

EU4DIALOGUE-UNDP-GEO-00123336

B0550 - Georgia - Tbilisi

REPORTING PERIOD 2020- 2025

Narrative

Executive Summary

“EU4Dialogue: Support to Conflict Transformation in the South Caucasus and the Republic of Moldova” (hereinafter “EU4Dialogue” or “the Project”) was implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) as a joint initiative of the European Union (EU) and the United Nations (UN). It was funded by the European Neighbourhood Instrument under the aegis of the European Commission’s Directorate-General for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations (DG NEAR). It supported the EU’s role in conflict transformation and management.

The project was one of three components of the broader EU4Dialogue Programme, which was seeking to support conflict transformation in the Eastern Partnership (EaP) region. The initiative covered conflicts that afflict four of the six EaP countries: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, and the Republic of Moldova (although the latter was covered by other instruments and therefore Moldova was not prioritised here), as well as emergency response in Ukraine.

The overall goal of the project was to contribute to building a durable foundation for conflict transformation by creating better socio-economic conditions and improving human security for conflict-affected communities. The project directly engaged with communities in areas wherever this was possible, while also working in all four contexts with conflict-affected populations understood more broadly. This included refugees, internally displaced persons (IDPs), and other persons displaced by conflict; communities situated near contested borders and boundary lines; and (where warranted) conflict-affected societies at large. All activities were designed to drive progress toward gender equality, address the unique needs of all genders, and enhance the prospects of children, adolescents, and youth in all their diversity.

Background

Focusing primarily on Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia, as well as emergency response activities in Ukraine, the project sought to contribute to sustainable peace by improving socio-economic conditions and human security for conflict-affected populations. Through community-based initiatives, dialogue platforms, and resilience-building interventions, the project engaged displaced persons, communities living near conflict-affected areas, and other vulnerable groups. A cross-cutting emphasis was placed on gender equality, inclusion, and the meaningful participation of women, youth, and diverse community members in peacebuilding and development processes.

Key Results Achieved

Following Russia's invasion of Ukraine and based on a request from DGNEAR, UNDP began exploring possibilities to repurpose a portion of project funding to Ukraine. On 21 April 2022, the PSC agreed to a proposal presented by the UNDP Country Office in Ukraine to allocate funds to civil society organisations assisting displaced persons and frontline communities and to procure medical supplies. Over the implementation period, 38 grant agreements (GA) between UNDP and civil society organizations have been concluded and successfully implemented. Based on the reports provided by the Project grant partners, the project has improved human security and created better economic conditions for over 65,844 beneficiaries in conflict affected communities throughout Ukraine. Among those, 31,907 are women; 12,419 represent children and/or youth and 21,384 are internally displaced persons. The geography of the implemented initiatives covered 18 oblasts of Ukraine with special focus on the regions with the highest IDP density like Dnipro, Zakarpattia, Lviv, Khmelnytskyi, Poltava and territories under regained Ukrainian control such as Chernihiv, Kyiv, Sumy.

Around 2.5 million people have been reached indirectly through various components of the project, with nearly 55% being women. The project reached 262,671 direct beneficiaries (143,649 women) across the South Caucasus and Ukraine. 135 initiatives were awarded and successfully completed in the South Caucasus and Ukraine through the grant scheme, peer-to-peer exchanges, and the flexible facility. Through the grant scheme, the project has supported 93 civil society-led initiatives. The organizations have accomplished a wide range of local actions to address the needs of their communities. Through the establishment of youth centres, supporting the inclusion of vulnerable groups such as persons with disabilities, or providing young people with trainings in key marketable skills, the CSOs have helped conflict-affected people to improve their lives and thereby strengthen the resilience of conflict-affected communities. The project facilitated 486 trainings, workshops, seminars, round tables, and conferences across the South Caucasus through its various components. In total, 228 civil society organizations (140 of them women-led) from the South Caucasus and Ukraine benefited from capacity-building activities. The project also facilitated exchanges among activists, professionals, and experts across conflict divides. In total, five peer-to-peer exchanges were held, bringing together over 67 participants from across the region. The participants have not only exchanged and deepened their knowledge in their areas of interest but have also fostered genuine cooperation across conflict divides. The flexible facility, a fund to implement strategic initiatives that contribute towards conflict transformation, has successfully completed 20 initiatives. The results under the flexible facility include tangible improvements to the human security of the target population.

Key Challenges Encountered

In Armenia, the arrival of more than 115,000 individuals displaced from Nagorno-Karabakh in 2023 has increased demands on public services and local infrastructure across various parts of the country, including border regions. While significant efforts have been undertaken by national authorities and development partners to support affected populations, challenges related to livelihoods, social inclusion, and access to services continue to require attention, particularly in

rural areas. This context highlights the continued relevance of development initiatives that promote social cohesion, resilience, and inclusive community development.

In Georgia, the operating environment for civil society organizations has evolved following legislative changes introduced since 2024, including amendments affecting foreign-funded organizations and grant-related procedures. These developments have influenced the broader regulatory context in which civil society actors operate. While peacebuilding, dialogue, and community resilience activities continue to be implemented, ongoing attention to organizational capacity and institutional resilience remains important to support effective programme delivery and stakeholder engagement.

Project Risks and Issues

Risks associated with project implementation were regularly reviewed and monitored during the reporting period. No major issues or unforeseen developments affected the delivery of activities or achievement of expected results. Existing risks remained within acceptable levels and were adequately managed through ongoing coordination, monitoring, and mitigation efforts. As a result, project implementation progressed smoothly and in accordance with the approved work plan.

Lessons Learned

The completion of the project phase provided an opportunity to reflect on implementation experiences and identify lessons learned across programme delivery, partnerships, and stakeholder engagement. The knowledge gained has generated valuable insights into effective practices, adaptive approaches, and operational considerations. These lessons are being applied to ongoing and future programming to enhance the relevance, efficiency, and sustainability of interventions, while supporting continuous learning and improvement.

Conclusions and Way Forward

Building on the outcomes of this phase, a second phase of the EU4Dialogue project will build on the success stories and lessons learned from the current phase, with a continued focus on grant-making, community empowerment, regional cooperation, and cross-divide dialogue.

The next phase is expected to scale up effective approaches piloted under this project, such as participatory grant schemes, capacity-building for grassroots actors, and inclusive regional exchanges, while adapting to evolving political and operational dynamics in the region.