

An Evaluation of

The UNV Abkhazia Programme
1996 – 2004

Undertaken by

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Executive Summary

This exercise represents the first full evaluation of the UNV (United Nations Volunteer) Abkhazia Programme since its inception in 1996. It is particularly timely since it coincides with the start of a UNDP area based development (ABD) programme in Abkhazia. The purpose of the evaluation is to learn lessons from what has taken place over the last 9 years so as to improve the content and delivery of the programme.

The TOR required that the evaluation examines performance against the stated goal, paying particular attention to organisational efficiency, NGO capacity building, peace building, the development of civil society in Abkhazia and funding issues.

The methodology involved a study of documents in UNDP's Tbilisi and Sukhumi offices and then fieldwork over a period of 7 days in Abkhazia. This involved gathering data from partners, individuals and beneficiaries. It was undertaken with the help 3 local people with experience of the Abkhaz NGO sector. Meetings took place with 17 organisations which had been responsible for implementing 59 out the 72 projects over \$1,000 funded by the UNV programme over the past 9 years. The purpose of the methodology was to structure the gathering of evidence to comment on programme goal, objectives and strategies.

Brief background information is provided about Abkhazia and is followed by more detailed information on the UNV programme and its development since 1996. The contributions of the four volunteers who have worked on the programme over this period are also described.

The presentation of findings starts with the opinions of the UNV programme provided by two members of the *de facto* Abkhaz government. They stated that UNVs presence was highly valued. It had played a part in the development of civil society in Abkhazia. The government looked forward to a continuation of UNV support, particularly in respect of capacity building of central and local government.

Findings were that overall programme efficiency was fair. There was a pressing need to improve information management systems and to consolidate narrative and financial reporting. Recruitment procedures however were good. Programming rigour could be improved. The UNV programme team was highly rated as a partner. Positive aspects of UNV were that is was politically neutral and showed no favour in grant dispersal. Its public relations needed improvement.

Findings for promotion of civil society indicated that this was a complex arena in which the UNV programme had made solid and positive contributions since the start of its activities in 1996. It had provided education on civil society. It had assisted in the establishment and development of a large number of NGOs. It was providing a measure of support for information exchange.

Findings for capacity building indicate that the UNV programme has undertaken a wide range of activities to support the development of NGOs across Abkhazia particularly in respect of assisting them develop ideas, write proposals and present reports. In addition it has supported seminars on NGO governance, management and fundraising.

Findings for peace building showed that the UNV programme has undertaken peace-building activities with organisations in all parts of Abkhazia. The focus has been on providing peace education and dialogue projects that involve young people. There was a need for more to be done to assist the integration of people from Gali with the rest of Abkhazia.

Findings for small business development: involvement in this sector is a new departure for the UNV programme. The allocation for the sector represented 30% of the 2004 annual spend. The project was well administered and delivered. However it is not recommend that UNV continue with grant-based income generation, particularly because of concerns for sustainability and dependency associated with the approach.

The analysis of findings examined the strengths and weaknesses noted in programme and project efficiency and suggested ways to improve performance management and strategic planning. The discussion on programme concepts noted that in respect of civil society development the situation was evolving and that there was now a need to support advocacy initiatives. The UNV programme had taken a measured and sensible course in support for capacity building. Results were good. It needs to consider expanding its capacity building support to local government. In respect of peace building, it was noted that currently reconciliation is too ambitious a goal and that emphasis should be placed on funding confidence building activities in Abkhazia and encouraging intra-Abkhazia linkages.

The evaluation concluded that the UNV Abkhazia programme had achieved a great deal with slender resources. Through UNDP, it represented the only UN development agency permanently present in Abkhazia during nine difficult years. It had provided a small but strategically important contribution to the limited spectrum of international support directed to Abkhazia. With improved management practices and firm donor commitment the impact of the programme can be substantially increased. Great care should be taken that this valuable capacity is not lost.

The recommendations reflect that the UNV programme is on a positive course. They include tightening the focus of the existing programme and indicate a number of changes which could be made to enhance programme impact and delivery.

1.0 Introduction

Information about Abkhazia is scarce. Apart from reports by journalists, there is very little that is publicly available. What information that does exist tends to have as its main focus on the conflict and political issues¹. UNOMIG (United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia) undertake an excellent macro-political analysis of Abkhazia for its internal use. The few aid agencies that operate in Abkhazia are quite well informed and no doubt produce internal and donor reports and evaluations also for internal use. There is virtually nothing available for wider audiences which discusses the every day life of people in this self-declared republic².

Since October 2004 UNDP has been deepening its engagement in Abkhazia. In the course of which it has been commissioning a series of development-related studies which focus on the most war effected areas of Abkhazia. These have been on water supply, rural livelihoods and micro-finance. A conflict analysis is being planned. The information from these activities will be used for programming purposes, and also put in the public domain.

This present document is part of that process. It represents the first full evaluation of the UNV Abkhazia Programme, a programme which has operated in all parts of Abkhazia. It covers the first 9 years of its operation. A valuable multi-country review of UNV's involvement in conflict resolution and confidence building, which included the Abkhazia programme, was undertaken in 2000³. However, while this will be referred to, it does not represent a specific and systematic study of the Abkhazia programme.

This evaluation is particularly timely since it coincides with the start of a UNDP area based development (ABD) programme in Abkhazia. It also occurs at the time when a new UN volunteer is coming to take responsibility for the UNV programme. The evaluation is not to do with accountability to donors, which is undertaken in donor reports, rather it is do with learning from what has taken place over 9 years and how lessons learnt can be used to locate, shape and improve the content and delivery of the programme.

The evaluation was undertaken by a three-person team led by a UNDP advisor who was also responsible for the drafting of the report. The team members assisted with data collection and acted as a consultative forum.

The report starts by outlining the TOR and set outs the methodology used to obtain data. Following the presentation of background information in Abkhazia and UNV's involvement in the region, the report then examines evidence gathered about the key components of the UNV programme, namely: promotion of civil society, capacity building, peace building and income generation. The findings are then analysed. Finally, the conclusions are summarised and recommendations presented.

¹ Probably the most useful publication is Cohen, J. (ed.) 1999. "Accord: A question of sovereignty: The Georgia-Abkhazia peace process". Conciliation Resources, London.

² An exception is: Gumba, Y., Ketsba, T. 2004 "Economic development prospects in Abkhazia and the concept of regional cooperation" in *"From War Economies to Peace Economies in the South Caucasus"* Champain, P, Klein, D., Mirimanova, N. (eds.), pp. 158-178. International Alert, London.

³ Cohen, J. 2000. *"Review of UNV's involvement in conflict resolution and confidence building."* Conciliation Resources, London.

2. 0 Terms of Reference

The TOR for the evaluation are provided in full in Annex 2. The UNV programme goal is described in the TOR as:

To foster an enabling environment for confidence building and reconciliation and contribute to peace building in Georgia/Abkhazia.

The objectives of the UNV programme are described as:

Through the provision of small grants, to strengthen the capacity of local NGOs and local organizations in Abkhazia to effectively contribute to the humanitarian rehabilitation of their communities and to the peace building effort in Georgia/Abkhazia.

The issues to be addressed by the evaluation team are outlined as follows:

1. *How effective has the UNV programme been in building NGO capacity in Abkhazia?*
2. *Comment on the positive and negative outcomes of UNV activities.*
3. *To what extent has the UNV programme contributed to community development outside of Sukhumi?*
4. *Comment on programme efficiency.*
5. *How effective has the UNV programme been in developing the notion of civil society in Abkhazia?*
6. *Comment upon the consequences of short-term funding as opposed to more longer term funding of UNV activities?*
7. *Determine the extent to which the UNV programme has fostered an enabling environment that has built confidence and assisted reconciliation between conflicting parties.*

3.0 Methodology

The evaluation started with a study of documents. These included proposals, financial and narrative reports located in the UNDP offices in Tbilisi and Sukhumi. Reference will be made to the 2000 Cohen report since it forms a useful marker in the middle of the period being evaluated. While that report concentrates on peace building issues and should be referred to for an informed debate of the issue, this study has primarily been concerned with obtaining partner feedback to ascertain what has taken place and how this has contributed towards achieving the programme goal. The intention of the methodology has been to structure the gathering of evidence to be able to more clearly comment upon the definition and achievements associated with goal, objectives and the strategies used for achieving them.

An evaluation team was assembled by UNDP composed of members of the principal ethnicities of the region who worked under an expatriate advisor to UNDP. The local team members had experience of the non-governmental sector in Abkhazia. Including the team leader, the team was

composed of two males and two females. Training was given prior to the start of the evaluation. Key issues were discussed, such as the notion of civil society and the nature of peace building. A semi-structured questionnaire which responded to the demands of the evaluation was prepared.

The team worked in two groups. Membership of these groups changed daily so that each person had the experience of working with each of the three other members. In addition team members undertook interviews with organisations in regions with which they were less familiar. So that the person from Gali undertook interviews in Sukhumi and Gagra and the people from Sukhumi visited Gali, Ochamchira and Tkvarcheli. Completed questionnaires are lodged with the programme administration. A sample form is provided in Annex 2.

The diversity of team membership enriched the evaluation process and allowed the team to experientially explore some of the more sensitive issues that relate to this troubled region. One area of sensitivity concerned the spelling of place names in the report which all local team members requested be written in their Abkhaz transcription⁴.

Information from the files indicated that 72 projects over \$1,000 had been funded over the 9-year period. Financial information was not available for 5 projects. Out of the remaining 68 projects for which financial information was available, 59 were examined by visiting the organisations responsible for their implementation. One project was examined by inspection of the files. In total 17 organisations were visited. (See Annex 3, 4 & 5) Information was also obtained from a number of project beneficiaries. Meetings took place with present and former UNV staff, with two members of the Abkhaz government and a university lecturer. The UNV programme formed the focus of a group discussion at the weekly NGO meeting in Sukhumi. The evaluation was structured so as to provide systematic feedback from a comprehensive cross section of actors who had worked with, or who had an interest in, the UNV programme. The methodology was thus structured to provide evidence, the analysis of which would allow judgments to be made on the TOR questions.

4.0 Background

4.1 General

Abkhazia is a region of the Caucasus with a strong and distinctive identity. During the 20th century it underwent rapid modernisation as part of the Soviet Union and became one of the more wealthy regions of the USSR. However, longstanding and underlying tensions in the relationship between the Abkhaz and the Georgians remained unresolved.

Violence between the two sides erupted in 1989 and was followed by a bitter civil conflict in 1992-3 in which 300,000 Georgians were displaced. There were heavy casualties on both sides. Further skirmishes took place in 1998. An agreement signed in Moscow in 1994 marked the cessation of the conflict. A CIS peace-keeping force was mandated to patrol 12km each side of the cease-fire line and a UNOMIG observer mission was sanctioned to cover the conflict zone.

⁴ This request was denied by UNDP since the UN may only use spellings recognised by the international community. This policy caused considerable irritation within the team and is indicative of how the smallest issue can create negative resonances.

The infrastructure and economy were devastated as a result of both the conflict and the disintegration of the system of central planning which linked the Abkhaz economy to wider spheres of economic activity in the Former Soviet Union. Abkhazia was, and remains, a multi-ethnic region. At the end of the Soviet period it had a recorded population of 525,000 composed of Abkhaz, Armenians, Georgians, Greeks as well as many other nationalities of the FSU. The region had been subject to massive emigration with consequent reduction in the population. People left Abkhazia as a direct result of the conflict and for economic reasons both pre and post conflict. Since 1994 the people of Abkhazia have been subject to acute economic deprivation⁵.

On the political front, Vladislav Ardzinba was elected as president of the self-declared Republic of Abkhazia in 1994. He was not able to be re-elected for a third term so did not stand in the presidential poll which took place in October 2004. The 2004 elections were shrouded in controversy which resulted in a political standoff. This was resolved by a further election in January 2005 in which the two former opposing candidates stood on the same ticket. Sergei Bagapsh and Raul Khadjimba were voted as President and Vice-President respectively.

Abkhazia was tense during the autumn of 2004. However informal institutions played an important role in maintaining stability. An illustration of the degree to which civil society has developed in Abkhazia was the formation of an NGO coalition 'The League for Fair Elections' which monitored the election process. Notwithstanding the recent pole, Abkhazia remains an entity in which political and economic power remain highly centralised in the hands of a few. Given the small size of this society and its relative lack of decentralisation and legal reform, it is hard to evaluate how distinct commercial and other non-governmental actors are from the governing establishment.

4.2 UNV Programme: Initially UNVs were retired UN staff. However they are now generally young professionals who offer their services to the UN. Usually they are seconded to a UN agency to provide an additional input to its activities. Often UNVs work closely with beneficiaries, either through NGOs or with government ministries. Georgia is one of the few examples where there has been a separate UNV programme. Operating under the aegis of UNDP with a separate funding stream, it is administered by a volunteer. The UNV programme in Georgia started in 1994 as a pilot with the general objective of promoting civil society and confidence building between groups in a divided society. Its main foci were capacity building and conflict resolution.

A UNV programme started in Abkhazia in 1996. Its first UNV was Martin Schumer (MS) who administered the programme from 1996 to 1999. After his untimely death, he was succeeded by a locally recruited volunteer, Amy Stafford (AS). She remained in post for 9 months during the year 2000 and then after an 18-month gap was followed by internationally recruited, Pollock Ndonodji (PN). Upon the departure of PN, John Lewis (JL) who had been previously been working in Abkhazia, was hired for the UNV post. He worked in this position during 2003 and 2004. The vacant UNV position was filled by a locally recruited person who started work at the beginning of 2005.

It becomes apparent when examining UNV project activity that only a small number of projects took place in the first years of 1996 and 1997. Two projects, the first year, three the second, but in year three (1999) there were 18 projects. In fitting together the information that has come to light during this evaluation, we see that the first two years of MS's term were very much involved in

⁵ cf. UNDP-Led Feasibility Mission to Gali District and adjacent areas of Abkhazia, Georgia, 2004.

listening, peace education and the creation of partnerships between UNV and other organisations. It is evident from reports that this first UNV was a remarkable person. He is still remembered warmly and with great respect in Abkhazia. He was undoubtedly the right person at the right time. By 1999 we see an annual spend of \$64,627 on a wide range of projects covering peace and human rights education, information dissemination, promotion of civil society, capacity building and ecology. One sub theme in the projects is a focus on Abkhaz identity. MS was a hard act to follow.

However a national UNV was recruited locally to assist the programme and provide a measure of continuity between MS and his successor Amy Stafford. Records show that in 2000 three projects took place and that only \$4,840 was disbursed, a dramatic decrease on the previous year. There was then a gap of about 18 months in the Abkhazia UNV programme and it was not until Pollock Ndonodji was recruited in 2001 that the programme was resuscitated. During the PN period records indicate the programme funded 16 projects to the tune of around \$22,000. While the types of project were quite varied, they appeared to have followed a similar pattern to those funded by MS in 1999. There was a clear emphasis on culture-related projects.

John Lewis, who had previously been working in the region, was locally recruited and worked as a UNV for the years 2003 and 2004. During this time he was responsible for funding 28 projects over \$1,000 totalling \$105,635. Again project types were quite diverse, but by 2004 themes were being identified and projects were being selected to fit the themes. There was an increased emphasis on capacity building and peace education and a reduction of support for culture-related projects. The records show that for the first time a clear goal for the UNV programme is explicitly stated as being:

- *To strengthen non-governmental capacity in Abkhazia to contribute to rehabilitation and peace building.*

The themes by which this would be achieved were defined as:

- *NGO computer training*
- *NGO staff development in Gali*
- *NGO sustainability*
- *Promoting knowledge and techniques on conflict resolution*
- *Support for small business initiatives*
- *To reduce ethnic tension within Abkhazia*

5.0 Government Perspectives on UNV and Development in Abkhazia

The presentation of evaluation findings starts with views from two members of the interim *de facto* Abkhaz Government. Both officials responded fully to questions about UNV, but both took the opportunity to widen the discussion beyond development to make a number of political points.

Sergei Shamba (Foreign Minister and Deputy Prime Minister): Stated that UNV had been present from the end of the conflict. Its presence has been highly valued. The government had sought to encourage its activities which were seen as being most useful. Looking back, Shamba said that every form assistance whether large or small has been of value in helping Abkhazia

surmount the huge social, psychological, economic and political difficulties it faced in the aftermath of the conflict.

The provision of humanitarian assistance had been most valuable in key sectors and had enabled Abkhazia to achieve a measure of stability. There was now a need to address infrastructure and economic development. Above all there was a need to attract investment and develop small businesses.

One notable change in Abkhaz society since the conclusion of the conflict had been the development of civil society. UNV had played a useful part in its development. NGOs were now important actors valued by the state. Abkhazia now had a multi-party system and a free press. However much remains to be resolved. Abkhazia is afraid of a new conflict. Further conflict would be an obstacle to developing democratic process.

When asked for criticisms of the support provided by the UN in the form of the UNV programme, Shamba replied that he did not think the UN was providing enough assistance nor was Abkhazia being treated fairly. If the UN saw Abkhazia as being part of Georgia why should it not have a share of the aid being provided for Georgia, such as a proportion of the \$10 million being provided to support the health sector in Georgia?

Nugzar Ashuba (Speaker of Parliament): stated it was important to go beyond post-conflict rehabilitation to build civil society. Civil institutions composed of experienced and intelligent people independent from the government were undertaking important work. The election monitoring undertaken by the League for Fair Elections was a good example of what could be achieved. UNV has had a large role in helping NGOs develop. It provided the right type of help at the right time. But, he noted, as organisations grow, the type of help they need changes too.

It has been 11 years since hostilities ceased. Abkhazia has many social, economic and political problems. It is important that social and economic problems be addressed immediately. The operation of government departments was not ideal, the government therefore seeks to make use of any capacity building support that organisations such as UNV and the UN can provide. While the government was grateful for humanitarian assistance, they wanted to people to be able to earn their livings. Ashuba found it difficult to identify any weaknesses associated with the UNV programme but emphasised the importance of maintaining support for the work that had been started with NGOs.

Ashuba then chose to widen the discussion. He noted that the geo-politics of this situation were very complicated involving not only Georgia but Russia, the US and Europe. Russian/US relations impacted particularly heavily on Abkhazia. He stated that being the only respected and neutral international organisation, the UN could have a major role in resolving problems. But, Ashuba noted a contradictory position of the UN which on the one hand defends Georgia's right to maintain its existing frontiers while on the other it says nothing about Abkhazia's right to self-determination. He said that these contradictions need to be addressed and solved. He concluded, "Abkhazia will reach its goal by peaceful means".

6.0 Findings: Programme Efficiency

6.1 Administration

There were difficulties in undertaking a preliminary survey of documents relating to the UNV programme. The filing system in Tbilisi was poorly managed and very difficult to extract information from. Although there was a considerable amount of recent data in electronic form, it was recorded in a haphazard and fragmented way. It thus took a considerable amount of time sorting out the projects which have been funded (see Annex 5). Even so, it has not been possible to do this satisfactorily. There is therefore a need to have consolidated narrative and financial reporting in Tbilisi. In the Sukhumi office project data dating from October 2003 is systematically filed and easily accessible. However, neither in Tbilisi or Sukhumi are there consolidated financial records by means of which the programme can be quickly and easily studied on an annual basis. This situation makes performance management difficult. As a result of this exercise, a start has been made by staff in Tbilisi to systematise recording and to construct an appropriate information management system.

6.2 Human resources

Procedures for recruitment of local and international staff was seen to be in accord with international best practice. It was seen to be undertaken in a fair and transparent way through public advertisements, short listing and interviews.

One aspect of staff induction needs further attention. An idea suggested in the Cohen evaluation (2000, p.43) was that there would be value in having a resource pack that would familiarise new staff, be they local or international, on a range of development issues, including that of conflict transformation. This should be followed up. There would also be value in instituting a formal mechanism for debriefing departing UNVs by the UNDP Georgia office so that lessons learnt are written down and incorporated in the organisation's institutional memory.

6.3 Project cycle and programme rigour

As has been noted in §6.1, the recording and storage of programme data is not good. When looking at the period being evaluated, this is reflected in a lack of strategic continuity between volunteers, inconsistency in programming and poor programme rigour. Until recently, there does not appear to have been a clearly laid out programme goal and supporting purposes and activities. Without explicit strategic guidelines, UNVs have tended to follow their own interpretation of the UNV mandate. As noted, this creates problems of consistency and continuity. It is not until 2004 that it becomes possible to identify in programme documents an explicit description of the programme and a set of criteria against which its performance may be judged.

Spot checks were made on projects applications and reports. The system is adequate for its purpose. Those project reports inspected were fairly thorough, gave sufficient account of money spent and a good description of project outcomes. Out of 73 projects offered for evaluation, only two instances came to light where more thorough checking for viability should have been made on individual projects prior to approval. Interestingly, in both cases problems related to energy supply.

Despite comments made by one or two NGOs (see below), the procedures for obtaining and reporting on grants does not seem over-onerous. Certain minimum standards are required for the receipt of public funds and to account for the way they are spent. The systems which exist are in place to ensure accountability and transparency. UNV partner organisations need to accept the fact that these have to be complied with. There is every indication that UNV staff do their utmost to make the process of grant application as easy as possible and that they use the opportunity to build capacity with their partners.

From the inspection of documents it appears that monitoring is adequate to provide accountability to donors. However there is no performance framework within which to record the activities of the UNV programme in such a way that information becomes knowledge which can be used for learning. There is an urgent need for systems which allow people unfamiliar with the programme to understand its composition and how it is progressing. It is most worrying that there has not been a specific evaluation of the Abkhazia programme during the 9 years of its activity and that no one in the present programme was aware of the 2000 Cohen evaluation. These are negative indicators which point to a lack of awareness of the benefits of promoting institutional learning.

6.4 Quality as a partner

There was a remarkably positive response to the question about UNV's quality as a partner. Out of the 17 organisations who consented to be interviewed, 13 described UNV as a good partner, one had slight reservations and two organisations were ambivalent. One organisation gave a poor rating to UNV. As part of the evaluation, the UNV programme was discussed in the weekly Sukhumi NGO meeting. Key points brought up were:

Positive	Negative
Does not impose political views Neutral in respect of Abkhazia Takes all interests into account UNV most open UN institution Has a local office	Short-term projects Bureaucratic Budgeting requirements People do not understand role of UN Demand for proposals in English a constraint

UNV's view of itself as a partner is that it does its best to help emerging NGOs in as many ways as possible. Firstly, through the provision of relevant courses in English and the important computer programmes. Secondly, through the individual help that staff provide to grant applicants in planning, proposal writing, budget formation and reporting.

Examining the questionnaire responses, it can be seen that UNV was described as being good at building relationships and was accessible. Many organisations found it extremely useful that it had a local office where people and organisations could come to discuss issues. This facility differentiated UNV from most other donors. UNV was described by one NGO as a partner which listens to their needs and tries to help. A number of NGOs valued the assistance of the UNV community facilitator. The way in which UNV directly engages with people and their organisations contributes to it being perceived as different from other branches of UN. One organisation even went so far as to call UNV a perfect partner.

On the negative side, the programme was subject to a hiatus in its activities around 2000/2001. This coincides with a marked divide in the perception of UNV by Abkhaz partners. Two NGOs stated that from this point the organisation was subject to a lack of continuity and became increasingly bureaucratic. Bureaucracy appears to have become an issue during the middle of the

period being examined. However, only one of UNV's current partners complained about high levels of bureaucracy associated with grant applications and reporting. The move to the Aitar was seen as being regrettable by many since it had made UNV more remote and less easy to deal with.

A considerable improvement can be seen to have taken place from the situation described in the Cohen report (2000, p.17) which describes the UNV funding mechanisms as cumbersome and lacking flexibility. Organisations expressed appreciation to evaluators of the speedy way in which grants were now being disbursed once approval was given and the fact that there were no application deadlines. The working conditions of UNVs in Abkhazia has improved from that described in the Cohen report (2000, §5, §6), however attention needs to be maintained on ensuring that UNVs have sufficient institutional back up and support.

6.5 Short versus long term funding

The issue of funding periods was raised in the TOR. UNV provides short term and usually rather small grants. The average grant size for 2004 was about \$3,900 (for grant size averages see Annex 4). The evidence from former and present partners produced a clear response to this issue. The majority of organisations saw consistent long term funding as being essential for NGOs since it produces more meaningful and lasting results and provided security for organisations to grow. However for long term funding to bring this benefit, it was noted that organisations need a clear strategic direction. Long-term projects were said to be easier to implement, monitor and evaluate and brought more significant results. The discussion of grant policy brought up the subject of whether UNV should be more focused and have a simpler goal.

Negative aspects of short term funding were described as being: a) a reflection of a lack of donor commitment b) small grants and short term funding make for more administrative work c) organisations which depend exclusively on short term funding tend to have a short term vision bound by the length of the grant. Without a clear strategic direction an organisation can jump from one short-term project to another. (N.B. The evidence of this evaluation was that it was the lack of strategic direction which tended to undermine sustainability, rather than short term funding *per se*.)

Through discussion with respondents, the evaluation identified the following positive points associated with short term funding:

- It can be instrumental in assisting a fledgling organisation get started
- It can fill gaps in longer term funding
- It can be a tool for innovation
- It can fund one-off events e.g. NGO exhibition.
- It allows organisations to have a diversity of projects.
- It allows UNV to have a diversity of partners
- It is a useful form of funding for initiative groups.

So while partners exhibited an understandable preference for long term funding, many were aware of the benefits associated with an organisation which provided funding on a shorter time scale. One way in which short term funding can have an extended impact, in certain and appropriate circumstances, is by having a continuity of disbursement. Continuity might be in terms of integrating initiatives across organisations in a particular sector of activity. It might be in

terms of sequential support for a single organisation. Instances of this are observable in the current programme.

In any development situation there is a role for a diversity of funders which provide support for different sectors, with different approaches and within differing time frames. In the context of Abkhazia, there does not appear to be a persuasive argument for altering the current UNV funding strategy of providing short-term small term grants, other than to try and achieve a greater degree of continuity in the way that they are disbursed. UNV has carved a niche for itself in Abkhazia with this funding strategy which it has used to considerable success, particularly in respect of being an agent for innovation.

6.6 Public relations

Probably the most serious criticism to be made of the UNV programme was its poor public relations (PR). The failure to undertake adequate PR was unhelpful from a number of perspectives. It was stated that apart from a few NGO leaders, no one knew anything about its function and role within the UN system or about its policies and location. Out of all the organisations questioned only one said that its PR was reasonable. There is clearly a need to make people aware of the UNV programme, its role, function and activities.

The negative consequences of poor public relations have been that since the role of UNV has not been widely known about or understood, members of the public were suspicious of organisations that received funds from it. Most central and local government actors were unaware of UNV's role in Abkhazia and its position within the UN system. In the future, village administrations for example, will require a great deal of information, some of which will include knowledge about UNV. In the eyes of those that heard of the programme, UNVs were associated with UNOMIG and this was damaging their reputation. A number of respondents noted that the failure to provide basic information about the UNV programme made public officials at all levels suspicious of it.

Suggestions put forward to improve knowledge about the UNV programme were to:

- Produce written information which provides simple and basic information about the UN system and the various organisations that work within it.
- Provide written information which describes the reason for the UN presence in Abkhazia and the structures within which the various agencies operate.
- Produce specific agency-related information tailored to the needs of NGOs, government institutions.
- Make use of the weekly District Administration meetings of village heads to disseminate information to villages.
- Use TV and other media to inform people about NGO activity and to assist information exchange across Abkhazia
- Where possible, use projects to inform both public and government about UNV e.g. Gudauta library.
- Use the opportunity provided by conferences and dialogues to promote the public image of UNV.

6.7 Operational Equity: Looking at the range of comments made on UNV's operational equity, not one organisation indicated that it disbursed funds to the benefit of any particular section of

society in Abkhazia. It was not seen in any way to be discriminating in favour, or excluding, in respect of geographic location, ethnicity, gender, disability or wealth.

In respect of geographic equity, almost all respondents, wherever located, said that more should be done in the regions (see Annex 4 for UNV grant dispersal 1996 – 2004). The most developed NGOs were in Sukhumi yet even in 2004, notwithstanding a dispersal element within grants made to them, Sukhumi-based organisations received the largest UNV grants (e.g. Sukhumi Youth House (SYH) and Union of Businesswomen of Abkhazia (UBA)). There is an understandable bias by donors towards allocating funds to organisations which have demonstrated the capacity to use them. The lack of capacity in organisations outside Sukhumi makes it difficult for donors to shift the focus of their support to the regions. A further difficulty noted by one regional respondent was that rural people are not so interested in activities undertaken by NGOs as those from urban settings. It should be noted that UNV was the first donor to provide capacity building assistance to organisations from the districts of Abkhazia.

The other geographic issue which arose during the evaluation was, despite UNV's cross-Abkhazia programming, the perception that the UN was placing too much focus on the most conflict affected districts of Gali, Ochamchira and Tkvarcheli. It was stated by two NGOs that it is important that the promotion of civil society be undertaken in all of Abkhazia. The issue was also raised about why UN development agencies were working in Abkhazia and whether the UN policy to Abkhazia was biased since it supported Georgia's territorial integrity.

7.0 Findings: Promotion of Civil Society

The TOR directly asks the evaluation to comment on UNV's effectiveness in developing the notion of civil society in Abkhazia. Given that the term is so widely, and loosely, used, the term is briefly discussed. This is followed by an examination of how the UNV programme initiatives of NGO development, education and promoting information exchange are contributing to the promotion of civil society in Abkhazia.

7.1 Civil society

Civil society is a political concept. The notion has been extensively employed in respect of the changes associated with the collapse of communism. The term has emerged as the goal towards which all states should be aiming and represents a kind of litmus test for the democratic potential of non-western regimes.

It is a theory used to understand the changes associated with the transition from feudalism to more complex political and economic relations. At its simplest, it is used to describe all those features of a society which are not part of the state. It thus operates in the spheres of the economy, communications, politics, religion, education, science and culture. It has also been described as a third sector compensating for the failures of the state and the market. It emphasises the role of autonomous individuals who, by means of many cross cutting civic organisations, create the foundation for an accountable and thriving democracy. This realm of self-organisation, which includes the market, conditions the texture of society and provides a check on the state.

While there is much discussion over the nature of civil society, the questions which can be asked to define its existence and nature in a given situation are: Is the state essentially an extension of

civil society with a mandate to administer, subject to being limited and accountable under the rule of law? Or, does the state exert a controlling influence over civil society? In other words a key defining issue is, how is power distributed?

To address the question of UNV's engagement with the development of civil society, the evaluation team firstly defined a notion of civil society which seemed appropriate to Abkhazia. This was used to locate the data collection team's understanding of respondent perception of civil society and to form the basis by means of which we could understand how respondents viewed UNV's contribution towards civil society. Civil society was defined as:

- Citizen participation in public life
- Public knowledge of rights, duties and obligations.
- Freedom of speech
- Freedom of information
- Awareness of human rights
- Availability of education: (re. UNV especially
 - Provision of peace education
 - Provision of free education
 - Provision of courses on minority languages)
- Economic sector:
 - The existence of a legislative environment appropriate for businesses activity
 - Availability of credit
 - Public understanding of the operation of a market economy
 - Public understanding and acceptance of tax regimes
- Social sector support:
 - i.e. Meeting shortcomings in state delivery of social goods (incl. disabled, destitute, the elderly, needy children, war trauma sufferers, drug dependency)

This was used as a framework against which to judge people's understanding of civil society. In general understandings were poor and quite disparate. This was particularly noticeable in the smaller organisations outside Sukhumi. There was a tendency to understand civil society as being represented solely by the creation of NGOs and their consequent activities. One respondent even saw it as 'knowing about the nature and application of international law'. This exclusive view of the notion illustrates how the interpretation of a concept is crucial. Definitions of an idea impact upon how people engage with it and the way it is used in determining power relations. One respondent noted that civil society was traditionally strong in Abkhaz society and that international organisations have introduced western values which are transforming these traditional notions of civil society.

7.2 UNV and civil society

NGO Development: It was noticeable that a broader vision of civil society was starting to emerge. Notions of education and advocacy were being linked to the enlargement of civil space. The formation of NGOs tends to be one of the first initiatives to be supported in the development of civil values in post communist societies. UNV was present in Abkhazia when it became possible to assist in the development of NGOs. One significant contribution by UNV in this respect was to provide initial funding for a NGO resource centre run by Centre for Humanitarian Programmes. This proved to be a highly important and useful initiative valued by many NGOs. Funding for this project was then taken up by another donor. This is one of a number of instances

where UNV has provided starter funding. Another was the Media Club. Here a group split off from Civil Initiatives Foundation (CIF), and used the information/training provided by UNV on skills, technical capacity, fundraising and governance to form an organisation for journalists.

Despite a number of publications on civil society, the public in Abkhazia still know little about the work of NGOs and the principles by which they operate. Using a local partner, in 2003 UNV mounted an interesting and innovative project to inform the public about NGOs and various aspects of civic action. In addition to demonstrating the role and function of NGOs, it drew attention to notions of democracy, diversity, the function of law and the role of justice and human rights. A large proportion of Abkhaz NGOs took part in the week-long exhibition. There was promotion on the TV and the press. Officials from government and UNOMIG attended. After the exhibition roundtable discussions on various aspects of civil life took place with politicians, NGO members and members of the public. This was a strong idea.

Other UNV funded initiatives for the promotion of civil society have been innovative youth dialogue projects and the facilitation of links with new contacts outside Abkhazia. UNV was said by one respondent to have helped generate momentum in Abkhaz-Georgian dialogues.

The capacity building activity undertaken by UNVs provides a further example of how the programme has contributed to the development of new NGOs by providing them with intensive assistance in developing ideas, help in budgeting, proposal writing and reporting. Such support to fledgling NGOs, especially those in the regions, has not been supplied by other donors to the extent that it has been by the UNV programme. In contributing to the development of civil society in Abkhazia,, this represents an area where UNV would be advised to continue and even increase its support

Education: A number of specific projects have been undertaken. UNV has assisted the Gudauta Youth House establish a library related to civil society issues and to develop its capacity to undertake education projects which have been funded by other donors.

A respondent noted that while UNV might not be as active in peace education as others, its contribution to strengthening civil society had a positive effect on organisations engaged in reconciliation and peace building. This respondent stated that as a consequence people were becoming less nationalist and more tolerant.

Peace education projects financed by UNV, such as those implemented by SYH, are said to have increased understanding of civil society by making young people more tolerant. Through CIF, UNV has funded 5 editions of the bulletin 'Perspective' (1996-2003). Topics include Caucasian geopolitics, Abkhaz economic development, Abkhaz national culture, ecological issues and environmental protection. UNV has also funded a publication for students on human rights.

Effectiveness in promoting information exchange: The team saw this as being a key criteria to be considered by donors interested in assisting the development of civil society. The sentiment was expressed by respondents that more should be done to assist in information exchange. UNV has undertaken some work in this area.

UNV has supported the publication of a number of publications. One was by CIF which published materials on various aspect of NGO activity and their effect on society. The booklets were distributed within Abkhazia to libraries, government ministries and the general public. Trainings funded by UNV also assist NGOs to exchange information between each other. UNV

initially funded the magazine “White Crane” and helped with its distribution. NGO workshops funded by UNV have provided a useful environment for information exchange and means by which NGOs have been able to forge partnerships.

Despite such initiatives, information exchange between NGOs was said to be poor. The failure to be able to access information was inhibiting their development. Regionally based organisations stated that no assistance with information exchange had been provided by UNV. Extending knowledge about civil society through assisting with linkages of various kinds is clearly an areas in which UNV should be more active.

Suggestions to improve the situation included increasing publications, using TV and other media and seeking innovative ways to cope with the problems associated with poor transport. The isolation and consequent difficulties experienced by organisations outside Sukhumi are substantial. Organisations in Novy Aphon and Gulripsh found that even 20 km was an impediment to their attending the weekly NGO meetings in Sukhumi.

8.0 Findings: NGO Capacity Building

8.1 The Abkhaz NGO sector

There have been considerable changes in the Abkhaz non-governmental sector. From a situation where there was no non-governmental activity prior to the 1992/3 conflict, contemporary Abkhazia now has a large number of NGOs. It was reported by the Ministry of Justice that in the autumn of 2004 there were 300 NGOs registered in Abkhazia. As a result of a re-registration finalised on 1 January 2005 there were stated as being 150 NGOs of which the government spokesperson stated 50-60 were active.

One characteristic of non-governmental activity is that the creation and initial activity of many organisations is dependent on the drive of charismatic individuals. Where the opportunity occurs for non-governmental activity, then it is almost inevitable that individuals with conviction and determination will set about creating organisations/initiatives that contribute to the public good. While there is immense value in such work, it is important that these initiatives become located in a framework which will permit the organisation, and the set of ideas it represents, to be sustained beyond the time of a founding or important individual. NGO sustainability is therefore strongly correlated to the capacity of an organisation to establish practices of good governance and a clear strategic vision. Quite often the two are intertwined. Where practices of good governance do not occur, organisations are liable to disintegrate with the loss of a strong or charismatic leader.

The evaluation involved meeting a large proportion of the most active NGOs in Abkhazia. As a result of these meetings it became possible to draw a rough typology of NGOs. We noted three broad types:

i) The first was a cluster of established NGOs, all of which were in Sukhumi. While these might owe their success to the drive and fire of a single individual and might not have as clear separation of powers as is desirable, each operated in a collegiate manner. The second characteristic of these NGOs was that they all had steady funding streams which allowed them to think and act more strategically.

ii) There was a cluster of NGOs which had a preponderance of dominant leaders and weak, or non-operative governance structures. Well meaning, dedicated and extraordinarily hard working though the leaders of these groups were, the lack of delegation and consultation inevitably impacted negatively on the way that the organisation operated. While this type of organisation had funding from several donors, they tended to receive only short-term grants.

iii) Finally, and of most concern, there were a small proportion of NGOs with a limited donor base that were characterised by being run by dominant individuals and/or were highly dependent on sporadic short term funding and/or did not having a clear organisational objective.

Two things come out of this aspect of the evaluation consultation. First, that generally not enough attention is paid by donors to organisations outside Sukhumi. Second, that NGO governance is weak and that this impacts on sustainability. This may be one of the factors that has caused a substantial decrease in the number of registered NGOs noted above. By good governance we refer to issues of accountability associated with the separation of powers, election of officers, appointment and reporting procedures of an organisation. These are laid out in a constitution which defines the role, function and duties of the board, membership and executive.

8.2 Capacity building activities

There were many reports from organisations covered in the survey of the benefits they had received from UNV capacity building support. In fact, every organisation at one time or another or in one way or another received such support from UNV.

Capacity building has taken place primarily by means of:

- Assisting organisations develop their ideas.
- Assistance with budgeting and proposal writing
- Assistance with reporting

These activities have taken place as part of the process of producing every grant processed by UNV. Working with partners and potential partners represents the core of UNV's daily workload. It is at this level the UNV staff invest a great deal of their energy in helping with the formation of new groups, the development of projects and then helping them deal with the complexities and requirements associated with external donors. This largely unsung activity generated a great deal of appreciation and positive feedback from the small and mainly regional organisations who form the bulk of UNV's partners. These skills tend to be taken for granted by the more established NGOs, even though they themselves benefited from such support from UNV in their early days.

Behind such grant-related work, UNV has been judiciously funding a number of projects which assist NGO staff obtain competence in relevant computer programmes. It also provides support for English language classes. NGOs who have received this assistance find that it has been of real benefit to their organisations.

In addition, a number of seminars have been financed which go deeper into organisational issues of administration, human resource management, governance and fund raising. More specialised assistance has been provided for the training of a group of trainers to undertake projects on peace education, conflict resolution, mediation and related subjects. Trainers have been trained in various aspects of capacity building. Their skills have been used to benefit regional NGOs. Such projects were described as being timely and successful. There was identified a great need for

more of these capacity building initiatives to be provided to assist regional NGOs and Gali NGOs in particular.

Since the programme inception, UNV staff have spent a large part of their time listening and advising. This type of capacity building has served an important function in the first phase of NGO formation in Abkhazia. It has been acknowledged and appreciated by even the largest NGOs. UNV has firstly been a sounding board and then gone on to provide timely and strategically relevant assistance. This support and the early Pitsunda seminars gave organisations self-confidence in the early stages of their development.

A great deal has been achieved in supporting the establishment of NGOs and by assisting them define and fund projects, but much remains to be done to assist them to plan strategically and to create sustainable structures. Only one organisation was seen to be reaching out to its community for support which it received from a bank, the church and individuals. Ironically, this organisation was being diverted from its original purpose, that of youth development, by implementing an income generation project. Findings highlight the need for improved strategic planning, development of funding bases and good governance as being key capacity building areas which need further attention.

9.0 Findings: Peace Building

9.1 Partner's views

A great deal of work has been undertaken by UNV on peace building activities with organisations in all parts of Abkhazia. The main focus of support has been in peace education/dialogue projects. Of particular note was the activity which involved youth centres in Gagra, Sukhumi, Gali and Ochamchira in 2004. This used a particular game theory which engaged all the ethnic groups in Abkhazia. It also had a separate capacity building component at its conclusion. Those who have been engaged in this series of initiatives report that they have helped children understand how to get on with others and also to understand more about the difficulties which exist in Abkhazia.

Leaders from all the organisations involved in these activities reported a noticeable difference between children who have been exposed to these initiatives and those who have not. There was every indication that the youth centres are achieving a great deal in making lives brighter for children and in expanding their horizons. These projects are contributing to an enabling environment for peace building and as such they help lay the basis for conflict resolution. UNV has also funded an NGO to produce booklets on peace building. One or two NGOs expressed their willingness to start joint projects with Georgian youth organizations.

The issue of education is vital. One fascinating project which shows how a small amount of money can be used to extremely good effect, has been the UNV support for a Georgian professor to deliver lectures in historical geography in Sukhumi University. The professor noted that while it was not the time to discuss conflict resolution, much could be done by creating links and increasing knowledge. He noted that the exchange of academic knowledge provides an alternative to political dialogue and represents an important form of confidence building. This low-key project is quietly deepening understanding and, most importantly, forging links across the divide.

A Gali NGO commented that after Georgian IDPs started to return to Gali, very little, if anything, was done by government or INGOs to integrate them into Abkhazia. The lack of joint projects between Gali people and those from other regions of Abkhazia has been an important factor behind their becoming increasingly isolated. In this respect it is evident that UNV can do more to improve connections between Gali and other places and people in Abkhazia.

One universal comment was that NGOs needed more education and training, not only to better understand the concept of civil society but also to be more effective in the promotion of peace building. While much remains to be done, good progress has been made by UNV over the past two years in respect of developing a peace-building component to the programme.

9.2 Strategic issues

Two organisations/projects examined during the evaluation highlighted the problem of strategy. The projects were both useful. The first (1999) was a one-off grant for the formation of ecological groups in schools. UNV was the first to support environmental projects. This one reportedly gave the opportunity for people of all ages in Abkhazia to work on trans-Caucasus projects alongside Georgians. It appeared to contribute to the promotion of a dialogue between the conflicting parties. The question that arises is, why was there not a continuity of support to this type of project and why were other approaches favoured? The debate by which allocation takes place is not transparent.

The second was an initiative group of parents and teachers from the Sukhumi music school who were given money to repair the school roof and heating system (2002). Music is important on an emotional level. Engagement with music plays a part in deepening understanding and building self-worth. This project was valuable and can be said to have contributed to creating an enabling environment for resolving conflicts. It highlights the value and function of initiative group projects. What is the correct operational balance between making small one-off grants to support projects of this nature and more sustained support to NGOs? These issues need to be more explicitly discussed and outcomes integrated into programme formulation.

Finally, an area of opportunity which has dropped out of UNV's funding orbit are journalists. They have a key role in the process of conflict resolution as they do in all previous stages of conflict. The training of journalists and encouraging of joint activities between journalists is an important component of conflict resolution. However this has not been seen as a priority over the past few years

These issues highlight the complex allocative decisions associated with maximising the effect of a small amount of money. Judgments are not easy, particularly when the programme goal is closely tied to peace building and reconciliation. In the stages before any breakthrough between conflicting parties, it is a goal which is most difficult to evaluate progress against. Those that make these allocative decisions need guidance in the form of an achievable goal to work towards and a clear strategic framework within which to operate.

9.3 An evaluation perspective: The issue which lies at the heart of the UNV programme is encapsulated by its goal, namely that of *creating an enabling environment for confidence building and reconciliation and contribute to peace building between Georgia and Abkhazia*. The evaluation team spent some time grappling with this set of notions. Firstly, it was seen as important to be aware of the precise meaning of terms that are used in resolution terminology. In

this respect there is a useful Annex in Cohen (2000, p.55) drawn from Miall *et al.*⁶ which clearly defines, in English, the important concepts used in conflict resolution.

Certain conclusions arose from discussions which took place during the evaluation. Firstly, in their drive to achieve resolution of intractable conflicts, international actors have their own set of political and economic interests. Conflict is often seen through partisan perspectives. All too easily it is seen in rather simplistic terms. For the obvious reason of not having been directly involved, external actors find it hard to appreciate the emotional factors that lie at the heart of a conflict. However if resolution is to be achieved, before anything can happen, the emotions felt by parties associated with a conflict have to be addressed. Conflict operates on multiple tiers. As Ashuba notes above “the geo-politics of this situation are very complicated”. Indeed they are, and geo-politics have taken precedent over allowing the building of confidence between those who have suffered the brunt of this brutal and painful conflict.

Secondly, it is evident that before reconciliation can be contemplated there is a need to undertake forms of confidence building, which lead to addressing structural issues and long-term relations between conflictants. Such confidence building needs initially to take place within Abkhazia. Positions have now hardened and rhetoric is carefully honed by leaderships who are in danger of losing touch with the people they are supposed to represent.

In interpreting the evidence from the evaluation, many positive things were seen to have been achieved by the use of UNV funding. Despite its contribution to peace building initiatives which have produced greater tolerance and understanding among young people in Abkhazia, it emerged that many remain deeply perplexed about the reason for the armed conflict. Very simply, many, especially those of the younger generation, do not understand why there was a conflict. This represents one possible avenue to be explored in the process of broadening the confidence building approach. The other, is to build on the work which has so far largely been undertaken with schoolchildren to involve other age groups.

10.0 Findings: Small business development

One project was undertaken in 2004 with the Union of Businesswomen of Abkhazia (UBA). This absorbed \$23,444, of which \$12,000 was allocated for grants. This represents the highest single UNV grant (see Annex 3). The allocation for small business development represented 30% of the 2004 annual spend on projects over \$1,000. The next highest grant in 2004 was \$11,460 for peace education.

The project involved delivering training in business consultation to 6 women from regions in Abkhazia to enable them to act as regional enterprise focal points. They received a 3-day training delivered by a business consultant and supported by the staff of UBA. The other component of the project was a small grants competition, which resulted in the awarding of grants to five small business ideas. These included a sewing workshop, a unit for the production of boxes for fruit, sweet production and the production of building materials. Grant size varied between about \$1,000 and \$2,800.

⁶ Miall, H., Ramsbotham, O., Woodhouse, T. (eds). 1999. *Contemporary Conflict Resolution*. Polity Press, London.

This project represents a shift into new territory for UNV. Unfortunately the Director of UBA was away and no one else was present who could provide information about the organisation, its activities and the project. That only one person could provide information was of concern. The evaluation has therefore had to make do with a study of relevant documents.

These reflected an efficiently administered and delivered project. There were some minor issues relating to follow-up monitoring by UNV of the businesses and the need to obtain regular quality monitoring reports from the UBA on the regional business centres as specified in the application document (p.5). This aside, there is nothing to be said about the way the project was run. In addition to the study of documents, two of the businesses had been visited on previous occasions.

However, when examining this initiative from a more strategic perspective, it is not recommended that UNV continue with this form of grant-based income generation for the following reasons.

- It was not demonstrated how using approximately 30% of the UNV annual spend on income generation will directly contribute to the stated TOR programme goal of confidence building and reconciliation.
- The opportunity costs of depriving other sectors of this level of resources were not outlined.
- Income generation is not an area where the UNV programme has any competitive advantage. If the UNV programme is to focus on business development, then it requires suitably trained and knowledgeable staff capable of judging viability, assessing risk and offering sound advice.
- Income generation by means of grants are not favoured by the director of the Abkhaz Central Bank, Emma Tania. She is on record as stating that grants for business development have a negative impact. They create dependency. People do not use the money sensibly. Since it is not their own, they invest money in businesses without properly assessing issues of profitability⁷.
- Income generation by means of grants is antithetical to, and would thus undermine, the micro-finance project currently being proposed for inclusion into the UNDP ABD programme.

There is undoubtedly a need for economic regeneration in Abkhazia but the case is not adequately made that this should be an area in which UNV resources are best spent. It is likely that business generation will be more appropriately, effectively and equitably addressed by UNDP in the forthcoming area based development programme. Economic development is an area where UNDP has an institutional mandate and expertise. In respect of Abkhazia, it also has a funding stream allocated to this activity.

11.0 Analysis of findings

11.1 Programme efficiency

Programme efficiency was discussed under seven headings. Administrative issues that need improvement (i.e. information management systems) were clearly identified. Human resource

⁷ To Tamsin Wilson, UNDP consultant 1/2/05.

policy was found to be sound with some improvement needed in respect of the resources provided to UNVs prior to posting.

UNV was generally seen as a good partner. Key positive comments that speak well of the UNV approach included the perceptions that the organisation did not impose political views, it remained neutral in respect of the conflict and that it took into account the interests of all parties. The criticism that the UN is focusing too much on the war-affected areas of Abkhazia is difficult to accept. The UN is simply focussing its immediate attention on those areas where there is the greatest need. There were problems associated with public relations and the lack of understanding of the UN as a whole. The importance of maintaining programme continuity was also noted.

Funding strategy: This is a complex issue. To date, funding strategy has to a large extent been subject to the approach of particular UNVs. Good management practice would be to introduce mechanisms that increase programme oversight. These will be further discussed in the Programme Rigour section below. The evaluation favours maintaining the existing policy of judiciously allocated relatively small short-term grants. However it is suggested that they be made with due regard to organisational and sectoral continuity. While there are obviously many advantages, to both donor and partner, to longer term funding, it is important to consult within the UN and with partners about the implications of any radical shift in policy. The advantages associated with short term funding as outlined in §6.5 are too significant to be summarily dismissed by an external evaluation. Changes in funding strategy thus need to be carefully discussed by the UNDP/UNV team in annual performance reviews and consequent strategy discussions.

Project cycle rigour: The following stages are generally accepted as forming the project cycle. Each stage is defined. Evaluative comments on UNV programme performance are then made for each stage:

Identification: feasibility, relevance to programme goal, defining priorities.

- UNV has performed quite well in respect of identification of projects and organisations. Some solid achievements have been made through its willingness to take risks and provide small grants at an early stage in an organisation's development and by exploring the viability and value of new initiatives. Greater attention now needs to be paid to prioritisation and ensuring that grants support activities directly related to the programme goal. It is important to make this information internally and externally explicit.

Preparation: refinement of design and the writing up of a budgeted proposal including risk assessment.

- UNV has provided some of its strongest work in the painstaking task of assisting organisations think through their ideas and put them into a proposal. The learning which has taken place as a result of this process is considerable. The only area where this process could be improved is in risk assessment. This could usefully be developed to the benefit of the programme but also as a valuable tool for partners.

Appraisal: an explicit process whereby a project is examined, assessed and formally accepted.

- The procedures whereby this takes place are not very clear. Of particular significance is the lack of an explicit strategy document which details sector weighting and associated funding criteria. Such a tool, which broadly outlines the type and mix of project, would make appraisal easier and more transparent and would increase the likelihood of the programme achieving its goal.

Implementation: monitoring the activity.

- Performance in this area appears to be good. High standards in monitoring produce well-substantiated donor reports and contribute to good accountability to donors.

Evaluation: determining whether goal and purposes have been achieved and to learn lessons.

- A problem area. Mechanisms have not been developed which permit performance to be assessed and which ensure that lessons learnt are applied. Linked to this has been the failure to set goals. Even when set, goals appear to be more in the nature of ideals rather than targets against which performance can be measured.

Programming rigour: As is noted above (§6.3), the lack of a performance framework within which to examine the activities and management of the UNV programme. Such a framework permits information to become knowledge which can be used for learning. It is a vital management tool. There is therefore a need for improved strategic management of the programme which may be achieved by instituting performance management practices. A number of these have been identified in the report and are now listed:

- To undertake an annual partner workshop. This would provide a forum by means of which partners can discuss the past funding period and identify the strengths and weaknesses of UNV support. This minuted meeting would provide a useful sounding board for developing strategic direction and understanding funding requirements for the future year.
- To undertake an annual performance review. Under the aegis of senior management, this exercise would permit a debate over strategic direction and could be used to establish indicative parameters for sectoral funding. The consequent strategy document will be useful, if not essential, in dovetailing UNV activities and capacity into the UNDP ABD programme.
- The result of annual performance review should be a clear strategy for the forthcoming year. Following the review, there would be value in producing a logframe to be used as a management tool (such tools will be increasingly important as UNDP interventions in Abkhazia become larger and more complex), and as means of assessing annual performance.
- It is necessary that an external evaluation be undertaken at regular intervals. It is suggested every third year. This should, more or less, coincide with the introduction of new UNVs. Regular external evaluation plays an important part in performance assessment.

11.2 Programme concepts

Civil society: The current UNV goal as stated in the TOR makes an implicit assumption that a flourishing civil society will of itself contribute to conflict transformation. While this is not unlikely, it is by no means necessarily so. Although it sees the UNV approach to supporting the

development of civil society as being broadly positive, the Cohen report (2000, pp.12-13) equivocates on its impact on conflict resolution. However rather than argue this point further, the case has been made, and indeed generally accepted, that the development of the notion of civil society, and applying the principles associated with it, is of intrinsic value in itself. If this point is accepted then consideration should be given to including the notion of governance in the programme goal.

The question that arose during this study was, in what way should the UNV programme move forward in its promotion of civil society? Should it support the increase of NGOs? Should it improve the quality of existing NGOs? Should it improve information flows and support the provision of more public education? How should the UNV develop its support for the notion of good governance? All these factors form part of a strategic debate which needs to take place within UNV/UNDP. The evaluation cannot answer these questions. However, it does recommend that mechanisms be put in place which ensure that strategic debate is structurally integrated into the UN/UNV continuum.

One issue directly relating to the formation of civil society is that of advocacy. It came up strongly during the evaluation as an increasingly significant factor in Abkhaz public life. Several organisations in Abkhazia are developing advocacy platforms. The subject was raised during the NGO meeting where it was stated that UNV should give funding priority to providing information about civil society. Since there was no human rights organisation in Abkhazia, these issues need to be supported through existing NGOs. It was stated that people are unaware of their rights and that there was a particular need for awareness about the rights of ethnic groups.

By developing the capacity to advocate on behalf of the people they serve, NGOs have been able to enhance the life experience of many. Advocacy is a means of influencing public opinion and policy makers. It is a means increasing impact, of creating a multiplier effect and contributing towards sustainable change. Without the use of advocacy, NGO activity has reduced impact. For NGOs to undertake activities without including an advocacy dimension reduces the pressure to bring about structural change.

While it is easy enough for an external observer to describe a situation, the question remains, how in the face of a regime with considerable coercive powers at its disposal do NGOs create space in which to undertake advocacy initiatives? Firstly, there is a need to make use of existing civil space. This requires recognising that civil space, understanding it, and then learning how to use it. This can be seen to be occurring in Abkhazia. Civil space is always taken. It is never given. It is within that space that advocacy can take place. Secondly, of course, there is a need for donors to give judicious and appropriate support for such approaches.

Using the analysis in §6.1, it is suggested that there would be value to all interested parties in better understanding the nature and operation of civil society in Abkhazia. One tool which the UNV programme could develop would be an annual civil society audit undertaken by a local partner (perhaps in cooperation with an external one) which examines the nature of civil society in Abkhazia as it operates in the political, economic and social fields. It would cover issues of accountability, transparency, privatisation and human rights observance. Such an audit would be useful in helping NGOs and donors define and pursue strategies to assist the development of civil society. Used on annual basis, it would be a useful tool for monitoring change and identifying areas for advocacy and programme development.

Capacity building: There have been very significant changes which have taken place in the development of the NGO sector in Abkhazia since 1994. A solid base of activity has been established. What is less clear is how the NGO sector may best be encouraged in its development. How many NGOs can usefully and practically exist in such a small region? Considerable disparities have developed in the operational capacity of NGOs. Should donors concentrate support on those that have a proven capacity or should resources be devoted to forming new NGOs and increasing the capacity of smaller NGOs? All NGOs are dependent on external donors⁸, what should be done to increase sustainability? These are tough questions to answer. It is already evident that some NGOs may soon cease to operate through shortage of funding.

In seeking to respond to these issues, UNV has taken a measured and sensible course. However it is one that needs to be subject to regular review, particularly in the light of the deepening of UNDP involvement in Abkhazia. The typology (§8.1) generated as a result of evaluation evidence may be of some help in deciding how resources for capacity building should be allocated. It identifies:

- The necessity to promote understanding of the need for good governance and to offer knowledge of mechanisms about how this may be achieved
- The value of setting strategic goals and undertaking strategic planning
- The need for NGOs to better understand the funding environment and the value of, and mechanisms by which, they can develop local support.
- The importance of enhancing knowledge about monitoring and evaluation and how to apply these principles.

In addition to the above there is a need to maintain regular scrutiny on the geographical allocation of capacity building support in Abkhazia. The UNV programme was reportedly the first donor to support regional NGOs. It has maintained this aspect of the programme and needs to continue to do so. However over time it is becoming clear that some organisations are not going to be sustainable. There may be some hard and sad decisions that have to be made in how capacity building resources are allocated.

It is assumed that UNVs will maintain the quality of their support to NGOs when advice is sought in preparing, presenting and reporting on projects and also in the provision of training in computers, language and administration. These are highly valued aspects of UNV activity.

Two other issues arise from this evaluation which relate to capacity building. The first concerns local government. Whatever the eventual status of Abkhazia may be, the region will need effective local government structures to deal with a central authority. At present, local government in Abkhazia is in a miserable and parlous state. It receives hardly any funds and thus delivers few, if any, services. Technical capacity has disappeared. Moral is abysmal. In looking to the future, it is suggested that there would be value in tailoring capacity building support so that it will be of value to local administration staff and heads of village councils. Many organisational issues and principles are shared with the NGO sector such as management practices, keeping of accounts, record keeping, personnel procedures, management of meetings etc. The UNV programme should give consideration to utilising resources to enhance such capacity building, particularly as it relates to the development of the UNDP ABD programme.

⁸ One exception is AIS (Rehabilitation Centre for Disabled People) which supplements its resources by a small business enterprise.

The second issue relates to initiative groups. Initially many such groups were funded but have seemed to slip out of favour in recent years. It is appreciated that small grants provided to inexperienced groups can cause a great deal of work and increased administration for hard pressed UNV staff. That said, support for initiative groups within the framework of the forthcoming UNDP ABD programme might provide a means where UNV funded capacity and expertise could act in synergising with the larger programme. The funding of initiative groups might be a way to build both confidence and capacity in village administrations located in the ABD programme area.

Peace building: It has been noted that reconciliation is too ambitious a goal in the present circumstances (§9.1, §9.3; also Cohen: 2000, p.15). The meaning imputed by each party to the notion of reconciliation is very different. It is therefore as yet uncertain as to what it is that people have to be reconciled. It is by no means certain that the growth of civil society and the formation of NGOs will of itself contribute to peace building. However the key lesson which came from this evaluation was that a great deal of confidence building activity needs to take place in Abkhazia. It is this which will provide the foundation for the possible development of reconciliation in the future. This understanding emphasises the need for peace education and for encouraging the development of intra-Abkhazia linkages.

Although the goal stated in the TOR identifies peace building as the key element of the programme, more resources are spent on capacity building and promotion of civil society. There was a unanimous view, echoed in the NGO meeting, that there was a need to increase peace education. The subject needs to continue to be integrated into school curricula and that opportunities should be undertaken to maintain and diversify the range of extra-curricula activities for young people. Support in this area is a key strength of the UNV programme which should receive greater emphasis. The need to ensure continuity in the delivery of this form of education never stops since new children move into each age cohort.

There are three additional activities which would enhance the delivery of peace education. The first concerns the training of trainers. UNV has made a start with this. Lessons learnt need to be integrated into future trainings which would impart this knowledge to teachers across Abkhazia. Secondly, it was noted that government officials are ceasing to be less suspicious of unfamiliar ideas and are starting to appreciate the value of the work being undertaken by NGOs, particularly in respect of child care and peace education. Support needs to be tailored to assisting develop links which have started to be formed between government officials and NGOs working in this sector. Finally, there would be value in supporting the publication of Professor Anchabadze's lectures on historical geography.

Business development: The case is made in §10 for UNV to withdraw support for income generation activities primarily on the grounds of it being inappropriate to the goal stated in the TOR and also in terms of value for money. However, where could UNV have a competitive advantage in the use of its limited resources would be to support relevant organisations advocate and lobby for the following:

- improvements in legislation to enable small businesses to operate more effectively
- reform of the banking law to improve the availability of financial services to citizens
- improvement in the trading environment and the removal of barriers to trade.

In order to lay the foundations for a flourishing market economy, much needs to be done in terms of public education. This represents a second important area to which UNV could allocate resources. There is a need to improve public understanding of how a market economy operates and of what governments need to do in order to provide an environment in which markets can freely and fairly operate. In addition, there needs to be much greater understanding by the public of their responsibilities in producing a viable and fair market economy. This includes learning about contributing to the shaping of the regulatory environment and the adoption of necessary practices including the acceptance of tax regimes.

12. Conclusion

The UNV Abkhazia programme has been a remarkable endeavour. It has survived on small amounts of money and has times been very insecure. The UNVs have been the only representatives of UN development agencies permanently present in Abkhazia during nine difficult years. During this period the programme has provided a small but strategically important contribution to the limited spectrum of international support directed to Abkhazia. The UNV programme has carved a niche for itself as a valued provider of judiciously placed, relatively small short-term grants.

The programme has used funds opportunistically. Risks have been taken. Most have paid off. It has played a significant role in the formation of many NGOs now operating in Abkhazia. Where ideas proved to be successful and organisations have got off the ground, support has then tended to be provided by other donors with more funds at their disposal.

The evaluation has sought to examine the programme since its inception in 1996. There has been a tendency by respondents to place an emphasis on personality. While acknowledging the invaluable role played by individuals, particularly Martin Schumer, the evaluation has sought to examine what has taken place as a process and then to identify the strengths and weaknesses in that process. To improve performance, more needs to be done to develop the strategic management of the programme. The process of internal record keeping needs attention. There was a pressing need for improvements in the flow of information about the UNV programme and the UN in general.

Respondents did not appear to tailor their comments. Shortcomings were identified. Some criticisms made about UNVs and the programme had a measure of validity. That respondents felt able to be frank indicates the open atmosphere which surrounds the organisation. The majority of respondents, especially those in the regions, were genuinely appreciative of the support provided by the programme. The underlying feeling conveyed as a result of this consultation exercise was that the UNV programme has been valuable and has been appreciated.

Small, and sometimes quirky, though the UNV programme has been, it has provided a constructive contribution to development in Abkhazia, not the least of which has been to enhancing people's confidence, value and worth. The recommendations offered below reflect that the UNV programme is on a positive course. They include tightening the focus of the existing programme and indicate a number of changes which could be made to enhance programme impact and delivery.

With improved management practices and firm donor commitment the impact of the programme can be substantially increased. Its ability to work more closely with people and communities than other UN agencies is its greatest strength. It is to be hoped that with the enhancement of UN support to Abkhazia, the UNV programme will add further dimensions to its role.

13.0 Recommendations

13.1 UNV/UNDP Organisation

- Institute procedures whereby there is summarised documentation/records of project activities and of the programme as a whole. This should include both narrative and financial reports which along with the results of the annual partner workshop would be used by senior management in the annual programme performance review.
- Produce a range of materials which explain the UN and its various parts. Material should state why the UN is in Abkhazia and what it is doing. Information should be made available about the nature and role of the UNV programme. (see §6.6)
- Produce a resource pack for new UNV and local staff which covers a range of development issues, including that of conflict transformation
- Open an office once a week in Sukhumi for a period of 3-4 hours and once a week in a rotating regional location. This would allow people easier access to the UNV programme and would provide an opportunity to disseminate information about the UN.
- Performance assessment practices need to be introduced. Suggested mechanisms:
 - Annual partner workshop to identify strengths and weaknesses in support and needs for the future
 - Annual performance review with senior management
 - Production of an annual strategic plan and logframe
 - An external evaluation every third year

13.2 Funding

It is recommended that UNV maintain its policy of disbursing relatively small grants until such a time as partner feedback and internal management review procedures determine otherwise. However, attention needs to be paid to ensuring that there is an adequate level of organisational and sectoral continuity in funding disbursement.

13.3 Goal and Purposes

As can be seen from the presentation of data, even though it might be contributing towards an enabling environment for reconciliation, a significant proportion of UNV activity is not directly involved in peace building. In the light of this, it is suggested that the UNV programme goal be made simpler, more concrete and more demonstrably achievable. Such an approach will assist in performance assessment and management. The following option is suggested:

- *To contribute to improved relations between ethnic groups and the establishment of good governance in Abkhazia.*

To achieve these twin goals it is suggested that the purpose of UNV activities be explicitly stated as:

- *To provide education and training on peace building*
- *To provide capacity building for NGOs and local government*
- *To promote the concept of civil society*

13.4 Programming

It is noted that the UNV programme is on a sound course. Many of the activities which form these recommendations are already part of the programme, however certain emphases are made and a few innovations introduced. It is therefore recommended that the UNV programme activities provide:

i) Education and training

- Provision of training/education on peace building with focus on regions
- Promoting knowledge and techniques on conflict resolution
- To include government actors in peace education initiatives
- To increase support for higher education initiatives related to conflict resolution
- Public education/awareness raising about the operation of a market economy

ii) NGO and Local Government capacity building

- Administration best practice
- Strategic planning
- Principles of Governance
- Principles of monitoring and evaluation
- Provision of capacity building to regional NGOs either directly or by ensuring that funding of Sukhumi NGOs directly benefits regional NGOs

iii) Promotion of civil society

- Increase focus on regions
- Support initiative groups, particularly within the context of the ABD programme
- Continuation of the NGO exhibition on an annual basis and across Abkhazia
- Promotion of linkages between groups in different districts, particularly involving Gali
- Supporting initiatives related to human rights advocacy (esp. through HROAG)
- Support lobbying for improved environment for small businesses
- Provide funding for an annual civil society audit

Annex 1

Organisations and respondents interviewed during the evaluation:

AIS (Rehabilitation Centre for Disabled People). Respondent: Elena Kuvichko
Apsabara Ecological Society. Respondent: Roman Dbar
Ashuba, Nugzar (Speaker of Abkhaz Parliament)
Association of Women of Abkhazia. Respondent: Natela Akaba
Centre for Humanitarian Programmes. Respondents: Batal Kobakhia, Liana Kvarchelia, Arda Inal-Ipa
Civic Initiative Foundation. Respondent: Tamaz Ketsba
Civil Society Development Center. Gagra Respondent: Ira Agrba
Cultural Educational Center for Women in Gali Region. Respondent: Tsira Kakubava
Gudauta Youth House (GYH). Respondent: Vitaliy Tirkba
Initiative group: Music school N 4. Respondent: Bagdasarian Inessa Semenovna
Kalimova, Galiya (UNDP)
Lewis, John (UNDP)
McGoldrick, Amy (UNV)
Novi Aphon Children's Centre. Respondent: Zaira Gurtskaya
Ochamchira Youth House. Respondent: Selma Zantaria
Professor Giorgi Anchabadze
Shamba, Sergei (Foreign Minister and Deputy Prime Minister)
Sukhumi Media-club Respondent: Manana Gurgulia, director
Sukhumi Youth House (SYH) Respondents: Elena Kobakhiya, Aida Ladaria
Tkvarcheli Youth Initiative. Respondent: Rita Ajiba
Union of Defenders of Abkhazia. Respondent: Irina Papba
Union of Sisters of Mercy. Respondent: Ludmila Marganya
Youth Association of Guliripsh. Respondent: Anzor Marshan

Annex 2

No:		Organisation:		Rec'd '96 – 2004 \$
Date:		Respondent:		
1	Effectiveness in Building NGO capacity	History		
		Purpose		
		UNV links		
		UNV cap. building		
2	Pos/Neg outcomes			
3	Focus outside Sukhumi			
4	UNV Prog efficiency	HR issues		
		Inst. records		
		Prog/proj cycle rigour		
		UNV quality as partner		
		PR capacity		
		Equitability		
		Promotion of inf. exchange		
5	UNV Effectiveness in promoting CS concepts			
6	Views on short/long term funding			
7	Evaluator judgment: What does evidence say about UNV creating an enabling environment to assist reconciliation			
8	Additional comments			

Annex 3

PROJECT IMPLEMENTERS (BY TOTAL AMOUNT RECEIVED BY ORGANIZATION) 1996 – 2004

PROJECT IMPLEMENTER	# OF PROJECTS	TOTAL FUNDING (\$)
Centre for Humanitarian Programmes (CHP)	8	27,770
Sukhumi Youth House	4	25,040
Union of Businesswomen of Abkhazia (UBA)	2	24984
Civil Society Development Center	5	14,951
Civic Initiative Foundation	5	13,940
Rehabilitation Centre for Disabled People (AIS)	4	12,330
Youth Association of Gulripshi	4	8,888
Association of Women of Abkhazia (AWA)	5	7,767
Ochamchira Youth House	3	6,493
Youth Initiative of Tkvarcheli	3	5,158
Novy Aphon Children Center	1	4,872
ADPSP	1	3,500
CEAWGD	1	2,690
Center for Human Rights and Support of Democracy	1	2,690
Cultural Foundation of Democracy	1	2,540
Apsabara Ecological Society	1	2,536
Society for Study of History & Culture	1	2,245
Union of Defenders of Abkhazia	1	2,204
UFSJPG	1	1,760
Union of Sisters of Mercy	1	1,640
Initiative Group – Parents	1	1,523
Gudauta Youth House	1	1,300
Hand of Mercy	1	1,200
Professor Anchabadze	1	1,170
Human Rights and Civic Society Foundation	1	1,024
New World	1	1,020
Gali Youth Center “Lazer”	1	1,000

Annex 4

UNV PROJECTS (OVER \$1,000) IMPLEMENTED IN ABKHAZIA 1996-2004

Project Locations (by district)

Administrative District	# OF PROJECTS	% OF PROJECTS
Sukhumi	36	50%
Gulripsh	4	6%
Ochamchira	3	4%
Tkvarcheli	3	4%
Gali	3	4%
Gudauta	3	4%
Gagra	6	8%
Multiple districts	2	3%
Outside of Abkhazia	12	17%
TOTAL	72	100%

Project Amounts

Project Dollar Amounts	# OF PROJECTS
Between 1,000-2,000	31
Between 2,000-3,000	16
Between 3,000-4,000	2
Between 4,000-5,000	5
Between 5,001-6,000	3
Between 6,000-7,000	3
Over 7,000	5
Unknown	7

MAIN PROJECT IMPLEMENTERS (RECEIVED 4 OR MORE GRANTS)

PROJECT IMPLEMENTER	# OF PROJECTS
Rehabilitation Centre for Disabled People (AIS)	4
Association of Women of Abkhazia (AWA)	5
Centre for Humanitarian Programmes (CHP)	8
Civic Initiative Foundation	5
Civil Society Development Center	5
Sukhumi Youth House	5
Youth Association of Gulripshi	4

Annex 5

UNV PROJECTS (OVER \$1,000) IMPLEMENTED IN ABKHAZIA 1996-2004

		Outline Project Description					
#	Date	Project title	UNV	City	Region	Implementer	Outline Project Description
1	1996	Training in Conflict Resolution and Human Rights	MS	Schlaining Austria		UNV/ Helsinki Citizens Assembly	NGO representatives from 6 regions of South Caucasus taught basics of conflict resolution and human rights monitoring for 2 weeks. Participants from Abkhazia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Nagorny Karabakh and South Ossetia
2	1996	Children's summer peace camp	MS	Bulgaria		UNV/ IDPWA/ CHP/ PCA (Tskhinvali)	25 IDP children from conflict zones in Georgia spent 21 days together with Bulgarian trainers/facilitators from the Open Education Centre, Sofia. Training in tolerance, first aid, and ecological issues.
3	1997	Summer Peace-Building Institute Training	MS	USA		UNV	UNV sent 2 Abkhazian and 5 Georgian participants to attend the summer courses at the Peace-Building Institute in Harrisonburg, U.S.A. (Subjects included: fundamentals of peace building, training design; healing and reconciliation.)
4	1997	Subregional NGO seminar	MS	Pitsunda	Gagra	UNV, NRC	Representatives of NGOs from 6 regions of South Caucasus (including 6 from Georgia proper) attended 3day seminar in Pitsunda, devoted to cooperation of NGOs in South Caucasian subregion
5	1997	Georgian & Abkhaz NGO dialogue	MS	Schlaining Austria		UNV/Berghof Center	11 representatives from Georgia and Abkhazia worked over 10 days towards elaborating a common vision and possible joint projects. Alongside of which conflict resolution was taught.
6	1999	Rehabilitation Centre	MS	Sukhumi	Sukhumi	ADPSP	The project was concerned with establishing a Social Rehabilitation Center for the disabled and re-integrating them into social life. This was achieved through organizing computer training courses and sessions on Human Rights focusing on the rights of the disabled.
7	1999	Organization of the School Forest Area	MS	Pitsunda	Gagra	Apsabara Ecological Society	The project promoted the protection and rehabilitation of the flora of the Pitsunda Pine Tree Reserve by involving pupils from local secondary schools. The main objectives were to organize a school forest area in Pitsunda and to create a pine nursery. Through this project the student community of Pitsunda took greater responsibility for the protection of their environment.

8	1999	The Georgian-Abkhazian Conflict: Obstacles for Peaceful Resolution	MS	Sukhumi	Sukhumi	Sukhumi	Center for Human Rights and Support for Democracy	The goal of the project was to engage members of the general population in Abkhazia and Georgia in the search for a peaceful solution to the conflict. Four Georgian and four Abkhazian scholars, NGO activists & MPs presented their views on the settlement of the conflict. Each person proposed concrete steps and activities for achieving success in building bridges between the two communities. Their papers were translated and distributed to organizations.
9	1999	Winter School, Programme for English Language	MS	Sukhumi	Sukhumi	CHP	CHP	10-week project implemented by CHP. Main objective was to give local youth an opportunity to learn English to enable them to participate in different international activities concerning peaceful conflict resolution and transformation. Besides providing language lessons, this project involved youth in NGO activities.
10	1999	Abkhaz NGO Public Awareness and Capacity Building Programme	MS	Sukhumi	Sukhumi	CHP	CHP	Main objective of 1-year project was the development of an effective, self-sustaining NGO sector in Abkhazia that can help prevent further conflict in the region and build a secure, civil and stable society. Main activities: workshops on NGO capacity building, campaign aimed at raising awareness of NGOs among the local authorities and community.
11	1999	NGO Resource Centre	MS	Sukhumi	Sukhumi	CHP	CHP	The aim of the project was to establish a Resource Center to assist and support the Abkhazian NGO sector in respect of information gathering, logistic support, financing and personnel training.
12	1999	Information-Analytical TV Programme "7 Days"	MS	Sukhumi	Sukhumi	Civic Initiative Foundation	Civic Initiative Foundation	The project aimed at giving the staff of the programme "7 Days" basic equipment to enable them to work more independently from the official structures. As the programme was very popular in past times, the re-launch of this programme was greeted well by the general public.
13	1999	Bulletin	MS	Sukhumi	Sukhumi	Civic Initiative Foundation	Civic Initiative Foundation	The project supported the publication of the 3rd issue of the bulletin and followed on UNV support of the 2nd issue. The main topics of the 3rd issue were geopolitics in the Caucasus (particularly Abkhazia); economic priorities of Abkhazia; problems of national culture; ecological problems and environmental protection. The project also encouraged the development of small independent media outlets.
14	1999	Human Rights Education	MS	Sukhumi	Sukhumi	Civic Initiative Foundation	Civic Initiative Foundation	This project was especially designed for the elementary and secondary school system. Its objective was to give pupils a general understanding of the principles of Human Rights protection. Materials provided by the Norwegian Refugee Council and Amnesty International.
15	1999	Media Workshop	MS	Sukhumi	Sukhumi	Civic Initiative Foundation	Civic Initiative Foundation	This one-week training for young journalists was organized in collaboration with the Conciliation Resources, London and the Civic Initiative, Sukhumi. This project was a follow-up of the previous workshop for journalists organized in Abkhazia.

16	1999	Youth Center of the Civil Society Development	MS	Gagra	Gagra	Civil Society Development Center	Rehabilitation project implemented by the CSDC in Gagra. It foresaw the reconstruction of the roof of the CSDC office where the organization planned to organize different activities for youth, especially for the socially insecure children.
17	1999	Publication of Tales in Abkhaz Language	MS	Sukhumi	Sukhumi	Cultural Foundation of Abkhazia	Collection of Abkhazian Folklore: project objective is to publish illustrated collection of best pieces of Abkhaz folklore (fairy tales, myths, heroic poems, legends, proverbs and sayings) for children and youth. Abkhaz Translation of World Folklore and Literature for Children and Adolescents: the project intends to translate world folklore and children literature into Abkhaz language. Both books to be disseminated in secondary school and libraries (1000 copies each).
18	1999	Sukhumi on the Boundary of the Millennium	MS	Sukhumi	Sukhumi	Sukhumi Society for the Study of History & Culture of Abkhazia	The aim of the project was to hold an exhibition dedicated to the 2500th anniversary of Sukhumi. The project was implemented in cooperation with the British journalist Peter Nasmlyth who had published a comprehensive study on Georgia in London. One of the objectives of the exhibition was raising awareness of the devastating state of Sukhumi after the war.
19	1999	Abkhaz Language Training	MS	Moscow		SYH	Two Abkhaz teachers provided with a two-month internship at the Department of Teaching Methods, Moscow Linguistic University. The internship will enable them prepare modern Abkhaz language textbooks for secondary schools.
20	1999	Summer Peace-Building Institute Training	MS	Harrisonburg, USA		UNV	UNV sent 2 Abkhazian and one Georgian participant to attend the summer courses at the Peace-Building Institute in Harrisonburg, U.S.
21	1999	Internship for Two Abkhazian Journalists	MS	U.K.		UNV/CR	One-month training visit to the BBC World Service. The project was a follow-up of a media training course organized in Abkhazia earlier in the year. The projects were part of the ongoing work of UNV and Conciliation Resources in promoting the development of civil society constituencies in Abkhazia.
22	1999	Follow-Up Media Training Course	MS	Sukhumi	Sukhumi	UNV/CR	Project was a follow-up of the training organized in 1999 in Abkhazia by the UNV and Conciliation Resources. The workshop was built on the outcome of the previous project. The topics discussed included the basics of journalism, media in the state and relations with the government, need for speed, accuracy and objectivity, etc. The technical aspects for improvement of professionalism were stressed.
23	2000	NGO English School	AS	Sukhumi	Sukhumi	AIS	The project was a follow-up of the UNV-supported "Winter School" project. It was proposed by the NGO Rehabilitation Center. It sought to increase English-speaking representation from Abkhaz NGOs in international/regional conferences and workshops, and to give them greater access to English-language NGO materials related to the non-governmental sector.

24	2000	Training for "Trust Line" Consultants	AS	Sukhumi	Sukhumi	CHP	This project that was submitted by Center for Humanitarian Programmes represents a follow-up training in telephone hotline consultations to Trust Line volunteers who have had no training since 1996. The project is ongoing.
25	2000	Psychosocial Rehabilitation Training	AS	Sukhumi	Sukhumi	CHP	Main goals of the project proposed by the Center for Humanitarian Programmes are: 1) beginning psychosocial work at the Center, paying special attention to identifying community post-war mental health needs 2) identifying community members interested in and qualified to be trained for psychosocial rehabilitation work, and 3) preparing an introductory training course in psychosocial rehabilitation. The project represents a three-month pilot run of the Outpatient Center.
26	2001	Creation of mini-laundry	PN	Sukhumi	Sukhumi	AWA	To strengthen links between women in Caucasus and to bring about peace building. The creation of a laundry service would enable women to have more free time for intellectual activities and for their children.
27	2001	Information Service on Social Activity	PN	Sukhumi	Sukhumi	CHP	Provision of information to unemployed, disabled, vulnerable groups regarding legal, medical, social welfare, pension issues. Aim to remove social tensions.
28	2001	Teenager tolerance seminar	PN	Gagra	Gagra	Civil Society Development Center	Project aimed at inculcating principles of tolerance in young people.
29	2001	Teenager Human Rights training	PN	Sukhumi	Sukhumi	Human Rights & Civic Society Foundation	Provision of information to children on HR principles and law and to assist the process of including HR into curricula.
30	2001	Children's record studio	PN	Sukhumi	Sukhumi	New World	The creation of a record studio for children 6-10 years old. To learn about Abkhaz songs, pop and folk art.
31	2001	Training on Conflict Management skills for journalists	PN	Lechkhumi	Sukhumi	UFSJPG	The project intended to provide journalists with conflict resolution and human rights skills through boosting intensive discussions concerning role of free media in Georgia

32	2001	Creation of art studio	PN	Tkvarcheli	Tkvarcheli	Youth Initiative of Tkvarchali	Art studio for children. Provision of equipment etc. for art classes 6-12 year old. multi-ethnic participation
33	2002	Small business training for children	PN	Sukhumi	Sukhumi	AWA	Training orphan youth in boarding school on basics of running small businesses so as to assist them plan and establish their own businesses.
34	2002	Women's conference	PN	Sukhumi	Sukhumi	AWA	To draw government attention towards the situation of women in Abkhazia. The conference produced qualitative and quantitative material on gender issues and publication 'Women in Modern Abkhazia'
35	2002	Doll collection	PN	Sukhumi	Sukhumi	CHP	To revive the Abkhaz culture of dolls by collecting dolls from 1900-2000. Collection and restoration of dolls and mounting of exhibition.
36	2002	Creation of library	PN	Gudauta	Gudauta	Gudauta Youth House	Rehabilitation of premises under museum, registering and equipping premises.
37	2002	Humanitarian assistance	PN	Sukhumi	Sukhumi	Hand of Mercy	To assist 20 disabled children from vulnerable families in Sukhumi with medical assistance of various kinds and food.
38	2002	School roof repair	PN	Sukhumi	Sukhumi	Initiative group- parents	Repair of roof, rehabilitation of heating and sanitation to assist 200 pupils in a music school.
39	2002	Puppet theatre	PN	Sukhumi	Sukhumi	SYH	Establishment of the first puppet theatre for children in Abkhazia.

40	2002	Provision of computer classes	PN	Gulripshi	Gulripshi	Youth Association of Gulripshi	Computer training for young people in Gulripshi.
41	2002	Computer classes at YAG	PN	Agudzera	Gulripshi	Youth Association of Gulripshi	This 12-month project trained the youth of Gulripshi district in computer competency and assisted them in acquiring professional skills in working with a computer.
42	2003	Computer & English courses for NGO employees (Phase II)	JL	Sukhumi	Sukhumi	AIS	The goal of the project was to provide resource assistance and build the capacity of local NGOs in Abkhazia. The objectives were: to conduct three-month computer courses in two groups; to conduct six one-day training on using Internet services; and to conduct three-month English language courses in two groups.
43	2003	Computer & English language training for local NGOs	JL	Sukhumi	Sukhumi	AIS	The goal of this project was to provide resource assistance and build the capacity of local NGOs in Abkhazia in computer and Internet usage and English language. 12 employees of NGOs were trained in basic computer usage, 36 people in Internet service and 20 people in the English language. In the second phase, 24 employees of NGOs were trained in computer usage, 12 people from regional NGOs received training in Internet usage, and 20 people continued English language courses.
44	2003	Conflict in our life	JL	Sukhumi	Sukhumi	AWA	The goal of the project is to assist women in understanding the nature of conflict and to provide basic knowledge and skills about conflict management and resolution during a two-day training in Sukhumi.
45	2003	NGO week - raising awareness of NGO activities	JL	Sukhumi	Sukhumi	CHP	The goal of the project was to improve public opinion about local non-governmental organizations and encourage civil initiatives as well as to involve new activists in the work of the organizations. Out of 36 NGOs registered in Abkhazia, 26 organizations took part in the NGO Week exhibition.
46	2003	Publication of the 5th issue of the NGO bulletin "Perspective ^s "	JL	Sukhumi	Sukhumi	Civic Initiative Foundation	The goal of the project was to publish the 5th issue of the NGO bulletin, to improve public opinion about local non-governmental organizations, to encourage civil initiatives, as well as to involve new activists in the work of the organizations. The roundtable discussion at the end of the project provided a further forum for the discussion of the role that NGOs play in the development of society.
47	2003	Mediation training for Gagra and surroundings	JL	Gagra region	Gagra	Civil Society Development Center	The goal was to improve mutual understanding in Abkhazian schools. First, 20 youth and teachers received training in conflict transformation and intermediate mediation skills and then they provided training to 150 youth in basic conflict resolution and mediation skills. In the second phase, the same 20 participants received advanced training in mediation and then in turn trained the same 150 youth in advanced mediation skills.

48	2003	Training in mediation for youth, 2nd phase	JL	Gagra	Gagra	Civil Society Development Center	The goal of this project was to improve mutual understanding and the peaceful resolution of conflicts in schools in Abkhazia. The objectives of the project were: to train six teachers and 12 youth from six schools to teach conflict transformation and basic mediation skills in their respective schools and to train 150 youth from six schools to use basic conflict transformation and mediation skills.
49	2003	New generation for civil society	JL	Gali	Gali	Gali Youth Center "Lazer"	The goal of the project was to carry out educational and cognitive programs that would raise the level of legal competence of young people in Gali. Classes on Conflict Resolution/Human Rights and Social Science were taught at the Youth Center "Lazer" in Gali. Seminars were also taught in 3 village schools in the Gali region for schoolchildren and representatives of the community.
50	2003	Conflict transformation and civil society development	JL	Ochamchira	Ochamchira	Ochamchira Youth House	The goal of the project was to foster an enabling environment for the conflict settlement through training on conflict resolution, civil Society and human rights. During the project 45 youth were trained in conflict resolution, civic education and human rights over the course of two months.
51	2003	Joint summer camp: Gali, Tkvarcheli, Ochamchira	JL	Ochamchira	Ochamchira	Ochamchira Youth House	During the 3-week summer camp in the village of Kindgi, youth from Tkvarchali, Gali, and Ochamchira will gain more knowledge in conflict resolution and mediation.
52	2003	Training for women in small business	JL	Sukhumi	Sukhumi	UBA	The goal of the project was to improve the level of small business development among women in Abkhazia through the training of women in marketing, management, accounting and legal issues and through providing consultative support to women in the sphere of small business development. The participants of the project were from Gali, Ochamchira, Tkvarcheli, Sukhumi, Gudauta, Gagra, and Novy Aphon.
53	2003	Fruit and vegetable farm	JL	Gudauta region	Gudauta	Union of Defenders of Abkhazia	The goal of the project was to reduce the economic suffering of selected families in Gudauta region and to provide youth with practical skills for their future. Specifically, the project trained 20 youth in the practical aspects of setting up a fruit and vegetable farm.
54	2003	Home Caretaker	JL	Sukhumi	Sukhumi	Union of Sisters of Mercy	The goal of the project was to improve the level of childcare in Sukhumi through training and development of unemployed former nurses and social workers. The objectives of the project were to develop a manual during the first month of the project and to train 20 women to work with children in the home through the use of the newly created manual and through classes and practical work.
55	2003	Ill youth Dialogue in Crimea	?	Sevastopol, Ukraine		UNV (as umbrella for NGOs)	40 students from Georgia proper, Abkhazia, South Ossetia, Armenia, Azerbaijan and the Crimea participated in 2-week training and peace dialogue. Trainers – representatives of Crimean NGO "Council of Teachers", topics – civic education, volunteerism, conflict resolution,

56	2003	TV studio at Gulripshi youth association	JL	Gulripshi	Gulripshi	Youth Association of Gulripshi	The goal of this project was to improve the population's access to information in the Gulripshi region through the establishment of a youth-based TV studio. More specifically, the project was intended to bring youth together for joint development of initiatives and the realization of different programs and activities and to foster information distribution and develop the creative and intellectual abilities of youth.
57	2003	Conflict resolution on TV	JL	Tkvarcheli	Tkvarcheli	Youth Initiative of Tkvarchali	The goal of this program was to increase knowledge about conflict resolution and human rights in the Tkvarcheli region. Two films on Conflict Resolution and Human Rights were produced and later shown on local Tkvarcheli TV. The films were devoted to different types of interpersonal conflicts (family, interpersonal, national and etc.).
58	2003	Life without conflicts	JL	Tkvarcheli	Tkvarcheli	Youth Initiative of Tkvarcheli	The goal of the program is to foster an enabling environment and to increase the foundation of knowledge about conflict resolution in the Tkvarcheli region. The objective was to increase knowledge on Conflict resolution and Human Rights by the production and broadcast of two films on Conflict Resolution and Human Rights on local Tkvarcheli TV.
59	2004	Computer trainings for Abkhaz NGOs	JL	Sukhumi	Sukhumi	AIS	Provision of a 3 month beginners computer course; 15 one trainings on Microsoft; 1 month course for experts on Excel; 1 month course for bookkeepers
60	2004	English Courses For NGOs Employees	JL	Sukhumi	Sukhumi	AWA	The goal of this 8-month project is to improve the capacity of local NGOs to communicate with the international community. The direct beneficiaries of the project are 27 people from nine local NGOs. The courses are comprised of two groups: an advanced group (10) and an intermediate group (17).
61	2004	Development of staff in Gali NGOs	JL	Gali	Gali	CEAWGD	To build capacity in Gali-based NGOs through training in English language (6 months), NGO development (6 months) for 32 people, production of 6 small grant proposals and 4 joint projects.
62	2004	Promotion of knowledge and techniques of Conflict resolution	JL	Sukhumi	Sukhumi	Civil Society Development Center	The project aimed to provide refresher information on conflict prevention techniques by means of producing and broadcasting a scripted film
63	2004	Establishing of small laundry in Novy Aphon	JL	Novy Aphon	Gudauta	Novy Aphon Children Center	The goal of this 7 month project funded is to establish a small income-generating laundry in Novy Aphon, which serves the population of the town and whose profit would be able to support the Youth Centre's activity.

64	2004	Teaching English and Computer Competence	JL	Ochamchira	Ochamchira	Ochamchira Youth House	The project goal is to assist initiative groups and local NGOs from Ochamchira town and three villages to obtain basic computer skills and English language for their future development. 16 participants will be trained in a beginner computer course featuring Microsoft Windows and Word and 16 participants will be trained in a 4-week computer course in Excel. 20 participants will be trained in English for beginners.
65	2004	Lectures on historical geography	JL	Sukhumi & Tbilisi	Sukhumi	Professor Anchabadze	To assist the Abkhaz State University improve historical teaching and to assist SYH to provide additional information about Abkhazia, Georgia and the Caucasus
66	2004	Perspective on peaceful co-existence in Abkhazia	JL	7 regions in Abkhazia	7 regions in Abkhazia	SYH	A 3 day workshop for 42 young people from the 7 regions of Abkhazia with the aim of creating a model for common understanding and the peaceful co-existence of ethnic groups in Abkhazia.
67	2004	Development of long-term NGO sustainability	JL	Gali	Gali	SYH	6 month project to support democratization and social reintegration in Abkhazia through empowerment of NGOs through providing them with new skills and planning capacity. 75 people attended seminars. Project in two phases.
68	2004	Support for small business initiatives in SE Abkhazia	JL	4 regions of Abkhazia	4 regions of Abkhazia	UBA	To train trainers who will provide training key business people and to establish resource centers in each region; to hold a competition and award small grants for 4-6 business ventures. The trainings took places in Sukhumi, Gali, Tkvarcheli, and Ochamchira.
69	2004	IY Peace dialogue of youth	?	Kislovodsk, Russia		UNV	36 youth from Georgia proper, Abkhazia, South Ossetia and Russia participated in 10 days peace dialogue and training. Trainers – Crimean Council of Teachers, Interregional Center "Friendship- North Caucasus, Sukhumi Youth House, IDP, Women Association, UNV, South Ossetian NGO Resource Center. Topics – conflictology, negotiations, human rights, gender
70	2004	Studio of Audio and Video Recording	JL	Agudzera	Gulripshi	Youth Association of Gulripshi	The goal of this 3-month project was to improve the population's access to information in the Gulripshi region through the establishment of a youth-based TV studio. More specifically, the project was intended to bring youth together for joint development of initiatives and activities, to foster information distribution, and to develop the creative and intellectual abilities of youth.
71	1996- to date	Children's Magazine	?	Georgia including Abkhazia		UNV	The "White Crane" magazine has been distributed in Abkhazia since January 1996, initially by CHP then through schools. Funding from UNV source was only for 6 months in 2002-2003

72	1997-2002	Summer peace camps	?	Bulgaria	UNV/IDPWA/CHP/ PCA (Tskhinvali)	The 1999 and 2000 camps included participation children from Georgia, Abkhazia, Ossetia, Armenia, Azerbaijan and The Crimea. Funding from various sources (2002 - financed from UNV contribution)
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MS = Martin Schumer
AS = Amy Stafford
PN – Pollock Ndonodji
JL = John Lewis

AIS = Rehabilitation Centre for Disabled People
AWA = Association of Women of Abkhazia
CEAWGD = Cultural-Education Association of Women in Gali District
CHP = Centre for Humanitarian Programmes
PCA = Palace of Children’s Art
SYH = Sukhumi Youth House
UBA = Union of Businesswomen of Abkhazia
UFSJPG = Union of French Speaking Journalists and Press of Georgia