

## Women's Fund "Sukhumi" - For Peace and Equality

### Alla Gamakharia

Chairperson of the Women's Fund "Sukhumi"

The Women's Fund "Sukhumi" was founded in 1997 as the cultural and humanitarian fund "Sukhumi." Four active women from Abkhazia established it: Zhanna Chabukiani, Nanuli Ramishvili, Maria Gelashvili, and Alla Gamakharia.

Our organization led to the creation of two other organizations: the Teachers' Association "Education and Peace" headed by Nanuli Ramishvili, and the Women's Entrepreneurs Fund headed by Maria Gelashvili. Thus, we became three partner organizations.

On October 19, 2021, the organization was renamed the Women's Fund "Sukhumi."

All areas of our activity begin with the word "woman":

- Woman and...
  - Gender Policy
  - Life Without Violence
  - Building Peace
  - Youth
  - Integration of Internally Displaced Persons

As a result of 26 years of persistent, tireless work alongside our partner organizations, we can be proud of many achievements:

- In every municipality, there is a Gender Equality Council that promotes the implementation of gender policy at the municipal level.
- Interagency commissions are created and strengthened at the legislative level in municipalities (including representatives from referral agencies) that actively work on issues of violence against women and improving their lives.
- For over 20 years, we have continuously worked with representatives from conflict zones, together with women living in Abkhazia and the Tskhinvali region, building bridges of peace that the younger generation should cross.
- Youth has always been our priority. How to manage conflicts? How to prevent violence? How to live in harmony with others? We teach young people these skills and learn together with them.
- From the first day of our establishment, we have helped IDP women overcome difficulties. Much has improved since then, but they still have specific needs that remain unmet. With the support of UN Security Council Resolution 1325, we work for our rights and needs.

The year 2023, like previous years, passed in accordance with:

**Our vision:** striving for a future where women and men have equal rights in all aspects of life – civil, economic, social, and cultural. We continue to play the role of defender of women's rights and gender equality, driving progressive social change and advocating for peace.

**Our mission:** supporting the social, economic, and political rights and opportunities of women by developing their social, educational, and legal potential, achieving gender equality, and involving women in the decision-making process.

In 2023, we worked on 12 projects aimed at the well-being of women. This is our annual report.

## **The project "Strengthening Women's Rights in Western Georgia"**

**Since 2001, the Fund "Sukhumi" has been actively addressing the issue of domestic violence against women by increasing public awareness and developing support services for victims. The project "Strengthening Women's Rights in Western Georgia" is implemented in 10 municipalities by the organization Brot für die Welt, supported by Evangelischer Entwicklungsdienst (Germany).**

### **Project Components:**

- Women's Support Centers
- Rehabilitation Center
- Forum Theater
- Youth Empowerment Centers
- Day Rehabilitation Centers
- Monitoring and Advocacy

### **Women's Support Centers**

**The Women's Support Centers are branches of the Fund "Sukhumi", established in Western Georgia starting in 2009. The centers promote the protection of women's rights and provide social-psychological rehabilitation.**

### **Main Objectives of the Women's Support Centers:**

- Prevention of domestic violence in society and support for victims of violence
- Supporting women and enhancing civic engagement in local communities

The centers facilitate the implementation of the GREWS system (an innovation of the Fund "Sukhum'i - the Gender-Responsive Early Warning System). In 2023, the Women's Support Centers operated in 10 municipal entities across 4 regions:

- **Imereti:** Terjola, Bagdati, Vani, Samtredia.
- **Samegrelo:** Senaki, Khobi, Tsalenjikha, Zugdidi (villages on the demarcation line in the conflict zone: Khurcha, Koki, Kakhati)
- **Guria:** Chokhatauri

- **Adjara:** Kobuleti

**The leaders of the centers** - mobilizers organized various types of events. They create a unified coordination system and collaborate with local structures, advisory organizations, gender equality councils, schools, community centers, and local civil organizations.

**During monthly informational meetings**, participants received necessary information on violence issues and learned about available services to help victims. Monitoring of domestic violence cases was systematically conducted, identifying crisis groups and risk groups, and women who became victims of violence.

- **124 cases of violence were reported.**
- **124 women accessed psychological services.**
- **42 women received legal consultations.**
- **26 women with children (77 individuals in total) were referred to the rehabilitation center of the Fund “Sokhumi “**
- **42 individuals participated in a municipal program.**
- **118 individuals found employment through state programs.**

Collaboration with gender equality councils was active, and outsourcing was successful in Tsalenjikha, Senaki, Bagdati, and Khobi, with work co-financed by the municipal budget.

**With support from local self-government in Khobi, a study was conducted, and the report "Assessment of Human Safety and Gender Needs of Women and Youth" was published. The study utilized the Gender Conflict Early Warning System (GREWS).**

<https://www.fsokhumi.ge/index.php/ka/publikacia/mshvidoba/item/14015-2023-09-24-06-08-49>

Groups of proactive women leaders have been established in women's support centers, tasked with identifying issues.

**In 2023, they discussed 64 issues.**

**Most identified issues pertained to social matters. Through early intervention information and advocacy activities, the situation for 41 women improved. In Terjola, Senaki, Kobuleti, Bagdati, Chokhatauri, and Vani, women engaged in economic empowerment programs and completed professional training—26 women enhanced their economic status. In collaboration with local governments in Senaki, Kobuleti, Zugdidi, Chokhatauri, and Samtredia, women's advocated infrastructural issues were addressed, involving the maintenance of internal roads, development of children's attractions, outdoor lighting, construction of mini-parks, and repairs of homes damaged by natural disasters.**

### **Youth Empowerment Centers**

**Conflict resolution groups and youth clubs have been operating in 12 municipalities for three years. These form the basis of Youth Empowerment Centers, which offer informal education to youth, prevent violence, and foster their leadership and creative potential.**

In 2023, the centers were active in 10 municipalities: Terdjola, Bagdati, Vani, Samtredia, Senaki, Khobi, Tsalendjikha, Zugdidi, Chokhatauri, and Kobuleti.

## 100 trainings were held

2360 participants

1365

995

Leaders of various groups held events in their schools, including workshops, information meetings, round tables, discussion clubs, and panel discussions. These activities were initiated as a result of a six-month training course.

**A total of 5,715 students participated in the activities initiated by young people, comprising 3,045 girls and 2,670 boys.**

**A set of training course modules for youth empowerment centers has been published and distributed to youth trainers and schools involved in the project. The publication includes ten training modules on the following topics: peace and conflict, domestic violence, causes of conflict, gender and gender stereotypes, conflict escalation, tolerance, consequences of conflict, early marriage, conflict resolution, and norms of ethics and aesthetics. It also addresses the interdependence of children and parents. The publication can be accessed here:**

**<https://www.fsokhumi.ge/index.php/ka/publikacia/trsaxelmzgvanelo/item/13365-2023-02-26-19-11-59>.**

A youth network comprising 50 participants was created. These young people became trainers and received certificates from the Fund "Sukhumi". Additionally, the schools involved in the project were given certificates of appreciation.

Young trainers independently conducted 60 training sessions. The members of the centers continue their relationships and friendships even after the course concluded.

The work of the centers has earned the approval of teachers, parents, school administrations, municipal youth departments, and education resource centers.

**Luka, one of the leaders of the Zugdidi Youth Center, actively participates in pieces of training and organizes events. Luka's mother is Abkhazian, and he often visits Abkhazia. He has friends in the schools of the occupied Gali district and shares his knowledge and experience about the youth center with his peers. Luka serves as an ambassador of peace for young people separated by conflict.**

## Rehabilitation Centre

**In 2022, the Women's Fund "Sukhumi" opened a rehabilitation center in Kutaisi. Women in difficult situations, who are not classified as victims of violence, can stay there with their children for 12-15 days in a peaceful environment. Referrals are made from women's support centers and various agencies.**

The rehabilitation center includes four bedrooms, a dining room, a kitchen, children's playgrounds, and relaxation areas. Three meals a day are provided.

**In 2023, the center rehabilitated 43 women and 81 children.**

Comprehensive work is conducted with the women. Social workers, psychologists, and lawyers assist them in figuring out their next steps in life and preparing the necessary documents. An educator engages the children in educational and recreational activities. All these efforts help the women become active, strong, and confident.

**"Here I met the warmest, most professional, and compassionate people, and received valuable advice, for which I am grateful. There should be more organizations like yours so that women can receive the help they need."**

**"For the first time, I felt immense help, hope, and respect. I learned about social services and my rights, which I will fight for and achieve justice."**

**"My children now see me differently, they understand that their mom is no worse than other mothers... Thanks to you, thank you for a new life."**

## Day Rehabilitation Centers

**"In 2018, a day rehabilitation center was established at the office of the Women's Foundation 'Sukhumi' in Kutaisi. This center provides victims of violence with access to free counseling from a psychologist and a lawyer, offers professional courses, and allows participants to write business projects. Furthermore, participants can compete for small grants."**

Rehabilitation centers have also opened in other municipalities. In 2023, courses were held in Kutaisi, Bagdati, Terjola, and Senaki.

**50 women received free training in:**

- Polymer clay work.
- Stylist courses.
- Computer courses.
- Manicure course.
- Tailoring and sewing courses.
- Embroidery and bead weaving.

After completing the polymer clay work courses, 22 women are already earning income from online sales. One woman provides manicure services at home, and two work as tailor's assistants.

After the professional courses, four trainings on business planning and marketing strategy were held: two in Kutaisi, one in Baghdatis, and one in Terjola. Beneficiaries participated in the competition, and authors of the best business ideas received small grants. In the first stage of the competition, 20 people participated in January, with 12 from Kutaisi and 8 from Baghdati. 10 women were financed: 8 from Kutaisi and 2 from Baghdati. Three projects in Baghdati were supported by the City Hall, which allocated 1500 GEL specifically for women. This funding was distributed among three women to purchase work materials and inventory, enabling them to start small businesses.

**At the initiative of the Gender Equality Council of Baghdati, professional courses were developed for women who are victims of violence. One of the instructors is a woman who experienced domestic violence herself. After her divorce, she lived in her father's house where, along with her minor daughter, she became a victim of psychological abuse by her brother. Through the coordinated efforts of the Fund "Sokhumi" mobilizer, a psychologist, and a lawyer, the local government facilitated her move to a rented apartment and secured her employment at a beauty salon. Subsequently, she was invited to professional courses, enhancing her financial independence. With further support, she connected with an organization that helped her learn a new profession and provided her with the necessary work materials. This is the story of how one woman's life was transformed.**

## **Forum-Theater**

**The Forum Theater was established in 2009. Later, the young actors mastered the art of shadow theater, and in 2021, a puppet theater was also created.**

The Forum-Theater contributes to the prevention of violence, conflict management, and the implementation of non-violent communications in society. The theater has a director and 6 actors. Its repertoire includes 13 scenes on various themes: domestic/societal violence, migration, mother-daughter relationships, bullying, and conflicts between lovers.

**A notable performance of the forum theater took place at the Hobi Culture House in front of officials from 8 municipalities of Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti and members of the Parliament of Georgia during a 16-day campaign against violence. The unique approach of the forum-theater sparked interest among the meeting participants.**

**24 Performances:**

- **Shadow Theater: 1**

- **Puppet Theater: 8**
- **Forum-Theater: 15**

Total number of spectators: 900

**Changes were observed in the participants – their speech, behavior, and relationships. Most importantly, they influence societal attitudes toward these issues.**

## **Monitoring and Advocacy**

**Advocacy at the national and international levels is a key area of activity for the Tbilisi office of the Women’s Fund “Sukhumi” (Tbilisi office established in 2019). Advocacy efforts are directed toward strengthening mechanisms for legal and social protection against domestic violence and providing services that meet the needs of vulnerable women and those exposed to violence.**

### **National Level Advocacy**

Advocacy efforts at the national level are grounded in evidence-based information, which is meticulously gathered by the monitoring group at the Tbilisi office of the Women's Fund "Sukhumi." This involves the analysis of data and findings obtained through surveys of all interest groups across 10 target municipalities. The experiences and activities carried out in these locations are shared extensively. Continuous communication with representatives of national state agencies, subject matter experts, and civil society representatives further enriches the advocacy process.

### **Local Level Advocacy**

**Advocacy at the local level has been notably successful. The following activities were conducted:**

- **Training for Local Self-Government Representatives: 1 comprehensive training session was held.**
- **Round Tables: 12 round tables were organized with the participation of government structures and local referral entities, involving 246 participants.**
- **Regional Meetings: 3 regional meetings took place with the regional administrations of Imereti, Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti, and Guria, involving 146 participants from 25 municipalities.**
- **Meetings and Consultations: Over 20 meetings and consultations were held with local government structures to implement gender policy and to foster cooperation with gender equality councils and interagency commissions.**
- **A platform was established to facilitate the exchange of information and experiences among representatives of different municipalities, significantly enhancing cooperation.**

## Monitoring and Analytical Reports

In 2023, the Tbilisi office developed a research methodology for monitoring critical issues related to domestic violence. By systematizing and analyzing the collected data, two analytical reports were published in both Georgian and English:

### "Evaluation of the Effectiveness of Implementation of Preventive Measures by Municipalities on Issues of Domestic Violence Against Women"

<https://fsokhumi.ge/index.php/ka/publikacia/informatia-zaladobis-tsinaagmdeg/item/13796-2023-07-13-20-36-14>

### "Research on the Risks of Violence Against Women"

<https://fsokhumi.ge/index.php/ka/publikacia/informatia-zaladobis-tsinaagmdeg/item/14415-2024-01-10-07-07-27>

## Do you have information about support services for victims of violence?

I have complete information

I have information about several support services

I have very little information

I have never heard of such services

Excerpt from Analytical Report

The reports were shared among the Parliament of Georgia, the administration of the Government of Georgia, local authorities, relevant ministries, international organizations, and embassies accredited in Georgia, as well as the civil sector and experts in the field. Each report reached up to 500 recipients.

## Targeted Advocacy Letters

As a result of the research, up to 15 targeted advocacy letters and recommendation packages were prepared to address and resolve the gaps identified in the activities of specific state agencies. The main addressees included the Standing Council on Gender Equality of the Parliament, the Interagency Commission on Gender Equality under the Government Administration, the Human Rights Department, Ministries, and the Social Services Agency. On average, about 100 civil servants were among the recipients of these targeted advocacy letters.

## Creating a Platform for Cooperation, Information Exchange, and Coordination between National and Local Governments

**To strengthen cooperation, information exchange, and coordination between central and local governments, the Tbilisi office organized and facilitated two meetings:**



1. **Online Conference - "Assessment of Effectiveness of Implementation of Preventive Measures by Municipalities on Issues of Domestic Violence Against Women" (108 participants).**
2. **Hybrid Conference - "Partnership between the Municipality and State Agencies for the Prevention and Effective Fight Against Violence Against Women/In the Family" (96 participants, including 77 in the hall and 19 via the Zoom platform).**

The importance of this platform is confirmed by the active involvement and feedback of high-level government decision-makers:

**"Such meetings, especially within the framework of the 16-day campaign, are very important for information exchange. In particular, the central government lacks information on the challenges faced when working on gender issues at the local level, and vice versa. Therefore, the efforts of your organization are highly appreciated, and we thank you for building this bridge."**

**- Head of the Human Rights Administration of the Government of Georgia.**

**"Coordinated cooperation between all agencies at different levels is crucial today. Cooperation with all relevant agencies, in terms of information exchange and mutual assistance, has been significantly enhanced by the women's fund 'Sukhumi' - a great contribution to introducing this practice."**  
**Head of the Human Rights Protection Division of the Ministry of Internal Affairs.**

### **Meetings at the National and International Level and Contributions to Policy Development**

In 2023, representatives from the Tbilisi office participated in over 100 thematic meetings organized by government bodies and international organizations. They actively contributed as speakers in various forums including the thematic research group of the Standing Council on Gender Equality of the Parliament of Georgia, working groups of the Interagency Commission for Gender Equality, Geneva International Discussions (GID), and the Incident Prevention and Response Mechanism (IPRM). Additionally, they were involved in meetings within the "Women, Peace and Security" consultation platform created by the Office of the State Minister of Reconciliation and Civil Equality.

Representatives of the Tbilisi office played a key role in the development of the following policy documents:

- Resolution of the Government of Georgia "On Approval of National Referral Procedures for Identification, Protection, Assistance, and Rehabilitation of Victims of Violence Against Women and/or Domestic Violence."
- National Strategy and Action Plan for the Protection of Human Rights of Georgia (2023-2030).

## Media and Social Campaigns

Several social campaigns addressing critical issues were implemented:

- **Online News:** 25 news articles, 5 feature articles, and 4 video clips were published on Info Imereti and Act2, highlighting the activities of the "Sukhumi" Fund. These garnered a total of 10,000 views.
- **Television:** Two TV programs were aired on the regional TV company "Rion," focusing on the prevention of domestic violence against women and enhancing inter-agency cooperation and coordination.
- **Social media:** Four social video clips were produced and distributed across various social media platforms, emphasizing the importance of preventive measures against domestic violence, existing support systems, and the empowerment of women. The campaigns included:
  - Participation in three programs (Public Broadcaster, Euronews Georgia, Studio-Re).
  - Facebook Campaigns:
    - "Break the Silence, Prevent Violence": This campaign featured 13 digital banners with messages from civil activists, government representatives, and NGOs on the importance of combating violence against women and specific strategies for its prevention. Each banner received between 600 and 2,121 views.
    - "My Choice is the European Union": This campaign shared seven personal stories of students and immigrants living in European countries, explaining why Europe is their choice. Each story received between 1,776 and 3,345 views.
    - "No to Russian Law": This campaign spread 30 digital banners highlighting the dangers of the "foreign agent" law. Each banner received between 1,002 and 4,607 views.
    - "Needs of Displaced and Conflict-Affected Women": A photo-essay series detailing the 17 most pressing issues faced by displaced and conflict-affected women and girls. Each essay received between 500 and 1,350 views.

These efforts underscore the Tbilisi office's commitment to gender equality, human rights, and social justice through active participation in policy development and broad-reaching media campaigns.

## Digital Resource Center for Victims of Violence Services

**In 2023, with support from the Gender Equality Foundation (Canada), women's mutual aid groups were created in ten target municipalities in Western Georgia: Zugdidi, Tsalenjikha, Senaki, Samtredia, Baghdati, Vani, Chokhatauri, Kobuleti, Tskaltubo, and Terjola. Each group consists of ten women.**

A total of 80 meetings were held throughout the year, with representatives from local structures, including the children's department and gender equality council, attending almost all meetings. These representatives introduced the congregants to various women and child support programs designed to help them solve their problems.

Groups participated in digital literacy courses, which have been completed in Terjola, Kobuleti, and Chokhatauri, and are currently underway in Tskaltubo, Senaki, and Vani. Through these courses, women acquired essential skills such as working with Google Forms and the Zoom platform, filling out online questionnaires, and using necessary websites. These skills have significantly strengthened group members and boosted their self-esteem.

**Work with the subjects of referral mechanisms across the ten municipalities included:**

- **Two training sessions for 30 teachers.**
- **Two training sessions for 30 medical personnel.**

Participants in these trainings realized their roles in preventing violence and protecting victims. Teachers mentioned plans to create a database of children living in conflict families and to study their home environments. Doctors acknowledged their responsibility to assist victims as much as possible.

- Seven women received necessary clothing and food products.
- Thirteen victims of violence received mobile phones equipped with the SOS application to send signals to the police or a trusted contact if necessary. The "Digital Resource Center of Services for Victims of Violence" website of the "Sukhumi" Fund was also loaded onto these phones.

Collaboration was established with the municipalities of Vani, Baghdati, Senaki, and Chokhatauri to activate and support the inter-agency commission for the elimination of violence against women and/or domestic violence. Two workshops were held in Vani and Senaki with commission members, discussing the constitution of the commission, the essence of its work, and the functions of its members. These workshops will continue next year.

**In 2021, the Sokhumi Fund created the "Digital Resource Center for Victims of Violence Services" website (<https://sosfsokhumi.ge/>). This platform consolidates information about help, support, and protection services for victims of domestic violence, provided by government agencies and civil society organizations at both national and local levels in Georgia.**

A map of domestic violence/violence against women risk indicators was launched on the website, assessing risks and security quality in pilot municipalities (Zugdidi, Tsalenjikha, Senaki, Tskaltubo, Khoni, Kutaisi, Baghdati, Chokhatauri, Samtredia, Kobuleti). This allows for timely responses to threats and appropriate advocacy.

**Several women's mutual aid group members in Senaki started a cleaning business, resulting in satisfied customers. With the help of their digital literacy course teacher,**

they created a Facebook page, "Kvantsili Gogobi" (meaning "Neat"/"Smart" girls in Megrelian). The women managed the page, designed and distributed printed announcements, and created a logo. The City Hall of Senaki assisted by providing the necessary materials and tools. The women attribute their success to the Sokhumi Foundation.

**T.D. from Terjola learned nail care for free through courses offered by the Women's Fund "Sukhumi," supported by an entrepreneur. After joining the women's mutual aid group, she shared her problems with local self-government representatives at a meeting. Consequently, the City Hall allocated 600 GEL to purchase working materials to help her start her own business and earn income.**

It is planned to conduct a quantitative survey twice a year to assess the extent and reality of violence against women. The first survey was completed, and all data about the municipalities was displayed on the website map. An electronic version of the first research report with key findings and recommendations was developed and distributed to relevant structures and stakeholders. The second study and data collection will commence in January next year.

The information on the website is continuously updated. Throughout the year, 162 materials (news, research, publications, etc.), six stories in the chronicles of violence, ten success stories of victims of violence, and three videos were published. The website attracted 8,694 viewers.

**The project "Overcoming the Divide - People-to-People Initiatives for Conflict Resolution"**

**The project is implemented with the support of the US Agency for International Development and in partnership with the Association "Peaceful and Business Caucasus." The project has four directions: work with women, work with youth, medical, and economic components.**

The first two directions are carried out by the Women's Fund "Sukhumi" together with Abkhazian and Ossetian women. Established in 2023 were:

- 13 women's initiative groups: 8 groups in 6 municipalities of Western Georgia (Kutaisi, Tskaltubo, Khoni, Senaki, Zugdidi, Tsalenjikha), and 5 in the occupied territories: 4 in Abkhazia (Gagra, Sukhumi, Gali, Gulripshi) and one in Tskhinvali. A total of 195 female leaders were involved in the project.
- 13 youth clubs (7 in Western Georgia, 4 in occupied Abkhazia, and 2 in the occupied Tskhinvali region), involving a total of 216 young activists (164, 34, and 18, respectively).

**Strengthening initiative groups is crucial to the project. Various topics were covered, including the Georgian-Abkhazian conflict, advocacy, leadership, advocacy plans, tolerance, stereotypes, project writing, and project management**

**There were held:**

- **15 training sessions with young people**
- **11 training sessions with women's groups**
- **4 joint training sessions for youth and women from all three parties**
- **A safe space was created for dialogue and exchange meetings of women's and youth groups. Joint meetings provided opportunities for inter-group interaction, networking, sharing of practices and experiences, and advocacy.**
- **12 joint meetings were held, involving a total of 98 women in both online and offline formats.**
- **A joint women's meeting was held in Istanbul.**

Through the Gender-Focused Early Warning System (GREWS), the needs of women were studied. Ninety women and young representatives from the initiative groups of all three parties participated in data collection. Eleven reports from all municipalities/districts and three consolidated reports on issues of human security and women's participation in political and economic processes were prepared.

**The assessment of the quality of human security and gender needs of the population is a systematic data report of quantitative and qualitative research conducted in six municipalities (Kutaisi, Tskaltubo, Khoni, Zugdidi, Tsalenjikha, Senaki).**  
<https://www.fsokhumi.ge/index.php/ka/publikacia/mshvidoba/item/13591-6>

The needs survey identified problems and needs that were reflected in the advocacy plan. Subsequently, 12 problems were addressed through active advocacy by women's initiative groups. West Georgia youth and women's groups developed a peace strategy and action plan, implementing more than 30 activities.

**To strengthen youth clubs, a grant competition was held, resulting in 13 implemented projects: 4 in Abkhazia, 2 in Tskhinvali, and 7 in Western Georgia. With the help of sub-grants, 129 events were held (32 in Abkhazia, 4 in Tskhinvali, 93 in Western Georgia) with the participation of 1,806 people (421, 56, 1,329, respectively).**

A youth council was created from representatives of the three parties, which actively meets every other month. Young people share work practices and plan joint initiatives to improve relations between young people. During the year, 6 meetings of the Youth Council were held, involving a total of 41 participants from all three parties.

**"This online meeting was unusual for me. I used to call Abkhazians enemies. I expected aggressive people at the meeting with Abkhaz peers. But they were smiling and looking at us lovingly. This day changed my life. If it wasn't for this project, I would have stayed in my created world and the Abkhazians would have remained my enemies. I don't use that word anymore. We have an online relationship and are friends," said Anastasia, a member of the youth group displaced from Abkhazia.**

**Association "Peaceful and Business Caucasus" Implementation Report**

**Medical Component**

The Association "Peaceful and Business Caucasus" has established an active service coordination system for patients from Abkhazia and Tskhinvali, encompassing transportation, logistics, advocacy, and assistance with the state referral program. A total of 154 individuals have benefited from qualified medical services, including 144 from occupied Abkhazia and 10 from the occupied Tskhinvali region.

In addition, two online training sessions were conducted for healthcare workers and community members. Georgian colleagues shared their expertise and introduced new techniques for working with patients.

## **Economic Component**

The economic component is integrally linked to other initiatives. It features an Economic Forum—a collaborative platform for stakeholders engaged in economic activities. Thirteen meetings of the Economic Forum were held, with participation from 65 individuals: 5 representatives from Tskhinvali, 36 from Abkhazia, and 24 from Western Georgia.

Each year, a competition is announced for Economic Forum members, supporting business projects that promote bilateral cooperation. In 2023, 13 business projects received financing. Members of the Economic Forum actively share knowledge and experience with one another. An economic tour was held in Georgia, where participants from Abkhazia joined their Georgian counterparts.

## **Project “Strengthening Women's Voices”**

**The project was implemented with the support of the Rapid Response Fund for the Protection of Women's Rights. Information work focused on the important role of civil organizations in society, particularly the Women’s Fund "Sukhumi".**

**Information leaflets describing the activities of the organization were distributed, and 20 information meetings were held with more than 500 people.**

**As a result of the information campaign:**

- **Four women human rights defenders held information meetings with 105 representatives of local self-government.**
- **35 journalists participating in the meetings prepared 12 stories about women who were victims of violence and women who benefited from the services of the Women's Fund "Sukhumi".**
- **Six television and radio programs were produced.**
- **Eight activists of the Women's Fund held 15 meetings in 10 municipalities.**
- **An exhibition of works by women victims of violence, graduates of the "Sukhumi" Fund Day Rehabilitation Center, was organized.**
- **Six video blogs were created for the YouTube channel.**

**The information campaign highlighted the role of our organization in building a democratic and equal society. This led to increased interest from local governments to cooperate with us.**

## **Project “Supporting the Transformation of Conflicts in the South Caucasus and Moldova”**

**This project is carried out in partnership with the charity-humanitarian center "Abkhazia". The aim is to empower women in homeowner associations within the IDP community. The target municipalities are Kutaisi, Tskaltubo, Khoni, Senaki, and Zugdidi.**

**In 2023, the work was conducted for three months. During this period, women's groups were mobilized in the IDP communities.**

**In Kutaisi**, IDP communities living in Shervashidze, Leselidze, Sukhumi, Nikea, Chavchavadze, Zakariadze, and Davit Agmashenebeli streets were selected.

**In Tskaltubo municipality**, IDPs living in Abkhazeti Street and the villages of Gvishtibi, Kopitnari, and Vartsikhe were selected.

**In Khoni**, IDPs living on Abkhazeti Street (a former military town) were selected.

**In Senaki**, IDPs living in the former military town and Uridia, Samtredia, Sanaya, and St. Nino streets were selected.

**In Zugdidi**, IDPs living on the streets of Lagidze and Baramia were selected.

**There are 15 people in each group, totaling 75 IDP women and girls.**

In December, training on "leadership, presentation, and public speaking" was held for all groups.

In the coming year, work with these groups will continue actively to identify and advocate for the problems faced by IDPs.

**Through engaging exercises, we clearly saw how ready we are for leadership, what qualities a good leader needs, how to get involved in solving community problems, and how to achieve positive changes in the community, - stated one of the training participants.**

## **Project "Women and Youth - Implementation of the Women, Peace, and Security Agenda at the Local Level"**

**The project covered 17 municipalities. The Women's Fund "Sukhumi" worked with displaced women and young people living in five municipalities (Kutaisi, Tskaltubo,**

**Khoni, Senaki, Zugdidi). The project was implemented with the support of the United Nations Women's Organization.**

**Goal of the Project: To support the potential of regional and local administrations in the process of localizing the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 national action plan and to increase the full, equal, direct, and significant participation of displaced and conflict-affected women and youth.**

Five 15-person working (initiative) groups of IDPs were formed, with a total of 75 women joining. The working groups studied the needs of the IDP community and began advocating for the identified problems at the local, central, and international levels.

Fifty women - 10 from each municipality - completed a comprehensive questionnaire survey course and 11 workshops on the following topics: "Leadership, Presentation and Public Speaking", "Peace Building and Confidence Building", "Evidence-Based Advocacy", "Local Budgeting Analysis", "Local Government and Civil Society", "Coalition and Security", "Resolution 1325, Action Plan and its Localization", "One Window Principle".

A survey was conducted to identify the needs. Twenty-three problems were selected for advocacy in five municipalities; 17 of these issues were resolved, and six are in the process of being resolved.

### **Khoni Municipality**

- The issue of gutters and roofs of residential buildings has been resolved, and the renovation of the facades of 8 buildings is included in the 2024 plan.
- Additional garbage bins were installed in the settlement.
- A recreational zone was built, and attractions were arranged.

### **Zugdidi Municipality**

- A 50% concession for traveling by municipal transport was established for employees of preschool institutions.
- In the village of Ingiri, an area was allocated for the construction of the kindergarten "Tsitelkuda," and the construction plan was approved.

### **Kutaisi Municipality**

- The issue of address and house numbering was resolved in the IDP community "Cottages."
- There is an agreement regarding the improvement of the road in the 2024 plan.
- The entrance to Nikia Street was repaired.

### **Senaki Municipality**



- In the community of the former military town, the issue of drainage systems was partially resolved.
- Four buildings were re-roofed.

### **Tskaltubo Municipality**

- In the new community of IDPs, the street was named after Abkhazia, the buildings were numbered, and a sign was placed at the entrance.
- A pump was installed in the basement.
- Ten socially vulnerable IDPs were employed.
- Additional garbage bins were installed in the IDP community.
- A covered bench was set up.
- Drainage channels were cleaned.
- A kindergarten of modern standards is being built.

### **Support for Ukrainian Refugees**

Since the beginning of the war in Ukraine in February 2022, women and children seeking refuge have arrived in Kutaisi. Our area has gradually expanded as people from other cities in Western Georgia have reached out to us for help.

Thanks to additional funding from Brot für die Welt and the Canadian Fund for Equality, we have been able to meet the basic needs of these individuals in several municipalities (Kutaisi, Kharagauli, Poti, Tsalenjikha, Tkibuli, Samtredia, Kobuleti, Zugdidi, Khobi, Senaki).

In 2023:

- 470 people received food and hygiene products (227 women, 170 children, and 71 men).
- We assisted 29 families (76 people) in paying utility bills.
- 33 families (105 people) received financial aid ranging from 200 to 500 GEL.
- We covered communication costs (phone, internet) for 6 families.
- We provided clothing for 46 people.
- We gifted heaters to 4 families.
- We helped up to 50 individuals with expenses related to medical examinations, chemotherapy, medications, and partially covered surgeries.

Starting in September, the fund transitioned to a voucher system. One Carrefour supermarket voucher (100 GEL) was given to families of one or two people for purchasing food and hygiene products, two vouchers for families of three to five people, and three vouchers for families of six to eight people. In October, 50 vouchers were distributed; in November, 47; and in December, 57.

**"Thank you so much! I have no words to express my feelings. Your help is invaluable!"**

**"You are doing a great job. Thank you so much for your support... May God bless you all!"**

**"I want to thank the Women's Fund "Sukhumi" for their attention and care!"**

We established cooperation with volunteers from Kutaisi. With their help, we collected children's clothes, toys, and strollers for several Ukrainian families. An online survey conducted to identify the needs of refugees (65 respondents) highlighted the following priority needs: food, living expenses, utilities, medical services, medications, hygiene products, psychological and legal consultations, language courses, etc. We have taken these needs into account. Throughout the year, Ukrainian refugees received psychological support. A psychologist from the Women's Fund "Sukhumi" worked with them, and for several months, two psychologists from Ukraine also provided assistance before returning home. Through group and individual therapy, Ukrainians were able to adapt to their new environment and found the strength to start a new life.

On the website of the Women's Fund "Sukhumi" [www.fsokhumi.ge](http://www.fsokhumi.ge), a monthly blog titled "Women of Ukraine" was published, sharing the stories, feelings, dreams, and hopes of women. The blog was very popular among readers.

**In January, the Russian army launched a missile strike on the city of Dnipro, killing and injuring many civilians. Dnipro is a sister city of Kutaisi, and an action called "Kutaisi for Dnipro" was organized. The Women's Fund "Sukhumi" contributed financially to the campaign and helped spread the word. A total of 30,000 GEL was raised.**

With support from the regional hub Mtskheta-Mtianeti, a month-long project called "Art Therapy Sessions with Ukrainian Children" was implemented at the end of the year. Five sessions with a psychologist were held. Ten children aged 7-12 made friends and spent five enjoyable days at the Women's Fund "Sukhumi." The results were evident: reduced tension, mutual trust, and peace.

**Psychologist: "Kirill entered the room and, seeing so many unfamiliar people, crawled under the table. The introduction began by holding hands and sending warm impulses to each other. The second wave of introductions involved the question: "What does your mom affectionately call you?" The answers included bunny, kitty, bear, sweetheart, son, baby... Kirill came out and exclaimed, "Mom calls me 'molecule'."**

**"16 active days against violence against women" campaign**

**Our organization has been actively participating in the international campaign "16 active days against violence against women" for 21 years.**

"Break the Silence, Prevent Violence!" - with this slogan, the Women's Fund "Sukhumi" joined the international information campaign.

**The campaign started a day earlier, on November 24, at 7 PM at the Ramaz Shengelia Stadium - Shengelia Arena in Kutaisi. The match between "Torpedo" Kutaisi and "Dinamo" Tbilisi took place, with all players wearing white T-shirts displaying the campaign slogan: "Break the Silence, Stop Violence!" This slogan was also featured on a large banner.**

"Torpedo" Kutaisi has been the face of our campaign twice – in 2003 and 2013. Both times, we printed calendars featuring "Torpedo" players with messages against violence. These calendars fulfilled their mission, as words spoken by athletes, especially footballers, hold significant power. In 2023, the "Torpedo" football club independently printed calendars with the campaign slogan. These calendars and our information bulletins were distributed at the stadium.

### **126 Events Conducted with Over 40,000 Participants**

- **Women's Support Centers conducted 34 events, attended by 541 people.**
- **Youth Strengthening Centers organized 45 events, with 2,000 young participants.**
- **The Forum-Theatre and Puppet Theatre held performances in Kutaisi, Tskaltubo, Khoni, Senaki, Khobi, and Zugdidi, with over 400 attendees.**
- **In Kutaisi, Tskaltubo, Khoni, Senaki, Zugdidi, and Tsalenjikha, actions were carried out in collaboration with the HERA Women's Health Center (breast cancer screening, doctor consultations, mammography) – approximately 300 women received free medical services.**
- **Women's mutual aid groups held 11 events.**
- **Two training sessions on "Gender and Gender-Based Violence" were conducted for kindergarten teachers in Tsalenjikha, co-financed by the local municipality.**

At the end of the campaign, the foundation's staff attended the play "Liv Stein" at the Lado Meskhishvili Theatre in Kutaisi. After the performance, there was a meeting with Andi Dzidzava, who played the lead role. The actress shared her personal experience of dealing with psychological abuse and violence.

### **Staff Development Project**

**Supported by the European Network "Women Against Violence," the project began in November 2022 with training staff on the experiences of war survivors.**

On December 19, we celebrated St. Nicholas Day with Ukrainians at the Akaki Tsereteli State University in Kutaisi. In February, the second training session was held, where Georgian Red Cross master instructors conducted theoretical and practical work on providing first aid. Staff also participated in a seminar in Batumi focused on preventing professional/emotional burnout. The psychologist's work helped participants activate their own resources.

## Organizational Development

**Our organization places great importance on enhancing the qualifications and competencies of our staff. This increases their knowledge and experience, which is reflected in their daily work.**

In 2023, staff received training in various formats on issues such as violence, gender, gender equality, monitoring and evaluation, and human rights. They participated in conferences, webinars, masterclasses, and various meetings. Organizational development has contributed to the professional growth of each staff member.

## Financial report - 2023

### Revenues

43% - EVANGELISCHES WERK FUER DIAK NIE UND

ENTWICKLUNG E.V. - 704 198 GEL

34% - USAID Georgia - 540 283 GEL

12% - EQUALITY FUND - 198 373 GEL

3% - EU monitoring mission in Georgia - 51 925 GEL

3% - Association of Internally Displaced Women "Tankhmoba" ("Consent")- 49,849 GEL

1% - Charity Humanitarian Center "Abkhazia" - 15,634 GEL

1% - UNDP - 13 283 GEL

1% - Anna Plotkina - 2 363 GEL

0.9% - Women Against Violence Europe - 16 186 GEL

0.6% - URGENT ACTION FUND FOR FEMINIST ACTIVISM - 10,386 GEL

0.3% - Tsalenjikha municipality - 4 195 GEL

0.3% - Khobi municipality - 4 995 GEL

### **Financial Report**

71% - program expenses: (pieces of training, meetings, round tables, consultations, publishing costs; assistance to Ukrainians; rehabilitation center; computer, polymer clay and sewing courses)

14% - taxes

10% - wages

2% - transport costs

1% - utility costs

1% - conversion costs

0.3% - communication

0.3% - audit