering it both outstanding and highly valuable. The Law has helped:

- ✿ To establish a verification of a product based on its origin.
- ✿ To develop the list of products with the potential of Geographical Identification branding.
- ✿ To enhance potential for agro-tourism and export to European market.



FAO initiated several activities to support the establishment of a seed certification system. One of these activities involved several seed producers in a Voluntary Certification System. The participants were challenged to produce certified seed materials for the 2015-2016 season. As a result, productivity increased by 30%.



Institutional Enhancement and Capacity Building

Policy Unit

Establishment of a Policy Unit under the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture (MEPA) of Georgia that elaborates, oversees and monitors the implementation of the sector's development strategies to ensure prioritisation of policy programmes and financial resources.

Inter-Ministerial Coordination Board

Establishment of Inter-Ministerial Coordination Board led by MEPA to ensure the consolidated sectorial supervision of strategy developments.

Information System of Food Market Prices

Creation of Information System of Food Market Prices under MEPA to help farmers keep up with established market trends.

Agricultural Cooperatives Development Agency

Establishment of Agricultural Cooperatives Development Agency (ACDA), as a dedicated structure under MEPA to promote the development of cooperatives, provide them with consultancy services, coordinate state programmes to support cooperatives, grant cooperatives status and monitor their performance.

Monitoring and Evaluation System

Development of Monitoring and Evaluation to better plan new programmes, activities and budgets.





Institutional Enhancement and Capacity Building

Education and Research Institutions

Capacity Building for agriculture-related Education and Research Institutions, aiming at improved quality of vocational educational training (VET), university education and research within the food and agricultural sector.

The project was implemented by the University of Limerick (Ireland), in conjunction with the Rural and Agricultural Policy and Development Institute (RAPDI) and the Agricultural University of Georgia.

Under this capacity building work, vocational training, education and research in Georgian agriculture underwent rigorous reviews ultimately leading to the development of special curricula that now help shape the system in terms of retraining, both theoretically and practically.

Agriculture Census

In 2014, first quality Agriculture Census was carried out in Georgia with EU support and FAO technical assistance, and in cooperation with Geostat and the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture. Georgia showed real, primary data from the agriculture sector for the first time by means of a first quality Agricultural Census carried out across the country.

Deploying a professional and proven European methodology, the agriculture data today provides a far more representative and realistic image and precise figures as a means to improving more effective policy and strategy development across the sector.



ENPARD Spotlight



Results in research institutions

In Telavi, the ENPARD project building capacity of agriculture-related academic and research institutions, ensured an increase in the number of applicants (120 for 50 available places) and only the Faculty of Agriculture saw an increase in applications. The research results already demonstrate immediate impact.

In Samtskhe-Javakheti, increased numbers of farmers began growing onions and therefore increasing their output. Notably in this context, two demonstration plots for onions were supported by the UNDP.

In Batumi, the research convinced the Ministry of Agriculture of Ajara that it is important to support the university to extend the value chain analysis to other crops.



Piloting a European Model of Rural Development

The key to boosting employment and improving living conditions in rural areas, is diversifying the economy and moving away from an over-reliance on agriculture. Under ENPARD I, the EU began working with relevant ministries, civil society and local communities to promote lasting rural development in a variety of ways.

Key Achievements:

A National Strategy for Rural Development 2017-2020

At the central level, ENPARD I provided technical assistance that supports the development and implementation of a National Strategy for Rural Development. The strategy is founded on three core axes:

- ✿ Competitive agriculture
- ✿ The sustainable management of natural resources
- ✿ A diversified local economy.

It is also based on the EU LEADER approach, which is currently already underway across twelve Georgian municipalities under ENPARD I, II and III grant components.

What is LEADER? - The approach considers each rural area distinct and maintains that the unique traits of a region are most effectively understood by its own inhabitants. It adopts a "bottom-up" approach where Local Action Groups (LAGs) mobilise communities at the local level. Once the needs have been identified, the LEADER process moves on toward financing promising project ideas.

New Economic Opportunities in Rural Areas

In tandem with the new strategy of rural development, ENPARD I launched the pilot activities with the involvement of civil society and international experts – to support the rural development process in Georgia.

Three pilot rural development projects were implemented in **Borjomi, Lagodekhi and Kazbegi** to strengthen non-agricultural sectors such as eco-tourism, manufacturing, and services, and to create a vibrant labour market in rural areas, amounting to half of Georgia's population.

In line with the LEADER process, first Local Action Groups (LAG) were created in these pilot municipalities to test the effectiveness of the model in the Georgian context. ENPARD delivered European expertise on the identification of local problems, in developing strategies for addressing those problems, and provided EU grants to fund local development initiatives.



Lagodekhi LAG

Local Action Group (LAG) Lagodekhi is an independent platform to stimulate the development of Lagodekhi municipality. Following the EU's LEADER model for rural development, the LAG combines more than 100 representatives from all 15 municipalities and represents citizens from the private sector, civil society and local authorities, including the head of the municipal board.

One of the key priority directions of Lagodekhi LAG is agricultural development, namely support to agricultural competitiveness, also environmental protection, improvement of rural livelihood and services. Through economic activities the LAG facilitates the establishment of diversified employment opportunities in the municipal villages and encourages economic empowerment of rural population.

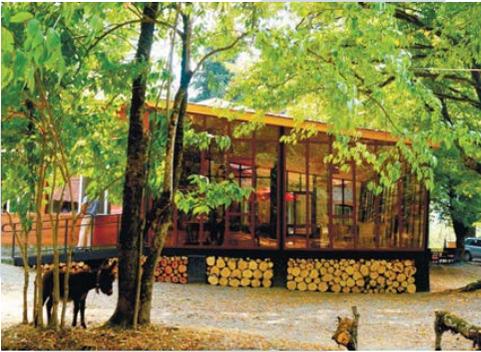
Key Figures:

With the funding from EU under the ENPARD program, Lagodekhi LAG has supported 64 rural development initiatives valued at GEL 2,482,100 to meet the key priorities of the strategy. In total more than 30,000 rural citizens benefited through the direct or indirect impact of the economic and social initiatives incubated within the rural development project.

ENPARD Spotlight

ENPARD Terrace

The best place to relax in Lagodekhi protected areas



“The EU support is prestigious for us. The EU has launched a great campaign in order to increase the awareness of the rural development”, - Valeri Kereselidze, the founder of the Terrace

A hotel in the forest – ‘Wald Hotel Lagodekhi’ is the only space with a natural landscape in the diverse Lagodekhi Protected Areas, where people have the opportunity to enjoy the vacation in the nature.

Valeri Kereselidze has been thinking about establishing the tourist facility with years of savings. In August 2016, Valeri Kereselidze and the Lagodekhi Protected Area signed the lease agreement which emphasized arrangement of cafeteria and a hotel. In order to make the hotel operational it was necessary to carry out the repair works and to ensure the proper equipment.

Soon Valeri learnt about the EU’s ENPARD program from a member of the Lagodekhi Local Action Group who was visiting his hotel. Following the announcement of grant competition by CARE, the founder of the hotel presented two initiatives – to build a terrace as well as a pergola. After passing the standard process, both initiatives were approved and Valeri started a new development phase.

ENPARD Spotlight

“With EU support, we have created the ENPARD terrace that has become a favourite place for many of the visitors to Lagodekhi Protected Areas. I would have definitely arranged the terrace at the hotel, but it would have taken time, years of savings. Together with EU, I could start popularization of my own business, as well as Lagodekhi Protected Areas”, Valeri says.

Currently, there are nine rooms available at the Wald Hotel Lagodekhi, which provide beds for 30 guests at the same time. 9 people are permanently employed in the hotel, but often the number of hotel staff increases up to 15 people. The initiative also supports local farmers through including their production into the value chain.

Valeri Kereselidze’s commitment greatly influenced the local population. There were only 8 guesthouses at the time when Wald Hotel Lagodekhi opened, while today their number exceeds 20. Local people saw that it was necessary to create an infrastructure, whether it would be a wine cellar or a bakery, where they would be able to host guests.

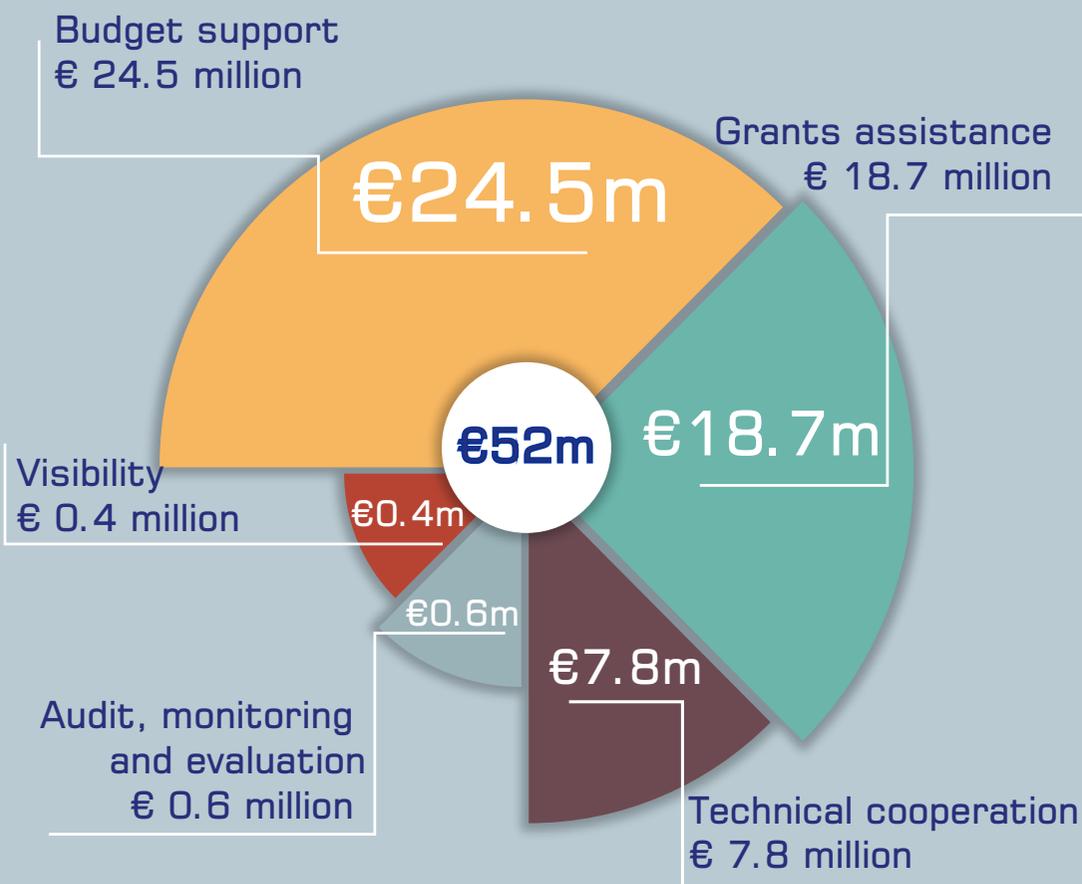


Key Figures:

Lagodekhi Protected Areas hosted 20,000 visitors in 2016, while in 2018 the number of visitors reached 50,000.

EU assistance under ENPARD I 2013-2017

TOTAL budget: € 52 million



ENPARD II (2016-2020)

Building on Strong Foundation

Building on the backing of the programme's first phase, ENPARD II extended its support to facilitate the integration of the agriculture sector specifically in terms of:



Improving agricultural competitiveness



Developing Food safety, sanitary and phyto-sanitary standards



Introducing Rural development policies and reforms in Georgia



Improving Agriculture

During the second phase of the programme, the EU continued its support to the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia in the context of the Strategy of Agricultural Development of Georgia 2015-2020 implementation. The programme furthermore provided technical assistance and expertise to continue developing the country's Agricultural Extension System and respective Strategy.

ENPARD II also provided technical support and training to the Ministry assisting it toward the creation of a farm registry, and the implementation of a seed certification process and climate-resilient agricultural practices.

In the form of direct budget support, ENPARD II also continued to encourage the creation and sustainability of business-oriented farmer cooperatives in Georgia.

Key Achievements:

Improvement of the organisational structure, human resources management and training systems of the MEPA

Over 400 staff trained to better plan new programmes, activities and budgets in the following areas:

- 🌿 Value chain analysis
- 🌿 Database creation and management
- 🌿 Agricultural statistics
- 🌿 Yield prognosis systems
- 🌿 Geographic information systems
- 🌿 Post-harvest handling
- 🌿 Trade regulations
- 🌿 English languages
- 🌿 IT topics

Improvement of the agriculture analytical capacity and database management

Food Price Monitoring and Analysis Tool – an electronic system that provides an advanced technical solution for the dissemination and analysis of market price information. In parallel to the policymaking, up-to-date statistics on local food prices will help rural families and farmers' associations to ensure that their production is in line with market trends, and to help them lead to the new economic opportunities.

Farm registry system – A IT software programme rolled-out to gauge accurate data on farmers' agricultural assets toward further developing and improving Georgian Agriculture.



Boosting food safety standards

Food safety and sanitary and phyto-sanitary (SPS) measures have long been neglected in the country. Yet, during the negotiations of the EU-Georgia Association Agreement, the issue reappeared on the legislative agenda – resulting in the core assumption that Georgia can only take full advantage of the free trade opportunities with the EU, if it converges, adopts and participates with and to EU standards.

Key Achievements:

 Capacity building of National Food Agency (NFA) created in 2012 under the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia and tasked with control and inspection of food safety and SPS.

 Adoption and enforcement of the Code on Food and Feed Safety, Veterinary and Plant Protection with strict regulation on vaccination and pesticide usage.

 Improved SPS, food safety and food quality standards and procedures for inspection and control:

Upgrading of laboratory capacities and food safety/SPS standards for inspection and control.

Strengthening of capacities for border inspection, control and upgrading of standards for food import/export monitoring.

Adoption of improved food safety/quality schemes by farmers.



Reported FS standards violations

2015

550
cases reported

2018

over **5,000**
cases reported
=
increased credibility



Number of products inspected by NFA

2012

less than **400**
inspected

2017

45,000 inspected
=
effective responding mechanism



Anthrax was one of the most prevalent animal diseases that proved fatal to consumers. Via the deployment of an effective veterinary protection system over last 12 month, zero cases have been reported on the Anthrax.

* Figures are provided by National Food Agency of Georgia



Promoting Rural Development

A showcase of how successful the implementation of the pilot rural development projects across three municipalities were, induced an ENPARD II top-up during 2017 - whilst adding **Borjomi**, **Lagodekhi** and **Kazbegi** to the grant, furthermore, the LEADER model was expanded to five new municipalities, including **Dedoplistskaro**, **Akhalkalaki**, **Tetritskaro**, **Keda** and **Khulo** during that time.

ENPARD II has continued to focus on rural development for creating new economic opportunities for the rural population.

Despite primarily targeting rural and mountainous areas, the programme also has helped non-farmers via various formats, specifically through:

-  Continual financial assistance and technical support
-  Fostering the creation of micro, small and medium enterprises
-  Helping potential entrepreneurs to identify development ideas
-  Providing expertise to design projects, with thorough budgeting and business plan

This kind of help improves and upgrades rural services that are oftentimes inadequate, hamper economic development and contribute to rural poverty.

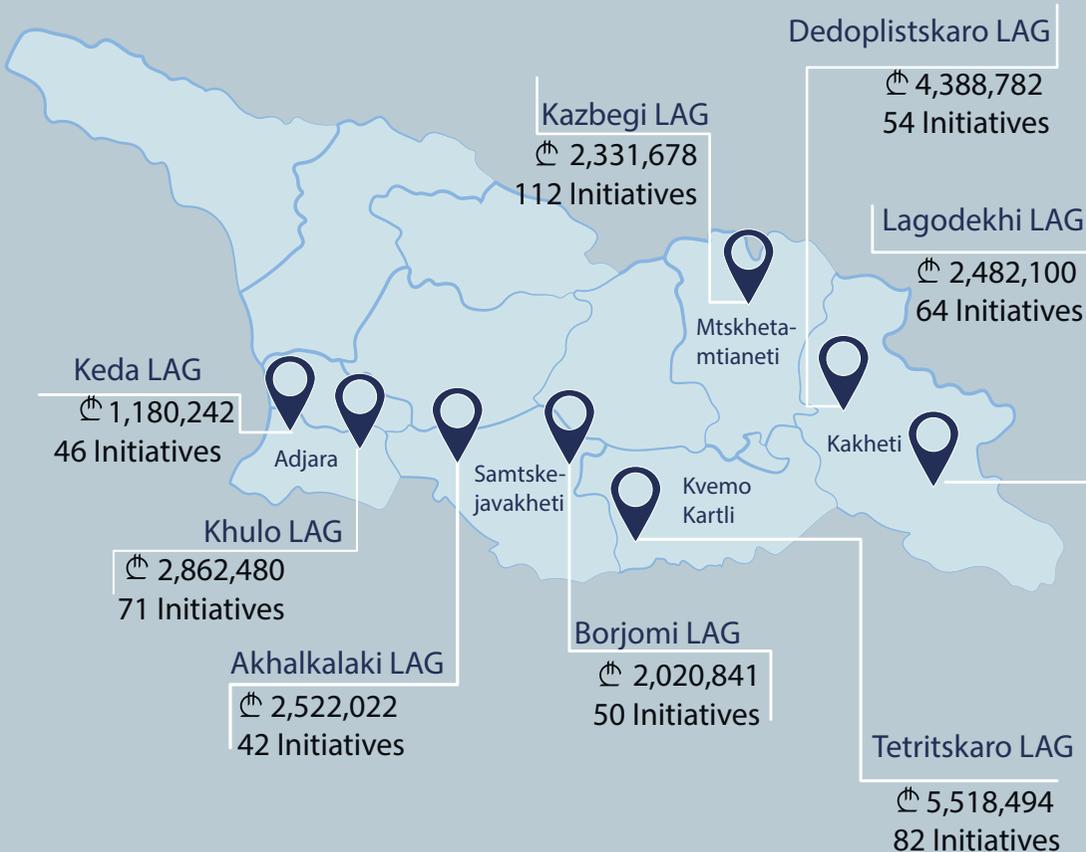
The rural development component of the programme benefits the whole of Georgia, while its concrete rural development actions are implemented in selected municipalities of the country. LEADER projects were extended to eight municipalities under ENPARD II (See map).

Key Fact:

The programme also supports rural development activities in the breakaway region of **Abkhazia**, in line with the EU's principles of non-recognition and engagement. Importantly, ENPARD actively promotes the core EU principles of gender equality, environmental sustainability, as well as the fight against climate change.

MAIN PRIORITY AREAS FOR LOCAL DEVELOPMENT:

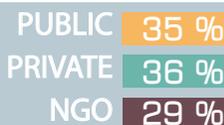
- 🌿 Agriculture and value chains
- 🌿 Tourism and related services
- 🌿 Social and municipal infrastructure
- 🌿 Education, sports and culture
- 🌿 Environment protection
- 🌿 Natural resources management
- 🌿 Women, youth and vulnerable groups



STRUCTURE OF EU-SUPPORTED LAGs:

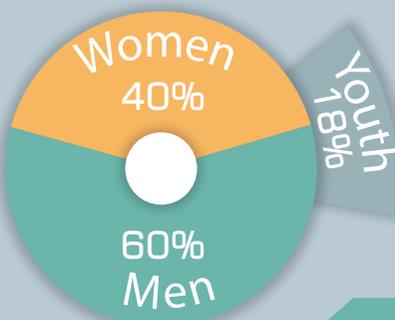
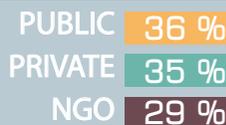
Lagodekhi LAG

130 MEMBERS



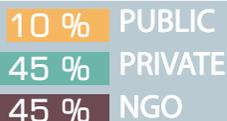
Borjomi LAG

28 MEMBERS



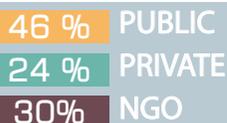
Kazbegi LAG

146 MEMBERS



Akhalkalaki LAG

30 MEMBERS



Tetritskaro LAG

89 MEMBERS



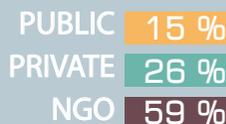
Khulo LAG

69 MEMBERS



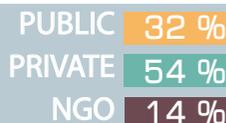
Dedoplistskaro LAG

91 MEMBERS



Keda LAG

322 MEMBERS



ENPARD Spotlight

Tetrtskaro Local Action Group

Tetrtskaro's LAG converges the civil, private and public sectors helping stimulate the local development of the Tetrtskaro municipality through a balanced, participative and inclusive local development strategy. Tetrtskaro LAG, with a membership of about 100 Tetrtskaro inhabitants, was created in August 2017 in the framework of the EU's LEADER approach. Elected at 27 years old, Nino Tikurishvili is the Executive Director of the Tetrtskaro LAG.



The LAG combines all 20 communities, including national and religious minorities as well as IDPs and eco-migrants residing in the Tetrtskaro municipality, out of which 40% are women and around 30% are young people.

Between February – March 2018, Tetrtskaro LAG members congregated to define the Local Development Strategy implementing action plan. They also developed strategy, monitoring and evaluation indicators, whilst community consultation processes took place. LAG members held 20 meetings with Tetrtskaro communities and introduced the draft version of the strategy. Based on feedback from its many communities, the Tetrtskaro Development Strategy was officially validated during a LAG general meeting, in March 2018. The key priorities of the strategy support the development of rural tourism, the modernisation of agricultural and diversified initiatives, environmental protection, the management of natural resources and disaster risk reduction, and the rehabilitation of the rural infrastructure.

“The main potential of the region lies in its tourism sector. Tetrtskaro is dotted with noteworthy spots and beautiful nature, and very few people are actually aware of them. Awareness is notably low amid both foreign as well as local Georgian tourists. In parallel with service and infrastructure development, PR, awareness, recognition and image are of strategic value and importance. Creating entertainment and holiday spots and facilities will undoubtedly attract not only tourists from abroad, but also bring many levels of diversity into the lives of local people”,- says Nino Tikurishvili, LAG Director.

ENPARD Spotlight



Rope Adventure Park
EU Supported
Rural Development
Initiative in Tetrtskaro

The EU-supported Rope Adventure Attraction is located at the Algeti National Park, in Manglisi, Tetrtskaro Municipality. The 225-metre long attraction is suspended at different heights from the ground and combines barriers of ropes, bridges, nets and beams. The park has 2 routes: one designed for adolescents/teenagers and another that caters for family activities.

The initiative was among those EU-funded projects that has been developed and implemented to meet the Tetrtskaro strategy goals developed by LAG.

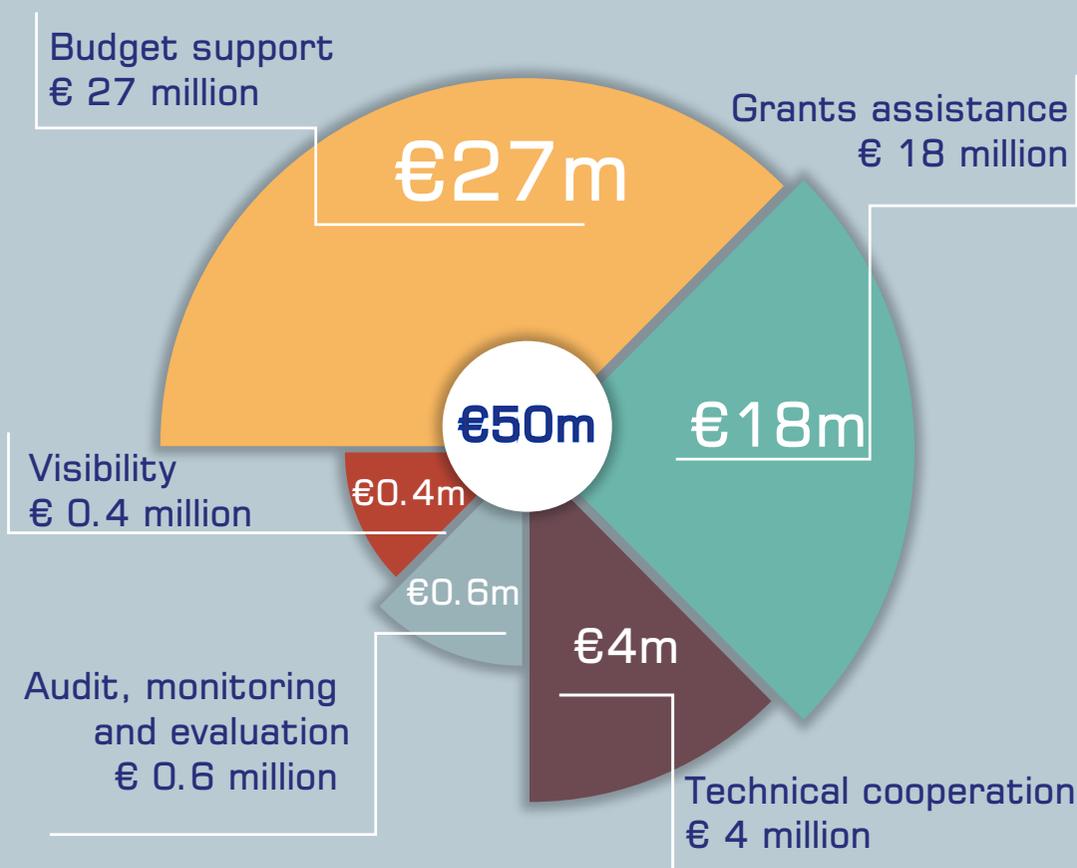
“The Rope Adventure Park is set to bring financial benefits to the Algeti National Park in turn helping increase its attractiveness, thereby offering more and better benefits to local residents. Because the Park’s visitors rely on food, accommodation, transportation and guiding services, local residents are ideally geared toward providing these services. The project is also on course to helping develop ecotourism in reserved territories amounting to all sorts of advantages to locals.” – says Avtandil Mchedlidze, Director of the Administration of Algeti National Park, project implementer.

The amount of the EU grant amounts to GEL 150,000 (including GEL 100,000 of co-funding). In 2018, approximately 88,000 people visited Algeti National Park. A modest forecast recently showed that the Rope Adventure Park is set to boost the number of visitors to Alegeti National Park, by an impressive 40%.



EU assistance under **ENPARD II** 2016-2019

TOTAL budget: € 50 million



ENPARD III (2018-2022)

Consolidating Reforms in Agriculture and Rural Development

The strategic goal of ENPARD III, in line with priorities of the National Strategy for Rural Development 2017-2020, features:



The diversification of rural economic activities



The growth of tourism



The sustainable development of natural resources



The improvement of the quality of life in rural areas

Notably an Inter-Ministerial Working Group was created to help coordinate the adoption of the National Strategy of Agriculture and Rural Development of Georgia 2021-2027.

Key Achievements:

Enhancing the competitiveness of the agriculture sector with policy implementation support to the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture

 Under ENPARD III, the government adopted the **National Strategy of Agriculture and Rural Development of Georgia 2021-2027**. The new strategy will focus on lessons learned and address gaps. Among the key strategic priorities are Georgia's institutional approximation to the European Union, inclusive rural development and climate smart agriculture.

 As part of the sectoral institutional reform, the **Agricultural and Rural Development Agency (ARDA)** came into being. ARDA's role is to manage the formation of new cooperatives and new projects in the fields of agriculture and rural development to efficiently support farmers and cooperatives.

 Based on the earlier established Information and Consultation Centers, **Agricultural Extension System** was developed and a revised **Agricultural Extension Strategy for Georgia 2018-2020** was adopted.

The primary goal of the strategy is to improve the competitiveness of the Georgian agricultural sector by delivering quality and cost-efficient advisory services to the farmers by:

Transforming the existing information and consultation centres into a modern extension service focused on real needs of farmers;

Introducing a new Demonstration Chain Network initiative, one of the mechanisms for teaching and consulting farmers;

Establishing the unification of private and public demo plots in Georgia.

Racha-Lechkhumi and Guria are the two pilot regions circa the implementation of the Agricultural Extension Strategy for Georgia 2018-2020.

Improving employment and living conditions in rural areas by:

 Supporting the Government of Georgia and the Government of Ajara AR in implementing rural development policy to ultimately diversify economic activities.

 Improving employment and services across the different regions in Georgia, including Adjara and Abkhazia.

Four new grant projects, which introduce the European LEADER approach to rural development were launched under ENPARD III in the municipalities of **Tsalka**, **Akhmeta**, **Tskaltubo** and **Mestia**. These projects follow the earlier EU-supported rural development actions under ENPARD I and II in other eight municipalities of Georgia.

Improving the environment, sustainable management of natural resources and climate action by:

 Within the ENPARD Programme strategy has been developed to intensify the work on climate-smart agriculture at different levels as a mean to reduce the impact of climate change in Georgia.

 ENPARD with technical support of FAO has introduced the actions to mainstream climate smart agriculture in the country focusing on land use and planning, implementing good agricultural practices for soil, water and crop management, reducing agricultural green gas emissions and establishing efficient agro-meteorological services.

ENPARD Spotlight



David and Valentina Kapanadze are of the first farmers to have been active in setting-up the eggplant production demo plot in Lagodekhi. This is a prime example of those implemented within the ENPARD programme, from the chain of the demo plots promoting climate smart agriculture. Kapanadze`s Demo plot adheres to the vegetable plot arranging methods and techniques that are designed to withstand drought, heavy rain and pests that arise as consequences of climate change.

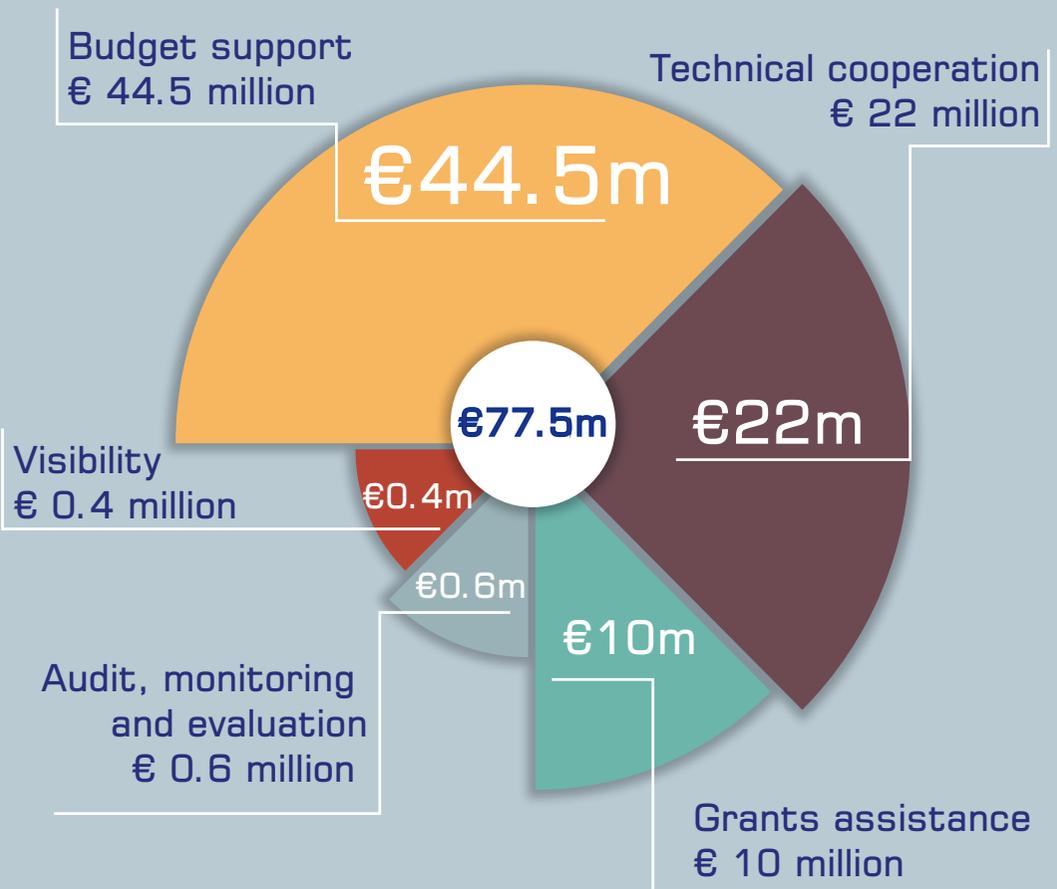
“We decided to implement all knowledge and expertise shared with us from European experts. Using proper drip irrigation and integrated pest management methods, resulted in a complete eggplant field that we can claim, today, bears wonderful harvests. Heavy village rain has unfortunately destroyed most of our neighbours’ crops, whilst our plot has been built to resist, survive and thrive in all kinds of weather and pests”, - says Valentina Kapanadze, demo plot farmer from Lagodekhi.

The demo plot is the part of the ENPARD III project, implementing by FAO, that develops and improves agricultural extension services in Georgia. The project intends to improve the competitiveness of the agriculture sector in Georgia by delivering quality advisory services to farmers and upgrades the capacities of existing ICCs as climate smart agriculture-resistant ones. There are different types of potatoes, wheat, maize, cucumber, eggplant and raspberry plots, that focus on the municipalities of Dedoplistskaro, Akhalkalaki, Kazbegi and Lagodekhi.



EU assistance under **ENPARD III** 2018-2022

TOTAL budget: € 77.5 million



ENPARD IV (2020-2024)

Enhancing Standards, Deepening Exports and Improving Rural Livelihood

The fourth phase of ENPARD is envisioned to be launched at the end of 2020. It will provide extended assistance in the **food safety and SPS** sector to enhance consumer protection for citizens of Georgia and to promote exports of Georgian products to EU Member States. ENPARD IV will build on the achievements of the Comprehensive Institution Building (CIB) programme and of previous ENPARD phases. It will provide further support to the National Food Agency (NFA) for improved inspection and control systems and for continuation of the legal approximation process including enforcement of newly adopted regulations. It will also support food business operators in their efforts to adapt to the sectoral reforms.



In addition, ENPARD IV will further support **rural development** and will improve living conditions for a larger proportion of the rural population in Georgia, rendering the rural development sector more dynamic and effectively contributing to Georgia's economic and social development. ENPARD IV will improve the economic and social integration of vulnerable households in disadvantaged rural regions of Georgia, including eco-migrants, conflict affected people, ethnic minorities, Georgian returnees and migrants. The action will continue to enhance civic participation in the regions of Georgia through increased civil society involvement in local decision-making processes and will continue to actively promote and encourage participation of youth and women, noting the specific needs and constraints of these groups.



ENPARD Communication Unit



“ ENPARD Communications Unit was established in 2012 with the aim to raise awareness of the EU support to and impact on agriculture and rural development in Georgia. Throughout these years, our team has been successful in designing diverse and flexible communication activities, also in developing effective coordination and monitoring schemes that have helped to streamline the operation of large number of EU-funded ENPARD projects, stakeholders and partners. These actions, coupled with diverse range of PR initiatives and broad national and regional media coverage, have facilitated increasing visibility of EU support to agriculture and rural development in Georgia. “

Tamar Khuntsaria

Team Leader, ENPARD Communication Unit



“ As a reporter of Agricultural Journalism, ENPARD has broadened my understanding and knowledge in modernized European approaches. As a subscriber of the ENPARD website, I keep myself updated on the current ENPARD achievement, new strategies and grant opportunities. My direct audience include farmers, food producers and customers and it is crucial for them to showcase the results achieved through EU standards. “

Demetre Ergemlidze

Reporter, Georgian Public Broadcaster



“ We unite the regional broadcasters. People living in rural areas are mainly interested in the news happening at their area. ENPARD Communications Unit produces a number of valuable videos and info graphics that explains the complicated strategic approaches in a simple way and tells the success stories of the ordinary rural people. We, as partner of ECU use the video and photo resources accumulated on the platform for further dissemination and broadcast to the wider audience, that might not have access to the internet. “

Natia Kuprashvili

Director of Alliance of Regional Broadcasters



The European Union
for Georgia
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