INTERIM NARRATIVE REPORT

Project "Air Quality for Better Citizen's Health"

EU Contract Number: NDICI-GEO-NEAR/2023/449-977

UNDP Project Number: 01001653

Reporting period: 1 October 2024 – 30-Sept-2025

Table of Contents

List of Acronyms

AAD	AMBIENT AIR DIVISION
AAQD	AMBIENT AIR QUALITY DIRECTIVES
AQ	AIR QUALITY
AQG	AIR QUALITY GUIDELINES
AQI	AIR QUALITY INDEX
BAT	BEST AVAILABLE TECHNIQUES
CBA	COST BENEFIT ANALYSIS
CO	COUNTRY OFFICE
EE	ENVIROMENT AND ENERGY
EIB	EUROPEAN INVESTMENT BANK
ELV	EMISSION LIMIT VALUES
EU	EUROPEAN UNION
EUD	EUROPEAN UNION DELEGATION
GCF	GREEN CLIMATE FUND
GEF	GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL FACILITY
GWP	GLOBAL WARMING POTENTIAL
HACT	HARMONIZED APPROACH TO CASH TRANSFER
IPPC	INTEGRATED POLLUTION PREVENTION AND CONTROL
LEPL	LEGAL ENTITIY OF PUBLIC LAW
LTLEDS	LONG-TERM LOW EMISSIONS DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES
MEPA	MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION AND AGRICULTURE OF GEORGIA
MIA	MINISTRY OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF GEORGIA
NCDC	NATIONAL CENTER FOR DISEASE CONTROL
NDC	NATIONALLY DETERMINED CONTRIBUTIONS
NEA,	NATIONAL ENVIROMENTAL AGENCY
NEAP	NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION PROGRAMME
NPD	NATIONAL PROJECT DIRECTOR
NRL	NATIONAL REFERENCE LABORATORY
PB	PROJECT BOARD
PMU	PROJECT MANAGEMENT UNIT
PSC	PROJECT STEERING COMMITTEE
UBA	UMWELTBUNDESAMT - ENVIRONMENT AGENCY AUSTRIA
UNDP	UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME
UNECE	UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE
UNEP	UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME
WHO	WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

1/ Project Description

1.1. Name of Coordinator of the grant contract: Giorgi Devidze, Project Manager

1.2. Name and title of the Contact person: Giorgi Devidze, Project Manager

1.3. Name of Beneficiary(ies) and affiliated entity(ies) in the Action: Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, National Environmental Agency, line ministries, State Representatives (Governors), Municipalities, environmental NGOs, industries and, general public.

1.4. Title of the Action: "Air Quality for Better Citizen's Health"

1.5. Contract number: NDICI-GEO-NEAR/2023/449-977

1.6. Start date and end date of the reporting period: 1 October 2024 – 30 September, 2025

1.7. Start date and end date of the project: 8 December, 2023 to 7 December 2027

1.8. Target country: Georgia.

1.9. Final beneficiaries &/or target groups[1] (if different) (including numbers of women and men): state and local government institutions, businesses, community groups and general population.

1.10/ Total Budget: € 4,087,800 (o/w EU: €4,000,000, UNDP: € 87,800)

1.11/ EU Instalments received: € 610,461.44 and € 3,237,772.00 ,
In Total: € 3,848,233.44

1.12/ EU Instalments delivered as of 30 Sept 2025:

Expenses –€542,748.13

Legal commitments: 1,816,806.50

In Total €2,359,554.63

[1] "Target groups" are the groups/entities who will be directly positively affected by the project at the Project Purpose level, and "final beneficiaries" are those who will benefit from the project in the long term at the level of the society or sector at large.

2/ Executive Summary

During the reporting period (October 2024 – September 2025), the project made significant strides toward its overarching goal of improving air quality (AQ) and public health in Georgia. Key administrative and technical milestones were achieved, laying a strong foundation for full-scale implementation.

- Output 1 - The project advanced preparations for strengthening national capacities, infrastructure, and tools for air quality (AQ) monitoring, modelling, forecasting, and data management. Procurement for new AQ monitoring stations was finalized in July 2025, with installation scheduled for January and June 2026. A joint technical mission with UBA and GeoSphere Austria in March 2025 defined the national AQ modelling framework and informed plans for network expansion. The World Health Organization (WHO), supported by the National Centre for Disease Control and Public Health (NCDC), delivered capacity-building workshops in February 2025 for 25 specialists from public health and environmental institutions, focusing on health impact assessment tools (AirQ+, CLIMAQ-H) adapted to Georgia's context. WHO also prepared a comprehensive situation analysis to guide tool adaptation. A feasibility study by UBA identified the most suitable AQ modelling and forecasting tools for national use. While modelling software procurement and related trainings are planned for the next phase, groundwork is complete. Preparations for establishing a National Reference Laboratory (NRL) progressed through technical support to MEPA/NEA, though construction, equipping, and accreditation remain future steps. Public awareness foundations were strengthened through completion of a nationwide Behavioural and Cultural Insights study, providing the first evidence base on perceptions and behaviours related to air quality.

- Output 2 - The project initiated consultations with WHO and UNECE to develop a tailored gender equality and social inclusion (GESI) framework, checklist, and toolkit for AQ and environmental health. Major activities—including framework development, piloting, and training—are scheduled for 2026. Current efforts focused on positioning national institutions for future integration of GESI tools and preparation of training materials addressing environmental health dimensions of gender and social inclusion.

- Output 3 - The enabling environment for regulating industrial emissions was strengthened through technical assistance for legislative alignment with the EU Industrial Emissions Directive. UNDP completed a detailed comparative assessment of Georgian draft regulations, providing actionable recommendations for harmonization with BAT standards. UNECE initiated feasibility and incentive studies for BAT implementation, selecting the Kaspi cement plant as the pilot facility. These studies, now underway, will inform practical and financially viable pathways for industry compliance. Preparations also began for 2026 capacity-building workshops and a study tour to expose Georgian regulators and industry representatives to EU best practices. While BAT retrofitting has not started, these steps lay the technical, regulatory, and institutional foundations for effective industrial emissions control and future BAT adoption nationwide.

Overall, the project is on track, with robust administrative systems in place, technical activities initiated, and strategic partnerships mobilized to support the next phase of implementation.

3/ Background

Georgia has long faced significant air pollution issues, particularly in densely populated areas like Tbilisi, Kutaisi, Batumi, and industrial zones such as Zestaponi, where fine particulate matter containing manganese is a concern. The main causes include high levels of exhaust emissions from vehicles due to an increasing number of vehicles and outdated fleets, poorly planned roads, and underdeveloped public transportation. Industrial emissions, especially from large combustion plants and steel manufacturing, also contribute, as do household heating with firewood and the construction sector.

These issues are exacerbated by unfavourable meteorological conditions, such as high temperatures and stagnant air, leading to temperature inversions and summer smog. Air quality measurements consistently show exceedances of limit values for pollutants like fine particulate matter and nitrogen dioxide. These pollutants have acute and chronic health effects, especially on vulnerable populations like children, the elderly, and those with

respiratory conditions. Long-term exposure can lead to various health issues, including Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD), cardiovascular diseases, and respiratory infections.

Air pollution in Georgia does not affect all population groups equally. Women—particularly caregivers spending more time indoors with solid-fuel heating—face higher exposure to household air pollution. Children and the elderly are more vulnerable to respiratory illnesses, while low-income households in urban peripheries often live closer to high-traffic or industrial emission zones. People with disabilities and those with pre-existing health conditions face compounded risks. These disparities underscore the need to integrate gender equality, social inclusion, and LNOB principles into air quality governance and health modelling.

Despite the significant health impacts, there is limited environmental health data in Georgia. Global assessments from organizations like the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME) indicate that air pollution is a significant factor in mortality and morbidity in the country. For instance, air pollution ranks as the sixth leading risk factor for death and disability combined in Georgia, with diseases like ischemic heart disease, stroke, and lung cancer being linked to air pollution. In 2019, each person's annual mean exposure to PM2.5 was estimated at 18 µg/m3, translating to an estimated 3,112 deaths in the country.

The key components of the project:

- Strengthening Air Quality Monitoring Infrastructure: Improving the air quality monitoring network in existing air quality management zones, with a specific focus on areas such as Chiatura, affected by elevated levels of 'toxic' dust containing manganese due to open-pit mining operations.
- Enhancing Modelling and Forecasting Capacities: Upgrading the modelling and forecasting capabilities of the National Environmental Agency (NEA) of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture (MEPA), ensuring the quality and validity of air quality measurements.
- Air Quality Health Modelling and Assessment: Improving knowledge and capacities of responsible national agencies - NEA and the National Centre for Disease Control and Public Health (NCDC) - in air quality health modelling and assessment.
- Establishing a National Reference Laboratory: Supporting the Government of Georgia (GoG) in establishing and commissioning a national reference laboratory, while building national capacities in the operations and maintenance of analytical and inter-calibration equipment.
- Capacity Building and Knowledge Dissemination: Enhancing the knowledge and capacities of decision-makers and relevant stakeholders in air quality health aspects, including risk communication. Implement a gender equality and social inclusion framework in air quality management, incorporating a toolkit and checklist.
- Technical Regulations on BAT (Best Available Techniques): Elaborating and supporting the adoption of technical regulations on BAT, ensuring a comprehensive and effective regulatory framework.
- BAT Incentives Study: Conducting a study on BAT incentives, presenting concrete proposals and strategies for their promotion.
- Pilot Project on BAT: Implementing a pilot project on BAT, emphasizing private sector cost-sharing as a sustainable approach.
- Capacity Building for Regulation of Industrial Emissions: Building knowledge and capacity among MEPA and industry representatives regarding the regulation of industrial emissions and BAT compliance.

4/ Progress Review

OUTPUT 1 - NATIONAL CAPACITIES, INFRASTRUCTURE AND TOOLS ENHANCED IN AQ MONITORING, MODELLING AND FORECASTING AND DATA QUALITY MANAGEMENT

This Output envisaged the project's commitment to strengthening the national infrastructure for air quality monitoring and forecasting. Through the development of improved modelling tools and the enhancement of data quality management systems, the project has empowered national institutions to monitor and forecast air quality more effectively.

- **Activity 1.1 Improve ambient AQ monitoring network**
  - Activity 1.1.1 – Improve Ambient AQ monitoring network.
    - Review of existing documentation on AQ monitoring stations, consultations with representatives of AAD, NEA

- Development/adaptation of specifications for AQ monitoring equipment, conduct market research for the equipment and contribute to preparation of the tender dossier (minimum requirements and technical qualifications of suppliers).
  - 1.1.2 - Procurement, installation, and commissioning of AQ monitoring equipment.
  - 1.1.3 - Trainings

During the reporting period:

- The procurement process has been finalized, and the contract was awarded in July 2025. Installation of the stations will be completed within 12 months, with the first batch scheduled for January 2026 and the second batch for June 2026**.**
- A joint mission was conducted from 4–7 March 2025 with UBA and GeoSphere Austria (Marcus Hirtl) to discuss the development of an air quality modelling framework for Georgia and the further expansion of the national air quality monitoring network**.**

- **Activity 1.2 Introduce national AQ modelling and forecasting tools and enhance staff capacities in their application**
  - 1.2.1 - Consultancy service on AQ modelling a forecasting and EH tools.
    - 1.2.1.1 Development/adaptation of environmental health impact assessment tools (AirQ+, CLIMAQ-H, HEAT, BAR-HAP) for Georgian needs.
    - 1.2.1.2 Development/adaptation of a training curriculum on the environmental health impact assessment tools and their application.
    - 1.2.1.3 Delivery of capacity building workshops for both environment and public health professionals.
    - 1.2.1.4 Subcontracting to GeoSphere (or organizations with similar expertise) for AQ modelling and forecasting expertise.
    - 1.2.1.5 Feasibility study in close consultation with MEPA/NEA and parallel EU projects on air quality modelling for enabling MEPA/NEA to select the most appropriate/optimum model(s) and forecasting tool(s).
    - 1.2.1.6 Technical advice and trainings to NEA staff in proper operations of AQ modelling and forecasting tools.
    - 1.2.1.7 Interaction with complementary projects under EU Green and Health Programme.
  - 1.2.2 - Procurement of data validation and data management software
  - 1.2.3 Trainings

During the reporting period:

- Contract issued with the National Center for Diseases Control and Public Health (NCDC) in December 2024 to provide support to the WHO consultant in preparation of the situation analysis as a basis for development and adaptation of the tools, considering the country context, as well as providing support during the capacity building trainings in February on WHO Air Quality/HIA monitoring tools. Within the contract the centre, prepared a situation analysis based on revision of existing relevant legal framework, national policies, identified regulatory gaps; collected existing research data to assist the WHO consultant in desk review/analysis process; prepared a one-pager outlining main issues, strengths, limitations for each of the WHO tools considering country context, provided support in identifying national institutions and target users of the WHO tools for each of the two trainings.
- The feasibility study on the selection of the most appropriate air quality modelling and forecasting tools for Georgia has been finalized by UBA. The activity was conducted in close consultation with MEPA/NEA and in coordination with parallel EU projects to ensure complementarity and alignment.
- Activities 1.2.2 (Procurement of Air Quality Modelling Software) and 1.2.3 (Trainings on Modelling) have not yet started and are planned for implementation in the upcoming phase.
- WHO consultant has been contracted for development and adaptation of the training curriculum and facilitating in-person capacity building trainings in Tbilisi, on health impact assessment tools (AirQ+, CLIMAQ-H).

- The consultant has prepared an extensive deck of slides covering the following topics: (i) Calculation of the Environmental Burden of Disease (EBD) in the Caucasus region using national data for Georgia, Azerbaijan, and Armenia. (ii) Discussion of the Health and Economic impact Assessment (HEA) methodology for assessing the burden of air pollution. (iii) Review of Georgia's Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) to the UNFCCC Paris Agreement. (iv) Assessment of health and economic co-benefits of improvements in air pollution linked to implementation of climate strategy action plans using WHO's Climate Mitigation, Air Quality and Health (CLIMAQ-H) HEA software; and (v) Application of CLIMAQ-H to real case studies in Europe and Latin America.
- The consultant has collated the necessary input data for Georgia to demonstrate the use of the CLIMAQ-H tool. Specifically, to evaluate the potential health co-benefits for a future scenario in which the use of fossil fuels in Georgia would be eliminated. The consultant, together with WHO staff involved, gave a pre-workshop online presentation to participants on 4 February 2025.
- Capacity building back-to-back trainings on application of WHO health impact assessment/air Quality tools (AirQ+, CLIMAQ-H), have been conducted on 10-14 February 2025. Twenty-five specialists representing public health and environment sectors participated in the training.
- A WHO-contracted consultant and WHO staff representing WHO ECEH office in Bonn facilitated the above-mentioned in-person training workshop.

➢ **Activity 1.3 Support to establishment and effective operations of NRL**
  - 1.3.1 Support to establishment and effective operations of NRL
    - 1.3.1.1 Review of the feasibility study/cost analysis for establishing NRL in Georgia developed under EU EPFACC project.
    - 1.3.1.2 Technical advice for detailed specifications for analytical and calibration equipment of the reference laboratory of NEA
    - 1.3.1.3 Conduct capacity building trainings for operating a NRL, including O/M and calibration equipment, QA/QC procedures, analysis, intercalibration and intercomparison protocols.
  - 1.3.2 - Building NRL infrastructure and its international accreditation

During the reporting period:

- Support to the establishment and operation of the National Reference Laboratory (NRL): Technical advice and support to MEPA/NEA on the establishment and operationalization of the NRL are ongoing. Activities related to capacity-building trainings for NRL operations (Activity 1.3.1.3) and construction, equipping, and international accreditation of the NRL infrastructure (Activity 1.3.2) have not yet started and are planned for subsequent implementation stages.

➢ **Activity 1.4 Develop capacities of the relevant stakeholders in risk communication and increase population awareness on the adverse health effects from air pollution.**
  - 1.4.1 Develop and conduct BI study on public perceptions related to air quality at the beginning of the project
  - 1.4.2 Develop and conduct training workshops on risk communication and awareness raising on the adverse effect of air pollution on health.
  - 1.4.3 Design and conduct awareness raising campaign on air quality.

During the reporting period:

➢ A baseline Study (mixed) on using behavioural and cultural Insights to understand perceptions and behaviour related to air quality in Georgia, has been completed. Sample size for the quantitative study: 2,816 respondents, randomly selected adults (18+), coverage: countrywide. Qualitative component: four focus groups, 16 in-depth interviews and two key informant interviews; Targeted healthcare workers, street vendors, industry representatives, and individuals with chronic respiratory illnesses. Coverage: Tbilisi, Kutaisi, and Rustavi. ACT-contracted for conducting a survey, collecting and analysing data. For the designing of the survey and interpretation of the findings a conceptual framework – COM-B Model has been applied. Presentation of the findings to the broad audience took place on 13 May 2025. Final draft report has been submitted. The quantitative survey included 2,815 respondents, of which 1,520 were women (54%) and 1,295 (46%) were men. For the qualitative component, four focus

group discussions with individuals living with chronic respiratory illness were organized by gender and location, comprising two female groups (50%) and two male groups (50%).

- Work has not started yet, however, the international consultant for developing materials for risk communication activities has been identified.
- 1.4.3 Design and conduct awareness raising campaign on air quality work to follow the completion of 1.4.2. activity.

OUTPUT 2 - NATIONAL FRAMEWORKS AND TOOLS ON GENDER EQUALITY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION IN AQM DEVELOPED AND CAPACITIES FOR THEIR APPLICATION BUILT

Acknowledging the shortcomings in recognizing and responding to gender dynamics and social inclusion considerations in relation to the management of AQ, the activities of Output 2 are intended to provide pragmatic solutions to allow for systematic application of gender and social inclusion in AQ management practices.

- **Activity 2.1 Develop gender equality and social inclusion framework and toolkit, including checklist.**
    - 2.1.1 - Consultancy service on development of GESI and EH tools
        - 2.1.1.1 Develop gender equality and social inclusion mainstreaming framework and a checklist with focus on air quality management and health.
        - 2.1.1.2 Review of national framework related to gender equality and mainstreaming into environmental policies and existing tools, methods and resources on gender mainstreaming into air quality management.
        - 2.1.1.3 Preparation of gender equality part of the overall Gender Equality and Social Inclusion framework, including a toolkit and check list
        - 2.1.1.4 Contribute to a guidance note on piloting the application of the tailored tools to the relevant key counterparts and application of the framework.

- **Activity 2.2 Build capacities of relevant stakeholders in application of gender equality and social inclusion tools in AQ management**
    - 2.2.1 - Consultancy service on trainings and practical application of GESI and EH tools
        - 2.2.1.1 Develop training materials on environmental health aspects of gender equality and social inclusion.
        - 2.2.1.3 Conduct pilot assessment in collaboration with key national counterparts (MEPA, NCDC, etc.)
        - 2.2.1.4 Develop a set of training material based on gender mainstreaming in air quality management.
        - 2.2.1.5 Contribute to at least one capacity building workshop on gender equality under gender mainstreaming framework.

During the reporting period:

- 2.1.1.1 Develop gender equality and social inclusion mainstreaming framework and a checklist with focus on air quality management and health Not Started however ongoing consultation with the WHO Regional Office in Europe for identifying a consultant. WHO will work collaboratively with UNECE that will result in development of a consolidated GESI framework. Implementation to be shifted to 2026.
- 2.2.1.1 Develop training materials on environmental health aspects of gender equality and social inclusion to be implemented in 2026.
- 2.2.1.3 Conduct pilot assessment in collaboration with key national counterparts (MEPA, NCDC, etc.) To be implemented in 2026

OUTPUT 3 - ENABLING ENVIRONMENT, KNOWLEDGE AND IMPLEMENTATION CAPACITIES OF DECISION-MAKERS AND INDUSTRY REPRESENTATIVES ENHANCED IN REGULATION OF INDUSTRIAL EMISSIONS

- **Activity 3.1 Provide technical assistance to decision-makers and industry representatives in creating enabling policy and legal-regulatory basis, knowledge, and implementation capacities for implementation of the Law on Industrial Emissions**
    - 3.1.1 - Local consultants to update technical regulations on industrial emissions
        - 3.1.1.1 Review and update of existing draft regulations in line with national and EU legislation, including BREFFS & BATCs

- 3.1.2 - Consultancy service on BAT
  - 3.1.2.1 A feasibility study to estimate the cost of implementing BATs for at least 1 existing plant.
  - 3.1.2.2 A study, including recommendations for the GoG on specific industries' incentives.
  - 3.1.2.3 A study tour to an EU country for relevant decision-makers and industry representatives to learn about an EU country's experience on IPPC BAT and its practical operation.
  - 3.1.2.4 Training sessions for industry representatives, regulators, and law enforcement officers
  - 3.1.2.5 Development/adaptation of training modules /manuals /guidebook(s), and an e-learning self-paced course in Georgian
- 3.1.3 - Grant to SMEs on pilot BAT
  - 3.1.3.1 Pilot on retrofitting/upgrading a selected facility on a cost-sharing basis.
  - 3.1.3.2 Sharing of pilot BAT results with other industries and key decision-makers for replication and upscaling
- 3.1.4 Trainings and consultations

During the reporting period:

- UNDP Completed a comprehensive comparative analysis of Georgian draft legislation against EU Industrial Emissions Directive and BAT standards, providing actionable recommendations for full regulatory alignment.
- UNECE conducted a procurement exercise to identify a contractor supporting the feasibility and incentive studies, study tour, and BAT training. UNECE signed a contract with 'Estonian, Latvian & Lithuanian Environment' and has, in 2025, worked with the contractor on the feasibility and incentive studies for BATs.
- After consultations with relevant stakeholders, the plant 'Kaspi cementi' was selected for the BAT feasibility study. In parallel, UNECE worked with the contractor on the BAT incentives study. Both studies are currently underway.
- The midterm report on BAT cost assessment for the cement plant will be available in October/November 2025, after which it will be translated into Georgian for validation and feedback from plant operators. The final report and conclusions are expected by end of October 2026, as installation of new continuous flue gas monitoring system is currently underway. The draft report on BAT incentives and policy recommendations to accelerate BAT uptake in the industrial sector will be available in November 2025.
- Initial preparations for the 2026 workshop and study tour on BATs for industrial stakeholders have started.

5/ Project Visibility

Throughout the reporting period, the project followed the visibility plan utilizing the major platforms for promoting project activities including the UNDP website and social media channels of Facebook, Instagram, and X (formerly Twitter)

Date	Title	Source	Link
18-Apr-24	**Launching Partnership for Clean Air in Georgia**	x.com/UNDPGeorgia	https://x.com/UNDPGeorgia/status/1780869932286116064
18-Apr-24	**Launching Partnership for Clean Air in Georgia**	instagram.com/UNDPGeorgia	https://www.instagram.com/p/C55QiRAt4oT/
18-Apr-24	**Launching Partnership for Clean Air in Georgia**	linkedin.com/UNDPGeorgia	https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7186661843229167616

Date	Title	Source	Link
18-Apr-24	**Launching Partnership for Clean Air in Georgia**	threads.net/UNDPGeorgia	https://www.threads.net/@undpgeorgia/post/C55gKV5M6Ur
19-Apr-24	**Launching Partnership for Clean Air in Georgia**	undp.org/georgia	https://www.undp.org/georgia/press-releases/clean-air-project-launch
19-Apr-24	**Launch of the project**	facebook.com/UNDPGeorgia	https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.829876049178613&type=3
19-Apr-24	**Launch of the project**	x.com/DougUNDP	https://x.com/DougUNDP/status/1781278573262721107
19-Apr-24	**Launch of the project**	x.com/UNDPGeorgia	https://x.com/UNDPGeorgia/status/1781285793023029436
22-Apr-24	**Launch of the project**	instagram.com/UNDPGeorgia	https://www.instagram.com/p/C6DR5SSJHDo/?img_index=1
9-May-24	**Europe Day: Clean Air For Georgia**	Facebook.com/UNDPGeorgia	https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.843252571174294&type=3
9-May-24	**Europe Day: Clean Air For Georgia**	x.com/UNDPGeorgia	https://x.com/UNDPGeorgia/status/1788487274805534822
9-May-24	**Europe Day: Clean Air For Georgia**	linkedin.com/UNDPGeorgia	https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7194263597428969472
13-May-24	**Europe Day: Clean Air For Georgia**	facebook.com/UNDPGeorgia	https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.846001010899450&type=3
13-May-24	**Europe Day: Clean Air For Georgia**	x.com/UNDPGeorgia	https://x.com/UNDPGeorgia/status/1789987153625153829
13-May-24	**Europe Day: Clean Air For Georgia**	instagram.com/UNDPGeorgia	https://www.instagram.com/p/C66Vjt-NnGS/?img_index=1
13-May-24	**Europe Day: Clean Air For Georgia**	instagram.com/UNDPGeorgia	https://www.instagram.com/p/C6vc5n5tIxV/?img_index=1
13-May-24	**Europe Day: Clean Air For Georgia**	linkedin.com/UNDPGeorgia	https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7195781696166772737

Date	Title	Source	Link
6-Sep-24	**International Day of Clean Air For Blue Skies**	Facebook.com/UNDPGeorgia	https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=922810373218513&set=pb.100064686759608.-2207520000&type=3
6-Sep-24	**International Day of Clean Air For Blue Skies**	x.com/UNDPGeorgia	https://x.com/UNDPGeorgia/status/1831964831580352872
6-Sep-24	**International Day of Clean Air For Blue Skies**	instagram.com/UNDPGeorgia	https://www.instagram.com/p/C_kSTQwsCPO/
6-Sep-24	**International Day of Clean Air For Blue Skies**	linkedin.com/UNDPGeorgia	https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7237724284553486338
7-Sep-24	**International Day of Clean Air For Blue Skies**	threads.net/UNDPGeorgia	https://www.threads.net/@undpgeorgia/post/C_nQI-IotSL

In addition, project:

- Participated in the EU Day on 11 May 2024, working closely with the EU delegation, MEPA, and NEA.
- Participated and represented the project in the World Bank and Twinning project activities related to Air Quality in Georgia. April 2024
- Developed project-related visibility materials and obtained necessary approvals through the Digitools platform. This process involved creating compelling and informative materials that align with project goals and comply with visibility guidelines.
- In all these events project ensured EU visibility.

6/ Project Risks and Issues

Several potential risks could affect the project's progress. Delays in the procurement, installation, and commissioning of air quality (AQ) monitoring equipment may cascade into setbacks for training and other critical activities. Securing land for new AQ stations and constructing the National Reference Laboratory (NRL) could face unforeseen complications. Additionally, challenges in sourcing and adapting appropriate data validation and management software might impede AQ forecasting and modelling, especially if the software does not integrate well with the existing station network. There is also a risk of misalignment between gender equality and social inclusion (GESI) initiatives and environmental frameworks, potentially resulting in ineffective policy integration or stakeholder resistance. The feasibility study for Best Available Techniques (BAT) implementation may reveal high costs or complex retrofitting requirements, leading to industry pushback and delays. Lastly, insufficient training for government and industry personnel on BATs and the Integrated Permitting System could hinder the project's successful implementation.

More details on emerging risks and mitigation measures are presented in Annex I – Risk Log.

7/ Lessons Learned

- Strategic Coordination Enhances Impact: Close collaboration with parallel and complementary initiatives has proven invaluable. By aligning efforts with other projects and stakeholders, the project has maximized resource efficiency, avoided duplication, and fostered knowledge exchange.
- Communication is Critical: Regular coordination meetings and transparent communication channels have facilitated timely problem-solving, adaptive planning, and the sharing of best practices. This has contributed to more responsive and resilient project implementation.

- Early Engagement of Stakeholders Matters: Involving key partners—such as MEPA, NEA, WHO, and UNECE—early in the planning and design phases has ensured alignment with national priorities and increased ownership of project outcomes.
- Flexibility is Key in Complex Environments: The project has demonstrated the importance of adaptive management, particularly in navigating procurement delays, aligning with donor requirements, and responding to evolving stakeholder needs.
- Environmental governance spaces often lack participation of women, people with disabilities, vulnerable community groups, and civil society.
- Engagement with women's CSOs and environmental NGOs is becoming increasingly difficult due to the political context.

8/ Conclusions and way forward

Summary

Under Output 1, substantial preparatory work has been undertaken to enhance national capacities for air quality (AQ) monitoring, modelling, forecasting, and data quality management. Technical specifications for AQ monitoring equipment are nearing finalization, positioning the project to initiate the procurement process soon. Similarly, the groundwork for the introduction of national AQ modelling and forecasting tools has been laid, with consultations ongoing to partner with GeoSphere Austria and initial discussions held with WHO regarding the adaptation of tools such as AirQ+ and CLIMAQ-H. The project is also in the early stages of supporting the establishment of a National Reference Laboratory (NRL) for air quality, with discussions on specifications and infrastructure development underway. Additionally, preparatory efforts for a Behavioural and Cultural Insights (BCI) study on public perceptions of air quality have been initiated, pending approval from the WHO Research Ethics Review Committee. Other outputs, such as Output 2, which focuses on gender equality and social inclusion (GESI) in AQ management, and Output 3, which aims to enhance regulatory capacities for industrial emissions, are primarily in the planning and pre-positioning phases. GESI framework development is slated for 2025, with consultants expected to be identified by the end of 2026. For industrial emissions, initial reviews of draft regulations and plans for a pilot BAT program have set the stage for more active implementation next year.

Way Forward

As the project transitions from preparatory work to implementation, the following priorities will guide the next phase:

- Deployment of AQ Monitoring Infrastructure: With technical specifications and procurement finalised, the installation of AQ monitoring stations will begin. Training for NEA staff will ensure effective operation and maintenance.
- Operationalizing AQ Modelling and Forecasting: Building on partnerships with GeoSphere Austria and WHO, the project will roll out national AQ forecasting tools and conduct targeted capacity-building for environmental and health professionals.
- Establishment of the National Reference Laboratory (NRL): Technical planning will advance toward infrastructure development, with the goal of operationalizing the NRL and initiating steps toward international accreditation.
- Public Awareness and Risk Communication: The findings from the Behavioural and Cultural Insights (BCI) study will inform the design and implementation of targeted public awareness campaigns on air pollution and associated health risks.
- GESI Framework Implementation: The development of a tailored GESI framework will begin in 2026, supported by training and stakeholder engagement to ensure integration into AQ governance.
- Advancing Industrial Emissions Regulation: The project will finalize technical regulations, complete BAT feasibility and incentive studies, and initiate a pilot BAT program. Study tours and training for industry and regulators will further build implementation capacity.

The groundwork laid during this reporting period positions the project for a successful transition into its next phase, with a clear roadmap for achieving its objectives in air quality improvement and inclusive environmental governance.

For further details, please see Annex 2 – Work Plan

Annexes

I. Updated Risk Log
II. Updated Logframe
III. Management Declaration
IV. Financial Report