



October 29, 2009

## Final Report on CDI-implemented project completion

**Project title: Democracy Development in Georgia: Cooperation of Civic Society and Media**

**Supporting Foundation : National Endowment for Democracy**

**NED Grant N: 2009-140.0**

### *Introductory note:*

Civic Development Institute has implemented the project “**Democracy Development in Georgia: Cooperation of Civic Society and Media**” with the support of American foundation “National Endowment for Democracy” (NED).

The purpose of the project was to establish a network of local NGOs working on Human Rights and civic development issues.

The project should have produced the two core results:

- a. create an informal network of NGOs and test its effectiveness.
- b. create the CDI web-portal that allows to collect basic information about two - regional media and NGOs networks and permanently renew it in compliance with incoming new information;

### *Brief overview of the activities done:*

During the six months of the project’s implementation the NGOs network was created.

The programmatic and implementation stages contributing to establishment of the NGOs network are described in details in our two interim reports that have been previously introduced to NED.

The principal stages in this regard have been:

1. researching of NGOs functioning in the regions (due to absence of reliable and updated database there has been a complete lack of information on the Non-State-Actors based and working in the regions);
2. exchange of information, meetings, finding out the common points and shared values and establishment of the collaborative ties with following development of the collaborative frame;
3. coordination workshops in terms of consolidation of NGOs network and figuring out the collaborative cohesion platform(s).



There have been two successive coordination workshops (in Tbilisi and in borough Shekvetili) held by CDI in summer of the current year. The first workshop in Tbilisi has been the decisive event in terms of final consolidating the NGOs network, for all NGOs CDI established the collaborative bridges with, have been brought together and the common denominators for collaborative cohesion have been figured out.

The following, second workshop in Shekvetili served coping of NGO and Media networks and in this way, establishing a comprehensive countrywide frame for enabling the coordinated action of NGOs and media; in this regard it is important that the NGOs and media-outlets involved into CDI coordinated network are simultaneously working on the same issues in their respective regions and coordinating their efforts (so, the NGO expertise and knowledge as well as the civic tools are getting multiplied through the local media space). The CDI web portal is a tool for getting the information on the activities of the same profile that take place in other regions; in this way, there is a countrywide informational exchange and coordination basis provided for.

In order to raise effectiveness of the newly created network and for cementing the cooperation between the NGOs and media outlets it has been decided to hold a simultaneous action in ten different cities of Georgia with participation of NGOs and Media. The action was thought out as campaign in support of elections as a development driving force that has no alternative.

***The 9<sup>th</sup> October campaign constituted by the simultaneously carried out actions in ten towns throughout Georgia***

The action was held on 9-th of October at 12 AM simultaneously in ten cities:

- ✓ Dedoplistskaro,
- ✓ Lagodekhi,
- ✓ Rustavi,
- ✓ Gori,
- ✓ Akhaltsikhe,
- ✓ Kutaisi,
- ✓ Ozurgeti,
- ✓ Batumi,
- ✓ Poti,
- ✓ Zugdidi.



Organizers of the actions were the local NGOs; the actions were tele/broadcasted by the local media outlets in each city; simultaneously the printed media outlets in respective regions reported on the actions. In addition the two TV companies of national coverage (“Georgian Public Broadcaster” and “Rustavi- 2”) telecasted the actions from 5 cities where both companies have the correspondents;

The content of the campaign included the following - participants of the action distributed original flyers – coasters made exclusively for this action. One side of the flyer held the map of Georgia and 2 slogans: 1. “We Choose Election!”

and

2. No- war! Enough of revolution! Election! – What Else?!;

on the other side of the flyer was placed the information on the aim of campaign, its organizers and supporter foundation – NED (please refer to the photographs attached, at the end of Georgia text you will find “NED” in Latin) .

There were 2000 flyers all together, for each city 200 flyers have been provided for; 10 action participants were distributing the flyers in each city the action was held in; each of distributors was wearing the special uniform with a slogan inscript - “We Choose Election”. The uniforms used in course of this action can be re-used during the elections, for they have been transmitted to the local NGOs, that carried out the action in place.

The action was planned for the second half of September but delayed by 2 weeks, because of the late delivery of coasters. There has been an unexpected delay in transportation due to last weeks of Ramazan in Turkey - the coasters were produced in Turkey, because there are no producers of such article in Georgia; CDI strived to distribute the quality product in order to make people keep them and make them work during the next election rounds; that’s why we preferred to order them in Turkey instead of use the thin paper substitute produced locally.

There was a list of famous people (musicians, sports people, writers, scientists) and statesmen established in Shekvetili workshop in terms of proving their solidarity to the campaign by putting their signatures on the appeal in favour of elections. CDI took the responsibility to negotiate with them. Approximately the half of them confirmed the participation but another part was referring to their institutional background bound to their signatures, so that they have been deprived of the possibility to put their signatures without the institutional consent. Because the both pools of signatories were important and neglecting the institutionally impeded people was strategically not correct taking into account the future activities of the network, we gave up the signature option on the flyer on the basis of overall consensus met on this issue among the network members.



In all ten cities the action was held, the local municipal authorities and self-government were informed beforehand and explanatory meetings were carried out by the implementing Non-State-Actors (so, NGOs involved into the network). That's why in none of the places the campaign sized were observed any misunderstandings with the local authorities.

The epicentre of the action was thoroughly thought out in each town separately in order to identify the most efficient place in terms of rapid attraction of public's attention and intensive dissemination of information among the citizens.

In all towns the action started at 12 AM. The duration of action varied according to the number of people attracted and activity of local citizens.

***Actions in ten towns at glance:***

The organizer of the action in the **Rustavi** city was NGO - "Georgian Association of Educational Initiatives". There were preparatory meetings held before the action started. Youngsters were told about the content of the action and the meaning of election. The flyers distributed by participants at the action were kind of reminder for citizens that the election is the way of development that has no alternative. The action attracted attention of lot of locals and police; discussions about efficiency of election in the central park of the city were provoked. The action was transmitted by the local branch of national media outlets ("Rustavi 2" and "Georgian Public Broadcaster").

In **Dedoplistskaro** the action was organized by NGO "Pirosmani". Flyers were distributed in the bus station and in the market of the city. Those places are the most crowded by locals and function as an informal meeting and information gathering points. The action was transmitted by internet newspaper "Qiziki".

In **Lagodekhi** the action was organized by "Civic Development Association". The members of the association have an experience of holding this kind of campaigns. The action revitalized the city center that is near the bus/train station, is the most crowded place at any time of the day and functions as an informal meeting and information gathering point. The announcement about the action was made the day before by the radio "Hereti". The information was provided on the radio web-page as well.

In **Gori** the action was held by the "Center of Civic Education". The center is the coalition of three youth organizations and each of them has long and successful experience in civic education field. The action attracted attention of lots of citizens. The action was transmitted by two TV stations of national coverage ("Georgian Public Broadcaster" and "Rustavi-2", the local TV "Trialeti" and two local newspapers - "Voice of Kartli" and "People's Newspaper".

In **Akhaltzikhe** the action was held by "Society Development Center of Akhaltsikhe". They selected good-looking youngsters and explained them the meaning of the action. On the



action day they gathered by the monument of king Tamar (who was one of the greatest kings of Georgia and is called “king” despite of the fact that she was a woman; the area around her monument is a very popular public gathering place) and started flyer distribution. The action, that took about 40 minutes, created merrily and live atmosphere around participants. The action was transmitted by national TV station “Rustavi 2”, the local TV station “Lomsia” and the local newspaper “Southern Gate”.

In **Kutaisi**, which is the second biggest city in Georgia, the action was organized by two NGOs: “Generation’s Dialogue” and “Informational Center of Kutaisi”. The action was transmitted by “Rustavi 2”, “Georgian Public Broadcaster”, the local TV stations “Rioni” and “Mega TV”, by radio stations : “Old City” and “Kutaisi”, and by newspapers: “New Newspaper” and “P. S.”. Society of Kutaisi took all the activities very positively and expressed their solidarity to the campaign.

In **Ozurgeti** the action was organized by three NGOs “Young Teachers’ Union”, “Young Scientists’ Club” and “Union of Democratic development of Georgia”. The flyers were distributed in the city center. Locals have been inspired by the original form of campaign and embraced the idea of elections. The action was attended by local politicians too, among them were the members of political party-National Forum who do not plan to take part in the election. They tried to express their own alternative opinion about the election and had a chance to do so. The action was transmitted by the local newspaper “Guria News” and national newspaper “Rezonansi”.

In **Batumi** the action was organized by three NGOs: “Institute of Democracy”, “Free Journalists’ House”, and the union “Progress”. It took place in the city center, in front of the Adjara supreme council. It caught the interest of member of supreme council as well as many other citizens of the town. Batumians welcomed the slogan that an election is the only way for a stable development of the country. The action was transmitted by three TV stations: “TV Adjara” (that, despite its Adjarian backgournd, broadcasts throughout Georgia and has a national coverage), regional TV station ’25-th Chanel” and national TV “Rustavi 2”.

In **Poti** action was organized by the NGO “Research Center for Protection of Human Rights and Social Justice”. The organizers gathered youth and explained the importance and role of the election for the country to them. The action in Poti was reported in the the local regional newspaper “Free Word”.

In **Zugdidi** the action was organized by two NGOs - Association “Imedi” and “Institute of Legal Protection”. The action was held in the most crowded part of the city –city center. The youngsters wearing special uniform immediately caught the attention of locals who actively interacted with them, asking questions about the aim of the action, whether it had political meaning, who was the organiser and so on. Their attitude towards the action was absolutely



positive. One could here word like “It’s exactly what we want”; “God bless you guys”. The transmission about the action was prepared by local radio station “Atinati”. It was also transmitted by the local representative of the national TV channel “Rustavi 2”. Some of the attendees couldn’t get the flyer because of the limited number of it and were unhappy.

***Summary of the results achieved in context of project’s objectives***

The CDI’s efforts supported by NED and aiming at

- a. finding the really functioning NGOs in the regions of Georgia;
- b. establishing the contacts with them;
- c. connecting the regional NGOs with local media outlets;
- d. creating the informal network;
- e. planning joint actions,

were successful and resulted in the campaign constituted by the action “We Choose Election” simultaneously carried out in ten cities of Georgia on 9<sup>th</sup> of October, 2009.

At present programmatic stage there is a joint collaborative network in place that is constituted by:

- a. network of development oriented regional NGOs  
and
- b. network of regional Media .

The CDI web-portal that “ties together” information and people from the two NGO and media networks contributes further to the sustainability and workability of the collaborative network constituted by both networks and simultaneously to the efficient work of each of them.

***Little bit more on CDI WEB-portal:***

As we mentioned above, one of the results of the project is creation of the web-portal. The web-portal ([www.cdi.org.ge](http://www.cdi.org.ge)) is designed for reflecting the materials, aired by the regional media and collected by the NGOs, planning and implementing the common activities for addressing the most important issues challenging to democracy and human rights in Georgia. The web-site was designed to empower representatives of civil society and media to cooperate in terms of informing each other and populace of Georgia about the issues of democracy development and socio-political life in Georgia and promote the liberal values. Thus, develop stronger civil society and media, support protection of human rights and other core democratic values in Georgia. Main principles include:

- ✓ transparency of information,
- ✓ providing neutral, reliable and trustworthy facts  
and
- ✓ high quality services.



The web-portal content was created by members of two networks - regional media and NGO-s (that were created under this project, for detailed information please refer to pp.1,2), therefore it completely meets the objectives and purpose set by CDI as well as prospective plans of our organization (please refer to next page below).

The CDI web-portal will serve as the source of alternative information, space for cooperation and exchange of information among and inside the regions and among regions and capital of Georgia, strengthen the regional NGO-s and media, spread their activities nationwide, address concrete problems of human rights and democracy development by joint effort of regional NGOs and media outlets.

In addition, offering opportunity to internet users from the entire Georgia to receive the information about the regional media publications, through placing pdf-files of regional newspapers on one web-site is the beneficial option there.

The information provided by regional Media and NGOs is divided into two categories – facts aired by the journalists and provided by the representatives of NGO-s and editorials;

The web-portal also contains important data-bases.

Data-bases of regional Media Outlets and NGOs are accessible for everyone via the web-portal. During the recent years it is the first attempt in Georgia to furnish a database on really functioning NGOs; therefore it is really helpful and useful data, especially taking into account the obvious need for this information, including the interest of international organizations openly expressed before. In this regard, the information the CDI WEB contains is of crucial importance not only in narrow country dimension but also in terms of supra-regional data.

CDI has also obtained the forum license and soon, anyone will be able to join the discussion forum on actual and urgent issues in our country.

The main language of the web-site is Georgian; however, it has Russian and English versions, covering the most important information uploaded on the web. In this way the CDI Web is accessible to representatives of all ethnic groups in Georgia as well as South Caucasian citizens and those ones of the supra-region.

The WEB-portal is starting up gradually though some parts of it are still under the construction.

CDI expands its work in the regions and came to the point to open four regional offices in the two regional centers in Eastern Georgia and other two in Western Georgia; the following locations are provided for: Telavi (East Georgia), Gori (East Georgia), Kutaisi



(West Georgia), Batumi (West Georgia). These offices will give us opportunity to strengthen NGOs' and media networks at cross-regional dimension, step up the coordination levers and plan and implement civil society projects really sizing the civil society through collaborative multicomponent network that will become a basement for development of state and civic awareness in the country.

We would like to express our deep gratitude to Foundation "National Endowment for Democracy" for the endowment of civic development. We hope our successful cooperation continues in future.

Ia Antadze

Chairperson of the board of Civic Development Institute

***Endnote***

The audiovisual materials reflecting how the 9<sup>th</sup> October campaign was carried out are enclosed into the CDI portfolio sent by the carrier service to NED.

Also, please find below the addresses of informational agencies, where is transmitted the action "We Choose Election"!

medianews.ge:

<http://www.medianews.ge/geo/news/51223.html>

P.S news.ge:

<http://www.psnews.info/php/newsshow.php?lang=geo&t=1&uid=356&page=1>

pirveli.com.ge:

[http://pirveli.com.ge/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=34636&Itemid=39](http://pirveli.com.ge/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=34636&Itemid=39)

expressnews.ge:

[http://expressnews.ge/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=6196:2009-10-09-06-08-05&catid=13:region&Itemid=18](http://expressnews.ge/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=6196:2009-10-09-06-08-05&catid=13:region&Itemid=18)

[http://expressnews.ge/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=6197:-10-----&catid=13:region&Itemid=18](http://expressnews.ge/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=6197:-10-----&catid=13:region&Itemid=18)

Regions.ge:

[http://www.regions.ge/18&newsid=2131&year=2009&position=news\\_hot](http://www.regions.ge/18&newsid=2131&year=2009&position=news_hot)

Boom.ge:

<http://news.boom.ge/geo/2/20091007/1237344/>

P.S.news.info:

<http://www.psnews.info/php/newsshow.php?lang=geo&t=1&uid=356&page=1>

**სამოქალაქო  
განვითარების  
ინსტიტუტი**



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Radio “Hereti”:

<http://www.heretifm.com/?fl=Y2FsZW5kYXIuMjAwOS4xMC44&p=MTUuMjU5OA==>

<http://www.heretifm.com/?fl=Y2FsZW5kYXIuMjAwOS4xMC45&p=MTUuMjYwNw==>