

**CARITAS GEORGIA
ANNUAL REPORT 2014**

YOUTH WORK

1. STREET CHILDREN

- a) **Mobile groups**, consisting of a social worker, a psychologist, a peer educator and a driver work with children right on the street where they gather/work/live (Tbilisi). The goal of the mobile work is to identify street children, earn their trust and establish a contact with them with further purpose of redirecting them to the Daycare Center or/and other long-term childcare services.
- b) The **Day Care Centre/Crisis Intervention Shelter** (Tbilisi) assesses street children redirected by the Mobile Groups and offers them psychological and medical assistance, formal and informal education with the purpose of their gradual enrollment in childcare services and settlement in long-term alternative services.
- c) The **Transit Center** (Rustavi) offers 24-hour rehabilitation, medical and educational service to street children to prepare them for long-term care (reintegration with the biological family or settling in foster families or small-group houses).

During the year of 2014, **314 street children** received assistance by Caritas Georgia.

2. **SMALL-GROUP HOMES** serve children (6-18) left without parental care and under State Care offering a 24-hour service in a family-type environment. Caritas Georgia manages 6 small-group homes (5 in Tbilisi, 1 in the village of Martkopi). In each house, live up to 10 children, with the exception of Martkopi that hosts less children as they are all affected by different types of disabilities.

3. **DAY CARE CENTRES** offer to children (6-18) from families living below the poverty lines additional education, school support and vocational trainings combined with psychological support. Caritas Georgia manages day care centers in Tbilisi (150 beneficiaries), Kutaisi (110 beneficiaries) and Arali-Samtshe-Javakheti (90 beneficiaries).

HIGHLIGHT: ADVOCACY

Since 2007, Caritas Georgia advocates with local authorities for the improvement of childcare services and participates in different working groups for the development of national policies. Daycare Centres in Tbilisi and Kutaisi are financially supported by the Georgian State through the voucher system. The small-group homes are also funded through voucher system up to 67-70% of the total costs. Since 2014, the services for street children started getting financial support from the State¹.

HIGHLIGHT: VOLUNTEERISM

Youth projects benefited from the volunteer work also in 2014. 2 volunteers supported the work of small-group-houses with preparation of meals, teaching activities and organization of different cultural and recreational events. A total of 35 local and foreign volunteers have also been responsible for animating an international summer camp for the beneficiaries of the Youth Centre in Kutaisi in August 2014. The work with street children was also enriched by the work of volunteers: in 2014, around 40 volunteers carried out supporting activities like distribution of informational material, participation in radio and TV programs, organization of recreational activities for beneficiaries, awareness-raising about the work of Caritas Georgia with street children.

THE WAY FORWARD: 2015

It is planned to start youth activities in the village of Eshtia, Bavra, Tsinubani and Vale.

¹ Within the "Social Rehabilitation and Childcare Program 2014".

HEALTH AND SOCIAL WORK

1. PRIMARY HEALTH

- a) The **Primary Healthcare Centers (Tbilisi, Kutaisi)** provide medical care that is not stipulated by the State-funded insurance programs. In 2014, we assisted 2.424 patients. Beneficiaries have access to free medical consultations, examinations and medicine.
- b) **Medical dispensaries** of Samtskhe-Javakheti Region (Khizabavra, Naokhrebi, Arali, Ude and Vale) provided medical service and medicines to 600 patients. In October 2014, Caritas Georgia, in cooperation with Ninotsminda Municipality, opened a new medical dispensary in the high mountain village of Tambovka.
- c) The **Mobile Medical Groups** perform medical examination of the population of the remote mountain villages for the early diagnosis of diseases. In 2014, 2 visits were carried out in the villages of Vale and Khizabavra of Samtskhe-Javakheti Region, 274 patients were examined and received medicine.
- d) **Tbilisi Rehabilitation Center** provided assistance to 184 patients in 2014. The services are provided at the Center as well as at the places of residence of patients.

2. The **HOME CARE** project provides medical, social and psychological services to the bedridden persons and people with limited abilities in several cities and town of Georgia (Tbilisi-396 beneficiaries, Kutaisi-96, Rustavi-63, Ozurgeti-64, Gori-200). Beside service delivery, Caritas Georgia has also made the training of medical students and nurses a top priority and delivers now high quality formations (in 2014, 250 students and 60 nurses were trained).

3. Other **SOCIALLY UNPROTECTED CATEGORIES** can benefit of:

- a) The **soup-kitchens** have continued their work in Tbilisi, serving a total of 194 beneficiaries, and in Kutaisi, serving 40 beneficiaries (till May 31). In Kutaisi and Ozurgheti it is active a service of food package delivery for persons living below the poverty line (respectively 35 and 25 beneficiaries).
- b) **Day Care Center "Harmony"** (Tbilisi). It provides daily care to 35 lonely elderly persons. It offers the opportunity to spend quality time and receive both mental and social stimulation. The service includes hot meals along with an afternoon snack.
- c) **Shelter for homeless people** (Batumi) offers emergency shelter and meals to 28-30 homeless persons. It offers counseling and legal support as shower and laundry service.
- d) **Shelter "House of Hope"** (Khelvachauri) provides counseling to 6 adults suffering from drug or alcohol addictions giving them the chance of rehabilitation through work therapy.

HIGHLIGHT: ADVOCACY

As the objective of the Home Care project is the integration of home care services into the healthcare system of Georgia, Caritas Georgia initiated the creation of a working group for the development of Home Care Service Standards with participation of the Ministry of Health and NGOs working in the sector of care services. In collaboration with the Ministry of Education, Caritas Georgia has developed Home Care standard syllabus for the education of nurses countrywide. Moreover, advocacy efforts have been done to get the project co-funded in Tbilisi and Kutaisi by the respective Municipalities.

HIGHLIGHT: VOLUNTEERISM

In 2014, 21 volunteers have been involved in the Home Care project in Tbilisi carrying out a total of 615 visits and performing a total of 872 activities such as distribution of medicines, shopping for patients, etc. Volunteers also received trainings in home care skills. Moreover, a foreign volunteer supported the social work of the social projects in Western Georgia on a long-term basis.

THE WAY FORWARD: 2015

It is planned to strengthen the advocacy and lobbying work in the sphere of primary health care and to start Training of Trainers for nurses in Kutaisi and Ozurgheti.

SOCIO-PASTORAL WORK

1. Formative work with **PARISH CARITAS GROUPS (PCG)**. Each meeting had its theme, related to Church Social Teaching and was aimed at animating the parishioners in their charity work. In 2014, 3 formative meetings took place. Up to 15 persons attended each meeting, from 3 Tbilisi parishes and 1 Gori parish.
2. **ACTIVITIES WITH VOLUNTEERS:**
 - a) From January to April 2014 and in December 2014, the Socio-Pastoral Program organized volunteers for the action **"Soup for the homeless"**. Volunteers prepared hot meals and distributed to homeless people at the main Station Square of Tbilisi. Each day (3 days a week) volunteers distributed food for 40 homeless persons.
 - b) The **Clothes Distribution Point** has continued its work during 2014 with 4 to 5 volunteers working twice a week for a few hours. Each day, clothes were given away to up to 20 beneficiaries. At least one foreign volunteer is involved in the activities supporting local volunteers. Beneficiaries receive clothes thanks to a "point system" developed by Caritas Georgia and based on their financial, material and social resources.
 - c) **Promotion of volunteerism** was also pursued this year through formative meetings (often held before volunteer summer camps) and the development of the Volunteers Center in Caritas Georgia (and its inclusion in the Voluntary Centers Network).
 - d) Several **summer camps** were organized in 2014 in Khizabavra (Samtskhe-Javakheti), Khizabavra (Kakheti), Kutaisi and Tbilisi. The camps were animated by local volunteers together with foreign volunteers for a period between 7 to 30 days and benefited children from unprivileged families.
 - e) At the end of every Pastoral year a **Voluntary Forum** is held. All the volunteers who participated in any voluntary activity during the year can take part in the Forum. At the Forum, volunteers share their work experience, discuss problems they faced during the year and make plans for the following year. 32 volunteers participated in the Forum 2014, from Georgia, Italy and Poland.
3. **FORMATION FOR NATIONAL CARITAS STAFF.** 7 meetings were held in 2014 with the aim of developing the spiritual and inspirational side of the charitable work of Caritas employees. Each meeting lasted 3 days and had its theme. Themes of the meetings were: "Faith and Labor", "Hope and Wealth", "Charity and Development". Meetings included: lectures, Biblical inspirations, working groups, presentations. 20 to 27 Caritas employees participated in each meeting.
4. Other activities included a **"Tour guides courses"** project for youth from 18 to 28 years old (Tbilisi) and a **"Sewing and knitting classes"** project for unprivileged girls and women, often with IDP status (Gori).

DEVELOPMENT AND EMERGENCY WORK

1. The 3-year project **“People with Disabilities: Natural and Respected Group of Society”** was finalized in December 2014. The project was financed by Czech Development Cooperation and implemented by Caritas Czech Republic in partnership with Caritas Georgia, Coalition for Independent Living/CIL and Georgian Association of Social Workers/GASW. The goal of the project was to reduce discrimination and social exclusion of people with disabilities and to contribute to their social integration through their active involvement in the working life. All the adult people with disabilities living in Georgia are potential beneficiaries of this project as they might benefit from improved laws.
2. In November 2014, the 3-year project **“Vocational Studies of Youth at Caritas Georgia Carpentry Workshop”** was launched thanks to the support of Autonomous Province of Trento (Italy) and the cooperation of the Community College “Mermisi” (Tbilisi). The initiative ensures vocational education to 9 young persons from vulnerable families (from Kutaisi, Akhaltsikhe, Kaspi and Tbilisi) and gives the opportunity of a stable future income for them and their families.
3. The project **“Re-integration of Voluntary Returnees from Belgium and The Netherlands”** has continued in 2014 as in previous years in partnership with Caritas Belgium and the Dutch organization “Maatwerk” supported by the “European Union Return Fund” and the State Agencies for Asylum Seekers of Belgium and The Netherlands. The project offers material support to Georgian migrants who decide to come back to Georgia voluntarily. In 2014, there have been 32 cases from Belgium (37 persons) and 3 cases from the Netherlands (7 persons).
4. In 2014, Caritas Georgia has received kind support from Caritas Austria in the frame of the Caritas Europa **“Caritas Development Fund”**. This year has been a preparatory phase for the 3-year application that Caritas Georgia has developed to support the Organization Development Plan for the years 2015-2016-2017. In these regards, the most important activity of 2014 was the 2-day self-assessment session that has been the first concrete step for the elaboration of the Organization Development Plan of Caritas Georgia.
5. In the frame of Caritas Georgia’s Emergency Program, the project **“Disaster Risk Reduction – a way to sustainable development in Georgia”** was launched in September 2014 with the support of the Development Cooperation Agency of Ministry of External Affairs of Romania and in cooperation with Confederation Caritas Romania. The main goal of the project is to make rural communities in Southern Georgia resilient to natural disasters caused by climate changes and to reduce the negative impact these disasters impose on the human and economic development of these communities.

HIGHLIGHT: ADVOCACY

The main outcome of the project “People with disabilities” was the elaboration of the “Strategy and Action Plan on Employment of Persons with Disabilities” aiming at promoting the employment of persons with disabilities. This Strategy was presented to the Government and different Committees at the Parliament of Georgia with the aim of proposing amendments to existing laws. In these regards, there is a follow-up on-going with the authorities on the possible changes in the legislation.

HIGHLIGHT: VOLUNTEERISM

The project “People with Disabilities” has made use of the good will and experience of about 15 volunteers, studying to become social workers, who have supported the work of social workers in backing up the beneficiaries (PWDs) before and during their work placement.

THE WAY FORWARD: 2015

It is planned to start the project **“Caritas Development Plan”** (2015-2016-2017).