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ASSESSMENT OF POLICY DOCUMENTS TO SUPPORT MAINSTREAMING MIGRATION INTO DEVELOPMENT AND REINTEGRATION AGENDA OF GEORGIA

ASSESSMENT REPORT

September, 2021

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FOREWORD

In its new International Cooperation (IC) Strategy, 2021–24, Switzerland has included migration as one of four thematic priorities. The objective is to promote safe, orderly and regular migration in order to advance the sustainable development objectives defined in the 2030 Agenda, while at the same time addressing the root causes of irregular migration and forced displacement.

Switzerland's IC Strategy 2021–24 acknowledges the importance of a holistic approach adapted to the country context when addressing an important issue like migration. Thus, the Strategy will not be limited to migration-related needs, challenges and opportunities at the political and thematic levels. It will also be articulated at the territorial level by integrating migration-related aspects into regional and country programs.

For example, the Strategy will also address the critical and related issue of remittances. Many have discovered the critical importance of remittances during the COVID-19 pandemic. They provided a lifeline to families in need, helping them cope with hardship as economies were contracting across the World. But the flow of remittances from migrants and the diasporas across the World has grown for many years before COVID, now exceeding the volume of official development assistance (ODA) by some 300 percent. This is why Switzerland, the fourth largest source country for remittances in 2020, joined forces with the United Kingdom and the World Bank launched in May 2020 the 'Call to Action to Keep Remittances Flowing', outlining a set of policy priorities in response to the new global challenges posed by the COVID-19.

Migration is thus treated as a cross-cutting theme in the new Swiss Cooperation Programme 2022-2025 for the South Caucasus Region with two main concerns: how do the initiatives supported by the Switzerland influence migration? And how are they influenced by migration?

This Report on 'Mainstreaming Migration into the Development and Reintegration Agenda of Georgia in 2021' was commissioned by the Swiss Cooperation Office for the South Caucasus together with IOM and EU to address these issues.

We thank the author of this report for her thoughtful assessment of important policy documents from the migration and development perspective, and for reviewing the state Migration Strategy 2021-2030 as well as the role of the State Commission on Migration Issues (SCMI).

The conclusion suggests that a holistic approach is the most relevant option. The Report concludes that a mix of migration and non-migration policies are required to best serve the goal of sustainable development. It calls for a whole-of-government approach in which migration becomes an integral part of countries' development strategies and is dealt in a consistent manner at the national and local levels.

The Swiss Cooperation Office for the South Caucasus will use this assessment to inform its dialogue with key stakeholders and policy makers. The hope is also that policymakers, development practitioners and civil society leaders will use the recommendations presented in this Report when designing their policies.

We sincerely thank IOM, the EU and the State Commission on Migration Issues (SCMI) for the good collaboration that allowed us to shed light on the best way to tackle the challenges of migration and integrate them better when debating development-related policy issues in Georgia.

DANIELLE MEUWLY

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Migration and development have always been intricately connected and their links exist all around us. Our local communities are shaped by the mobility of its members, whose migration — be it over a short or long distance, or for short or long periods — always reflect the local development opportunities and has the potential to drastically change them.

Georgia is certainly no stranger to the mutually reinforcing links between migration and development. Home to a growing and diversifying immigrant community, and a country of origin to a vibrant and active diaspora community as well as of the traditionally emigration-prone and increasingly remittance-dependent communities back home, Georgia has seen rising migration and development interlinks over the past decades. It is becoming increasingly important to recognize these mutual links and to appropriately embed them in the policies and institutions that govern development processes.

Mainstreaming migration into development planning aims at a more comprehensive and systematic approach which strengthens the migration and development interlinks throughout the design and implementation of development policies and interventions. It entails supporting stakeholders involved in the migration and development domains to work together in drafting policy responses that cross institutions and sectors.

A first step to promoting a more systematic approach to migration and development requires taking stock of the current state of affairs and assessing how far policies and institutions are prepared to promote and strengthen their positive correlations. This report provides an assessment of how migration is embedded in the development policy documents and in cross-sectoral institutional cooperation, setting the ground for exploring future development potentials of migration and building stronger and more effective migration and development nexus in Georgia.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author is grateful to the IOM country office Georgia, and particularly Natia Kvitsiani, Ketevan Beradze, and Tamar Golijashvili for their support in coordinating the research, providing supporting documentation, and analysing policy documents. The author would also like to acknowledge the vital contributions of Mikheil Skhiereli in the assessment of Georgian-language policy documents. The report benefited from the review and comments of IOM Vienna Regional Office staff Michael Newson and Sacha Chan Kam.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The *Assessment of Policy Documents to Support Mainstreaming Migration into Development and Reintegration Agenda of Georgia* explores the extent to which migration and migrants, including returnees facing reintegration, have been mainstreamed into Georgia's development agenda, which is assessed vis-à-vis specific development policies and policy documents. Integral to this review is the concept of migration mainstreaming for development, which encompasses two dimensions: 1) the process of anticipating the two-way interactions between migration and development, and the implications of migration for the design and implementation of development policies and interventions ("mainstreaming in policy"), and 2) the extent to which migration is recognised as a cross-cutting issue requiring coordinated, cross-sectoral policy response ("institutional mainstreaming").

Whereas institutional mainstreaming was assessed through the evaluation of the state Migration Strategy 2021-2030 and the role of the State Commission on Migration Issues (SCMI) in supporting mainstreaming processes, the extent to which migration is mainstreamed in policy was assessed through specific development policy documents. Thematic analysis of 15 policy documents was conducted to understand the extent to which the two-way interactions between migration and development are integrated into the design and implementation modalities of key development programmes and plans. The analysed documents covered development strategies, programmes, and plans in different sectors and governance levels, and included:

- The Decentralisation Strategy 2020-2025;
- Strategy for Development of High Mountain Settlements of Georgia 2019-2023;
- Pilot integrated regional development programme for Guria, Imereti, Kakheti and Racha Lechkhumi, and Kvemo Svaneti 2020-2022;
- Decree of the Government of Georgia No.936 on Approval of the guidelines for Elaboration of Development Strategy of Regions;
- Village Support Programme;
- Produce in Georgia;
- Plant the Future;
- Preferential Agrocredit;
- Agriinsurance;
- Agriculture Machine Co-Financing Programme;
- State Programme for Tea Plantation Rehabilitation;
- Co-financing of Processing and Storage Enterprises;
- Innovation Matching Grant;
- Co-financing Grants for Start-ups;
- Small Grants Programme;
- Local Economic Development Plan 2020-2021 for Akhmeta municipality.

The selected policy documents were assessed on three dimensions: 1) how migration/migrants are embedded in different stages of the policy process; 2) what roles migration/migrants are ascribed in the policy document, and; 3) what categories of migrants are identified.

The results of the assessment suggest limited mainstreaming of migration into existing policy documents, with only three of the 15 reviewed documents explicitly identifying migration at all, and none recognizing returnees and the mutual influence between returnee reintegration and community revitalization. In the three documents that did recognise migration (the Strategy for Development of High Mountain Settlements of Georgia 2019-2023; the Pilot integrated regional development programme for Guria, Imereti, Kakheti and Racha Lechkhumi, and Kvemo Svaneti 2020-2022, and; the Local Economic Development Plan 2020-2021 for Akhmeta municipality), migra-

tion was included in only two policy stages—agenda-setting and monitoring and evaluation. In the agenda-setting stage, migration was explained as part of the situation analysis and used to frame the policy problem, with the documents relating migration to depopulation generally from rural or marginalized communities to urban areas or international labour markets as the result of limited livelihood opportunities. In the monitoring and evaluation stage of policy, two documents described reduction of outward migration as indicators of policy progress but neglected return and the sustainable reintegration of former community members into local community structures as indicators of policy progress. The policy documents did not reflect the diversity of migration trends or migrant categories that are meaningful in the Georgian context; the documents focused primarily on internal migration, mentioning internal labour and education migrants most frequently, with limited reflection on international labour emigration. Returning migrants were largely neglected in the documents. Despite the inclusion of migration as part of the wider policy framing, the documents did not ascribe meaningful roles to migrants in the policy cycle. Migrants as such were not identified as beneficiaries of development actions, as the use of ‘reduced outward migration’ as a progress indicator actually addresses *potential* rather than *actual* migrants as the beneficiaries of development interventions. The absence of migration in these development documents is dissonant with the Migration Strategy 2021-2030, which explicitly acknowledges the two-way interactions between migration and development.

While mainstreaming of migration into the reviewed development documents was limited, **there appear to be strong institutional coordination mechanisms that would support the mainstreaming of migration into the policy portfolios of institutions and agencies with diverse mandates.** The State Commission on Migration Issues (SCMI) functions as a centralized coordination mechanism that brings together the competencies and resources of a diversity of national-level policy stakeholders. As an inter-ministerial collaboration framework, **the SCMI has made vital contributions to a unified migration and development-sensitive policy framework.** It has used the creation of a common migration data infrastructure and a system of migration data for risk analyses as a means of further fostering inter-institutional cooperation and of encouraging the development of further migration-related competencies within participating institutions. It has also consolidated cooperation through the production of periodic migration profiles and, essentially, through the development, implementation, and monitoring of state migration strategies. Other means of supporting consolidated institutional visions of migration mainstreaming include the Government of Georgia’s guidelines for the creation of regional development strategies and accompanying action plans (Government of Georgia , 2012) that explicitly encourage designers of regional development strategies to incorporate different dimensions of population mobility into their plans.

The assessment concludes that **migration is incompletely mainstreamed into development planning,** particularly in the holistic assessment of the two-way interactions between migration and development that would be needed to inform nuanced, particularly local, development policy. While the Migration Strategy of 2021-2030 provides insight into these two-way interactions, the assessed development strategies, programmes, and plans do not systematically engage with migration and its interactions with development. The assessments and conclusions give rise to two sets of recommendations related to: 1) strengthening both vertical and horizontal institutional coordination on migration; 2) reviewing and revising the inclusion of migration in existing policies, and ensuring embedding of migration and migrants in future policies and development-focused programming.

Key recommendations to **further strengthen vertical and horizontal institutional coordination include:**

- To perform a full stakeholder analysis to identify government institutions and their subsidiary agencies with mandates, policies, and programmes related to migration and development concerns;
- To assess mechanisms to promote vertical coordination or horizontal coordination at lower governance levels;

- To consider how local government authorities can access or contribute to existing migration data systems such as UMAS, and to assess how long-term strategic planning of data creation/sharing mechanisms like UMAS can address the data needs of policy planners;
- To benchmark the overall migration governance framework using international tools such as the dashboard of indicators for measuring policy coherence for migration and development and the Migration Governance Index, which may guide further consolidation of inter-institutional interests and collaboration, and to review how the monitoring and evaluation indicators used by the SCMI complement or expand on these international tools.

Recommendations are also given to support the more holistic reflection of two-way interactions between migration and development in *future* policy documents, namely:

- To collect examples of programmes and interventions that more comprehensively address interactions between migration and development in the Georgian context, which may demonstrate the pro-development potentials of specific migrant populations at different governance levels and with development interventions of differing scope;
- To explicitly map out the potential ways in which different groups of migrants may support development policy across the entire policy cycle in select development policies or strategies within the specific Georgian context;
- To provide disaggregated information on the intended and actual target beneficiaries of development interventions, identifying where (specific groups of) migrants are included or may need to be better targeted;
- To create opportunities for multi-stakeholder approaches to migration-related development policy, allowing migrants—as part of a wider civil society—to contribute to the design, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation of development policy;
- To review how guidelines that support the coordination of policy elaboration processes are implemented, and to assess the extent to which they recognise the two-way migration and development interactions that can foster better mainstreaming into different policy domains.

Finally, specific **recommendations are given on how migration and migrants can be better integrated across the policy cycle into the assessed development programmes and plans.** Under the assumption that the development programmes and plans can be modified, the following summarized recommendations can be pursued:

1. **Decentralisation Strategy 2020-2025:** The Strategy may be revised to: 1) explicitly identify that some migration-related policies (e.g., integration, education for returning migrant children) require local authorities to implement decisions made at higher level, requiring both capacity (e.g., content-specific knowledge, access to advice and knowledge at higher levels, coordination platforms) and decision-making autonomy (related to, e.g., provision of support services); 2) recognize that returned migrants, Georgian diaspora communities, and migrants' households back in Georgia can be important parts for local development planning and should be engaged in local policy processes, or should be consulted/informed about policy decisions; 3) extend the SWOT analysis to reflect on how emigration/immigration trends affect the stock of expertise of civil servants in local governments.

- 2. Strategy for Development of High Mountain Settlements of Georgia 2019-2023:** This ambitious strategy, which addresses the conditions leading to depopulation of high-mountain settlements and the conditions that prevent further growth of high-elevation communities, may better integrate the pro-development potentials of migration through: 1) better identifying the intersecting nature of migration and development-related challenges on local level; 2) integrating immigration, internal migration, and/or return migration as means of potentially resolving skills mismatches in selected sectors; 3) more holistically recognizing the multi-way relationships among individual development, community development, and migration; 4) ensuring that action planning is informed by a multiplicity of stakeholders from different policy domains, including migration; 5) creating mechanisms to support the contributions of migrants, particularly diaspora communities, to development financing through, e.g., philanthropic contributions, remittances matching funds, diaspora direct investment.
- 3. Pilot Integrated Regional Development Programme for Guria, Imereti, Kakheti and Racha Lechkhumi, and Kvemo Svaneti 2020-2022:** The regional development programme for the specified regions provides a nuanced analysis of the challenges facing the development of communities in specific natural and economic environments. Migration can be mainstreamed into this document through: 1) identifying how migration intersects with development in specific regional/local contexts, which can help motivate better-calibrated interventions that link migration to development solutions on regional and local level; 2) leveraging the unique resources diaspora and returned migrants can bring to local development, focusing on using migrant resources for supporting action planning in select, priority development areas such as tourism and the hospitality sector that have a high potential for growth and that can benefit from internationalization.
- 4. Village Support Programme:** The goal of the village support programme is to address social and economic challenges of local populations, to support the development of local infrastructure, and to encourage the employment of local populations in the implemented projects. The programme may 1) emphasise how the further development of local communities can facilitate attraction of immigrants and returning migrants; 2) directly reflecting on migration-generated resources in action planning, particularly related to interventions aimed to support community infrastructure that may be funded through collective remittance schemes.
- 5. Produce in Georgia:** The governmental programme Produce in Georgia emphasizes the development of entrepreneurship through support to entrepreneurs, the creation of new enterprises, the expansion and modernization of existing enterprises, and means of increasing competitiveness and export potential via access to finance, real estate and technical assistance. The document may: 1) recognize the two-way interactions between migration and development, for example, through identifying how members of the diaspora and returned migrants can contribute to the revitalization of local communities, particularly through providing demanded knowledge and skills to the development or expansion of local enterprises; 2) target specific migrant populations, namely returned migrants and the diaspora, as well as the origin households of international migrants, with information on the initiatives promoted under the Produce in Georgia programme; 3) set aside a specific quota or budget for financing (M)SMEs started by returning migrants, ensuring that returned migrants are able to create and sustain the small businesses that can support their long-term reintegration into the local community; 4) support the “matchmaking” between (M)SME owners in local communities and enterprise mentors from within the diaspora.
- 6. Plant the Future:** The Plant the Future programme seeks to support the sustainable production of diverse agricultural products through providing financial and technical assistance for the development of high-quality seedlings, perennial crops, and for anti-hail and irrigation systems. The programme may: 1) extend existing situation analyses to reflect how both immigration and emigration affect the availability

of needed human, physical, and financial capital used in local agricultural production; 2) explicitly include reintegration of returning migrants in the overall goals of the programme and the indicators used to measure programme success; 3) extend action planning to include seasonal migrants who work in agricultural production abroad as stakeholders in implementation, potentially as providers of technical advice or as beneficiaries of targeted supports; 4) set aside a certain share of financing to support return migrant entrepreneurs, which may help ensure the sustainable reintegration of returnees into local communities.

- 7. Co-financing of Processing and Storage Enterprises:** This programme has two distinct clusters of activities. The first component, related to processing enterprises, seeks to establish and rehabilitate agricultural processing enterprises, supporting greater geographical diversification of processing enterprises and creating more energy-efficient processing facilities. The second component, on storage enterprises, seeks to raise the self-sufficiency of agricultural households by supporting farmers of both annual and perennial crops to store their yields. Given the overlap of objectives between this programme and the Grow the Future programme, the recommendations are similar between the two programmes. An additional recommendation for this programme relates to facilitating the creation of collective remittance schemes that channel remittances into infrastructure investments.
- 8. Preferential Agrocredit:** This governmental programme supports primary agricultural production by enhancing access to finance (e.g., co-financing of bank loan interest rates and leasing) for enterprises involved in processing or storing of agricultural products. Migration may be integrated into this programme through; 1) leveraging remittances for the creation or expansion of financial products; 2) targeting diaspora members, return migrants, and the households of international migrants for information dissemination and programme support.
- 9. Agroinsurance:** The objective of this programme is to support the development of safety nets for entrepreneurs in the agricultural sector by stimulating the agricultural insurance market and supporting the resilience of agricultural activities. The programme can: 1) better reflect the needs and potentials of migrant communities by, for example, linking remittances to the development of agricultural insurance products; 2) targeting information about the programme to returning migrants; 3) profiling of the agricultural production behaviours and risks of migrant households
- 10. Agriculture Machine Co-Financing Programme:** The objective of this programme is to enhance access to agricultural machinery through provision of co-financing. The programme may better reflect on migration by recognising remittances and other forms of migrant investment as implementation resources, with particularly collective remittances raised through diaspora associations or organizations abroad potentially used to co-finance agricultural machinery on community level.
- 11. State Programme for Tea Plantation Rehabilitation:** This programme supports the development of the tea production sector and aims to increase export potential in the Guria region. There are several areas in which migration can be engaged in this programme, including by: 1) evaluating to what extent migrants come from tea-producing areas, and targeting migrant households involved in tea production for support; 2) linking members of the diaspora as mentors and advisers to tea producers wishing to enter global markets, which can be particularly valuable given the strict import regulations in countries (particularly within the European Union) for agricultural and food products; 3) promoting diaspora direct investment into the tea sector.
- 12. Innovation Matching Grant:** The objective of this programme is to stimulate innovation in the Georgian economy through product, technological, or business process innovations. It also emphasizes the adoption of technology through a grant co-financing mechanism. Integrating migration perspectives into this pro-

gramme can be supported through: 1) facilitating diaspora direct investment; 2) supporting knowledge transfers from return migrants and diasporas to local entrepreneurs; 3) creating opportunities for Georgian diaspora entrepreneurs to create consortia with local enterprises.

- 13. Co-financing Grants for Start-ups:** The emphasis of this programme is on stimulating innovation and the creation of innovative enterprises through development/adoption and commercialization of innovative products and services with the potential for internationalization. Recommendations for this programme include supporting returnee start-ups to support their further reintegration into local communities and to further fuel the revitalization of local communities.
- 14. Small Grants Programme:** The Small Grants Programme aims to support the piloting and adoption of innovations, emphasizing the integration of Georgian enterprises into the international technological and innovation ecosystem. In this programme, a clear entry point for migration relates to facilitating knowledge exchange between local entrepreneurs and members of the Georgian diaspora.
- 15. Local Economic Development Plan 2020-2021:** The only local development plan reviewed in this exercise was specified to the Akhmeta municipality, which developed a short-term vision for local economic development focusing on improvement of the municipality's visibility and investment environment, improvement of knowledge in the private sector and skills of entrepreneurs, and improvement of entrepreneurial opportunities and business environment. Integrating migration into this local development plan could be supported through: 1) constructing a nuanced profile of the skill supply of different migrant populations (focusing on returned migrants) and on the skill demand of local (high growth-potential) enterprise; 2) providing information on local investment opportunities to diaspora investors, potentially through online investment information hubs.

I. INTRODUCTION

The concept of policy mainstreaming refers to the extent to which a particular topic or issue is meaningfully embedded in sectoral policies, interventions, or programming. The concept of *migration mainstreaming* therefore relates to the extent to which migration as a trend, and migrants as particular population groups, are included or integrated into policy. The mainstreaming of migration and migrants into *development* policy entails understanding the two-way influences between migration/migrants and development processes. Such an assessment requires mapping out the underlying relationships between migration and development and understanding the implications or consequences of development strategies, policies, and interventions for migration/migrants (and vice versa). A truly mainstreamed approach to migration and development implies that migration is treated as a cross-cutting issue and therefore addressed in a comprehensive and coherent way through policy. Systematic mainstreaming is therefore important to ensure a coherent, ‘whole of government’ approach to the topic.

This *Assessment of Policy Documents to Support Mainstreaming Migration into the Development and Reintegration Agenda of Georgia* explores the extent to which migration, including among returnees facing reintegration, has been mainstreamed into Georgia’s development agenda, which is assessed vis-à-vis specific development policy documents. This assessment recognizes the importance of specific forms of migration and their interactions with development. Migrant return and the subsequent reintegration of returnees into local communities is a particularly important trend in the Georgian context, and the current (and future) inclusion of interactions between return and (local) development is therefore a particular focus of the assessment (see *Textbox 1: Defining sustainable return & reintegration* for insight on how return is conceptualised in this assessment). The review therefore identifies how key migration trends (e.g., return and reintegration, labour migration, diaspora engagement) are incorporated into development policy. Given the importance of regional and local government bodies in drafting, implementing, and/or monitoring the implementation of development strategies and policies, the review also distinguishes among national, regional, and local (municipal) governance of migration and development.

TEXTBOX 1: DEFINING RETURN & SUSTAINABLE REINTEGRATION

The term “return” within this assessment is used to indicate the act or process of going back or being taken back to the point of departure, within the territorial boundaries of a country (as in the case of returning internally displaced persons [IDPs]), or between a country of destination and a country of origin, as in the case of migrant workers, refugees, or asylum seekers¹.

Migrant return and the development of the communities into which return occurs have important mutual interactions. In 2017, IOM revised its approach to reintegration sustainability in the context of return—the so-called Integrated Approach to Reintegration, which explicitly recognises these mutual interactions. It acknowledges that the various factors influencing a person’s ability to reintegrate in their country of origin are not dissimilar from those that resulted in the decision to migrate in the first place. **Reintegration can therefore be considered sustainable when “returnees have reached levels of economic self-sufficiency, social stability within their communities, and psychosocial well-being that allow them to cope with (re)migration drivers. Having achieved sustainable reintegration, returnees are able to make further migration decisions a matter of choice, rather than necessity”** (IOM, 2017). This definition highlights the multi-dimensional nature of a reintegration process – economic, social and psychosocial – and the need to approach migrant reintegration in a comprehensive manner, considering the development-related factors that can affect reintegration at the individual, community, and structural levels.

¹ See Towards an Integrated Approach to Reintegration in the Context of Return, IOM, 2017.

The three “pillars” of reintegration used in IOM’s Integrated Approach to Reintegration map on to different dimensions of development. The **economic dimension** of reintegration covers aspects of reintegration that contribute to economic self-sufficiency. These include the ability to borrow money, the debt-to-spending ratio, practice of food rationing, adequacy of employment, ownership of productive assets, etc. The **social dimension** reflects the extent to which returnees have reached social stability within the community, including access to services relating to housing, education, justice, health, and other public infrastructure services. The **psychosocial dimension** encompasses the emotional, mental, and psychological well-being of returnees. “Psychological”-related needs—such as the need for therapy due to a mental health concern—are just one component of the broader psychosocial dimension. The different pillars or dimensions of reintegration have guided recommendations in this assessment related specifically to the mainstreaming of return into development programmes and plans, particularly those focusing on local development and community revitalization.

IOM’s integrated approach deploys three levels of support:

- **The individual level** has initiatives to address the specific needs and vulnerabilities of returnees and returning family members.
- **The community level** encompasses initiatives that respond to the needs, vulnerabilities and concerns of communities to which migrants return, including returnee families and the non-migrant population.
- **Structural level** initiatives promote good governance of migration through engagement with local and national authorities and stakeholders and supports continuity of assistance through adequate local public services.

The different pillars or dimensions of reintegration have guided recommendations in this assessment related specifically to the mainstreaming of return into development programmes and plans, particularly those focusing on local development and community revitalization.

And in the overall vision of the government and all levels of the governance. The review concludes with specific recommendations related to three dimensions of mainstreaming. The ultimate objective of this review is to identify how migration, including return and reintegration, can be more effectively mainstreamed into the Georgian development agenda, namely: 1) strengthening both vertical and horizontal institutional coordination on migration; 2) reviewing and revising the inclusion of migration in existing policies, and 3) ensuring embedding of migration and migrants in future policies and development-focused programming. This review has been commissioned by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM), and with the support of the EU funded project “Sustaining border and Migration Management in Georgia” (SBMMG). As such, the recommendations are expected to support both organizations in developing strategic work packages related to relevant migration and development issues at national, regional, and local levels.

Following this introduction, the following section of the report explores the context of migration governance for development, describing how both historical and more contemporary mobility trends in Georgia have contributed to the existing migration governance system in the country. Following this description, the next chapter explores the concepts of policy (in)coherence, migration mainstreaming, and whole of government approaches, explaining how these concepts relate to the creation of development strategies, policies, and programmes that comprehensively address migration. The methodology used to assess select development strategies, policies, and programmes is then described before the findings of the assessment are provided. The last section of the report provides recommendations and conclusions.

II. CONTEXT OF GEORGIAN MIGRATION GOVERNANCE FOR DEVELOPMENT

MIGRATION IN BRIEF

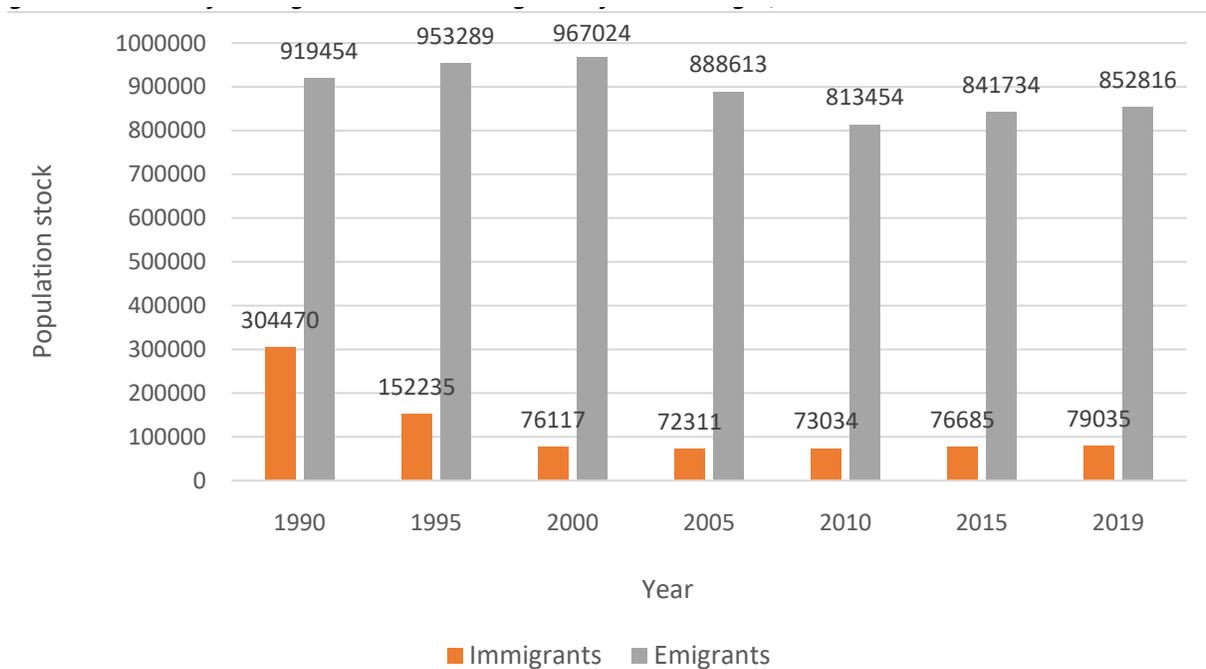
The governance of migration within any given country often reflects the specific mobility context, relating both to *internal migration* and to *international* in-migration (immigration) and out-migration (emigration). Since its independence in 1990, Georgia has experienced significant population movements. The scale of internal population movements is challenging to determine in Georgia, reflecting international ambiguity over defining and measuring the relevant population. IOM defines internal migration as “movement of people within a State involving the establishment of a new temporary or permanent residence.” (International Organisation for Migration , 2021). Determining when someone meets specific criteria to be identified as an internal migrant varies by context in line with elements such as distance of movement (i.e., distance between the place of habitual residence and new residence), the crossing of administrative boundaries (e.g., moving from one municipality to another), time scale (i.e., duration of stay away from the place of habitual residence), and even to administrative compliance (e.g., registering with a new locale of residence). The absence of a strong administrative framework that requires new residents of an area to deregister from one location and register in another generally challenges collection of data on internal movers. While census and other population surveys can provide indicators of internal movement, the infrequent collection of data can imply that estimates reflect past rather than current population trends.

In the Georgian context, internal migration has two important components: voluntary movement from generally rural areas to more urban areas for the sake of better livelihood opportunities, education, and infrastructure, and; forcible displacement from the place of habitual residence to another location. Policy documents issued by the government of Georgia recognize two groups of so-called internally-displaced persons (IDPs), namely those generated by conflict and those displaced due to ecological transitions (who the government identifies as ‘ecomigrants’).

The size of these different groups of internal migrants is uncertain. As noted above, determining the size of the voluntary internal migrant population requires both a standardized definition of internal migration and a clear mechanism to enumerate the population that meets that definition. In the absence of these features, there is no reliable estimate of the total stock of internal migrants nor of the annual flow of internal migrants. With that said, many government documents—for example, the Strategy for Development of High Mountain Settlements of Georgia 2019-2023—do provide estimates of the scale of depopulation, a large share of which can be attributed to migration (and not just to population decline through mortality and/or lower fertility). Determining the IDP population is easier due both to strong monitoring efforts as well as to the legislative framework for providing assistance to registered IDPs, which supports the identification of the forcibly displaced population. As of the end of 2019, the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre estimated that there were 301,000 conflict-induced IDPs in Georgia, and while there were no new displacements related to environmental disasters in 2019, in 2018 there were 310 new IDPs generated by environmental disasters. The IDMC predicts that the pace of environmentally-induced displacement may increase, with sudden-onset disasters such as earthquakes and flooding potentially creating over 12,000 new IDPs per year (Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre , 2021).

The size of both international migrant stocks and flows is easier to estimate given the variety of data sources available to capture cross-border movements. Since 1990, both emigrant and immigrant stocks have remained relatively steady in Georgia. Whereas the immigrant population peaked in 1990 at 304,470 people, the emigrant population was greatest in 2000, when 967,024 migrants born in and/or with the citizenship of Georgia were registered abroad (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2019). Figure 1 below visualizes the trends in international migrant population stocks between 1990 and 2019.

Figure 1: Stocks of immigrants in and emigrants from Georgia, 1990-2019

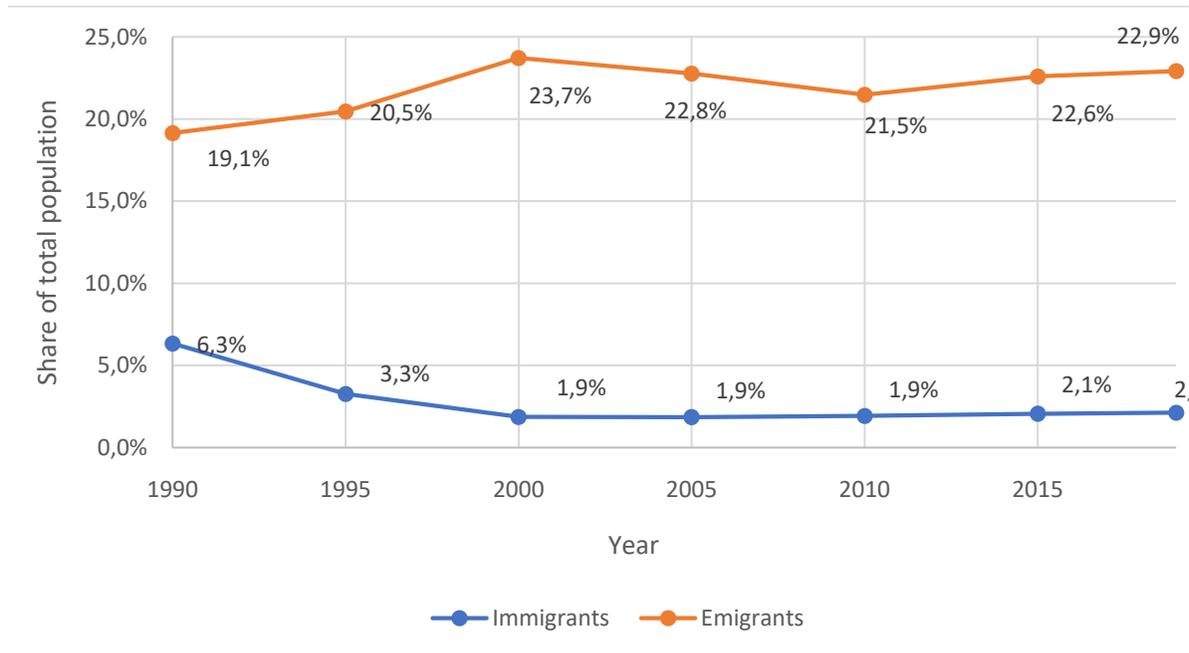


Source: Author's visualization based on United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (2019)

Estimations of the size of both emigrant and immigrant communities vary across data sources. While UNDESA data has been used to construct historical migration trends given the consistency of the methodology used to calculate figures over time, national data sources provide slightly different population estimates. For example, the immigrant population reported by Georgian authorities was estimated at 88,152 persons in 2018, over half of whom (47,883) were citizens of Georgia (State Commission on Migration Issues, 2019).

On the basis of the UNDESA migrant stock figures and World Bank total population estimates, the share of migrants within the total population can be calculated. As a share of the total Georgian population, immigrant stocks have remained small at between a high of 6.3% in 1990 to a share of 2.1% between 2015 and 2019. In contrast, emigrant stocks have represented a much more significant share of the total Georgian population, with a high of 23.7% in 2000 and a current share of 22.9% in 2019. These figures, calculated based on UNDESA (2019) migrant stock data and World Bank (2021) population data, give a rough indication of the scale of population movements and provide a way to compare the relative size of immigrant and emigrant stocks using a similar population reference.

Figure 2: Stocks of immigrants in and emigrants from Georgia as a share of the total Georgian population, 1990-2019



Source: Author's visualization based on migration stock data from United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (2019) and from population data from World Bank (2021).

Migrant stocks—the population residing abroad at a given moment in time—are the natural result of previous migration flows—that is, the population that moved over a border within a given year. While it is beyond the scope of this report to describe both historical and contemporary migration trends in Georgia, it is important to note that current migrant stocks represent heterogeneous groups of migrants who moved for different purposes during different political and economic eras. While in the immediate post-Soviet period both immigration and emigration were largely driven by (both compelled and voluntary) movement of ethnic minorities to their (ancestral) homelands (Caucasus Research Resource Centres, 2007), migrant populations began to diversify in the mid-to-late 1990s. Starting in the mid-1990s (and lasting to approximately 2004), emigration in response to political crises and conflict, and shorter-term labour emigration to a diversifying group of destination countries, became more central trends (Gugushvili, 2013; Labadze, 2013). Since the mid-2000s, labour migration to a growing range of destination countries has increased, as has circularity and the permanent return of a small but growing group of emigrants (Gugushvili, 2013).

The immigrant population has similarly changed in terms of countries of origin and reasons for migration. While the return of (former) Georgian citizens remains an important share of immigrants to Georgia, larger numbers of immigrants have begun moving to Georgia for the sake of tertiary education, entrepreneurship or investment, and for employment purposes (State Commission on Migration Issues, 2015). For example, of the 20,735 residence permits issued in 2019, 5,216 (25.2%) were issued for study purposes, 4,045 (19.5%) for work purposes, and 49 (2.4%) for investment purposes (IOM, 2021 based on statistics from PSDA).

Mirroring the accelerated rate of emigration from Georgia, the scale of returns to Georgia has been grown significantly in the last five years, reflecting different categories of emigrants. The vast majority of Georgian asylum seekers in Europe (over 20,000 in 2019) receive negative decisions on their claims and subsequently depart spontaneously, face departure orders, or register in assisted voluntary return and reintegration pro-

grammes (AVRR)². In 2019, IOM assisted 2,592 Georgians with AVR to Georgia (41% female, 59% male), and additional returnees travelled with the assistance of the French Office for Immigration and Integration (OFII), and Caritas. In addition to those assisted returnees, others have returned spontaneously or independently, without the assistance of governments, international organizations, or NGOs. Of all regions in the country, Tbilisi (urban), Imereti (rural) and Kakheti (rural) have experienced the highest rates of international returns, while Guria (rural) and Adjara (rural) are among the regions experiencing the highest rates of seasonal, and circular migration, with returns regularly occurring throughout the year. Post-arrival reintegration assistance is available from the Government of Georgia to returnees who apply independently and fulfil eligibility criteria (including irregular status abroad).

In addition to the above trends, many Georgian migrants decided to return to their country of origin in the face of insecurity or inability to afford staying abroad during the 2020 global pandemic. According to official statistics, capturing COVID-19 repatriation channels under the Government of Georgia's auspices, more than 23,300 Georgian migrants are known to have returned to Georgia on formal repatriation flights between March and August 2020 (no flights took place after August). Complete figures capturing returns inspired by COVID-19 are believed to be higher, considering returns by land and returns realized independently, via limited, commercial airline flights.

Capturing data on return migration is notoriously difficult even without the global pandemic. Much available data capture returns of assisted nature – those facilitated through voluntary return programmes or those returns executed through deportation. Data on spontaneous (non-assisted) return movements, which constitute the majority of returns, are not consistently recorded³, although immigration statistics do allow some insight into returns given the identification of Georgian nationals among incoming migrants.

MIGRATION GOVERNANCE IN GEORGIA

The growing diversity of immigrant and emigrant populations, consistent concerns about regional depopulation due to internal mobility, and the role of migration management in shaping regional relations have formed the backdrop against which Georgia's migration governance system has evolved. Particularly since 2010, the government of Georgia has supported the development of institutions and institutional coordination mechanisms to enhance a more encompassing migration policy framework. One of the most important mechanisms to consolidate expertise on migration issues and support a coherent vision on migration policy emerged with the creation of the State Commission on Migration Issues (SCMI). The SCMI was established in 2010 through a government ordinance (Government of Georgia, 2010) to serve three interconnected objectives:

1. To support the development of a unified national policy related both to internal and international migration, and, relatedly, to improve national migration management capacities;
2. To support the reintegration of Georgian citizens returning from abroad, and;
3. To support further coherence with migration-related components of the European Neighbourhood Policy Action Plan.

² IOM has been implementing assisted voluntary return and reintegration (AVRR) programmes in Georgia since 2004. A share of Georgian returnees eligible for reintegration assistance as part of assisted voluntary return programmes of IOM varies from year to year, e.g. in 2017 32% of returnees were eligible for assistance, but in years previous and after 2017 the percentage is lower varying from 20 to 23 %.

³ See IOM Georgia (2020) *Report on Reintegration System of Returning migrants: challenges and recommendations*; available upon request.

To achieve these objectives, the SCMI was empowered to prepare expert analyses and provide recommendations on migration issues, to develop policy proposals relating to migration, and to support the further coordination among relevant authorities (through, e.g., common migration data management infrastructure). In 2010 the SCMI was established, and by 2012, an EU-funded Secretariat was formed to support the Commission's functioning and provide expertise on migration-related issues. By 2015, the SCMI included representatives of 13 state agencies and 12 consultative bodies, including five national NGOs and seven IOs/IGOs (State Commission on Migration Issues, 2015). The current membership and functioning of the SCMI is addressed at more length in section VI. The SCMI sittings are organized regularly and thematic working groups have also been established to build SCMI's portfolio in specific topical areas. As of April 2021, the following working groups were operating within SCMI:

- Working group on statelessness
- Migration laboratory⁴
- Working group on Unified Migration Data Analytical System
- Working group on Migration Risk Analysis
- Working group on Integration Issues

The migration governance system in Georgia is characterised by a central institutional coordinating mechanism (in the form of SCMI) and by structures to support information sharing and coordination of policy responses across state institutions, such as information systems and migration data infrastructures. Under the SCMI, the Georgian government developed the Unified Migration Data Analytical System, essentially a management information system that facilitates the storage and sharing of the migration data needed to contribute to the development of policies and programming. The system is considered integral to the updating of two important institutional coordination and information-sharing mechanisms: the Migration Risk Analysis System, and the Migration Profile (State Commission on Migration Issues, 2015). The Migration Risk Analysis System aims to support the systematic analysis of both internal and external migration trends to the end of assessing the risks associated with them and proposing appropriate measures to prevent or mitigate those risks. While the system is being developed by a working group within SCMI chaired by the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the analysis and recommendations given are based on a "whole of government" approach, implying strong inter-institutional coordination and the sustainable intra-institutional investment in staff capacities (State Commission on Migration Issues, 2020).

The Migration Profile similarly supports both institutional capacity related to data analysis and migration-related competencies and inter-institutional cooperation. Migration Profiles first emerged in 2005 as the result of a European Commission Communication on Migration and Development, which emphasised the value of a document that crystallizes current migration trends and outlines the institutional context in which migration is managed to guide Community assistance programming related to migration and poverty reduction. Over time, the Migration Profile has been supported for both its purpose as an outcome (i.e., the final Migration Profile document) and as a process. As a process, the Migration Profile entails a state-owned process of consultation with both government and non-governmental (NGO and IO) stakeholders to identify meaningful migration data, to support its interpretation, and to support the formulation of recommendations that should "enhance policy coherence, evidence-based policymaking and the mainstreaming of migration into development planning" (International Organisation for Migration, 2011). As a process, a Migration Profile is also a means to foster inter-institutional cooperation on migration issues, particularly when dedicated, working groups, or other inter-institutional groups are formed to support its development and subsequent updating.

⁴ Until February 2019, this group was called the working group on migration strategy. The expanded scope of activities merited a shift to the current 'migration laboratory' working group, which is tasked with developing the migration strategy and action plans, preparing medium and brief migration profiles, producing analytical reports, legislative pieces, and coordinating migration and development-related activities (State Commission on Migration Issues, 2021).

The Government of Georgia has supported the development of several migration profiles, including an extended migration profile produced by SCMI in 2011 (Building Migration Partnerships, 2011) and updated medium migration profiles first published by SCMI in 2015 (under the Prague Process context), 2017 and 2019 (State Commission on Migration Issues, 2015; 2017).

The development of migration governance capacities through institutions and information-sharing mechanisms has been accompanied by the expansion of strategies (e.g., the Migration Strategies of Georgia, the 2014-2018 Strategy of the State Border Management of Georgia, the 2013-2020 Strategy for the Development of Professional Education in Georgia), and laws (namely the 2005 Law of Georgia on Legal Status of Aliens and Stateless persons and its 2014 replacement, the 2011 Law of Georgia on Compatriots Residing Abroad and Diaspora Organizations, the 2014 Georgian Citizenship Law, the 2015 Law of Georgia on Labour Migration, and the 2016 Law on International Protection) related to migration or with migration-related components. Importantly, some of the developed policy strategies are not directly tied to migration management, but instead relate to other policy domains (e.g., professional education, labour market development) that can affect or be affected by migrants. The Migration Strategy of 2021-2030 internalised these dimensions, relating the wider development objectives to its own goals.

The development of the Migration Strategy of Georgia and its accompanying action plan covering years 2013-2015 represented another substantial mechanism to encourage more comprehensive and coherent migration governance. The Strategy explicitly identified the need for the migration governance system to address the entire migration trajectory, including eventual return and reintegration. It also emphasised the necessity of inter-institutional consultation and cooperation to address pertinent migration challenges. The Strategy focused on developing or reforming systems, services, and legislation related to: 1) legal immigration and emigration; 2) irregular migration; 3) the asylum system and integration of refugees and persons with humanitarian statuses, and; 4) dignified return and reintegration of Georgian citizens (Government of Georgia, 2013). The subsequent Migration Strategy for Georgia 2016-2020 included the same core domains for further development, but it additionally included objectives related to 1) migration and development; 2) further development of migration management, and; 3) expansion of international cooperation. Under the objective area of further developing migration management, the Strategy specified objectives related to the improvement of migration policy coordination (including enhanced interagency cooperation and further support for existing coordination mechanisms such as the SCMI); the improvement of data collection and analysis methods by introducing and further developing the Unified Migration Data Analysis System (UMAS) and systematic migration risk analyses; the creation of a (e-) monitoring and evaluation system for Migration Strategy and its Action Plan, with respective indicators, and thematic studies (State Commission on Migration Issues, 2016).

The current migration governance strategic framework—the Migration Strategy of Georgia 2021-2030—covers a longer time period and has an overarching ambition to reduce the negative consequences of migration and to enhance the positive potentials of migration for the development of Georgia. The explicit framing of the policy around the “coordination, proper, and pragmatic orchestration of all directions contributing to the country development” (State Commission on Migration Issues, 2020; pp 9) emphasises a government vision of migration as a cross-cutting policy issue that requires coherent government response to positively contribute to development. The following table summarises the sectoral priorities and related objectives of the current strategy.

Table 1: Priorities, goals, & linked objectives of Migration Strategy of Georgia 2021-2030

PRIORITY AREA	GOAL	OBJECTIVES
Enhancement of migration management	Development of a migration management system built on strong institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvement of strategic migration management through strengthening the coordinating role of SCMI • Facilitating evidence-based decision making • Improving migration data management • Facilitating capacity-building of local self-government authorities & strengthening the role of local authorities in migration management • Increasing international cooperation & knowledge exchange • Ensuring sustainability of migration-related reforms
Facilitation of legal migration	Expansion & improvement of development-oriented legal migration opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvement of labour migration management • Facilitating & developing temporary/circular legal labour emigration • Raising public awareness on legal labour emigration opportunities • Improving the visa & residence policy in line with international good practise • Facilitating migration for sake of higher education & research • Expanding visa-free travel for Georgian citizens • Improving consular services & raising crisis-response preparedness abroad • Increasing capacities of personnel involved in legal migration governance

PRIORITY AREA	GOAL	OBJECTIVES
Fight against irregular migration	Effectively fight irregular migration & transnational organised crime; improved border security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased international cooperation on combating irregular migration & trafficking in human beings • Effective implementation of readmission agreements • Further development of expulsion mechanisms for irregular residents in Georgia • Improving prevention, detection, & prosecution of crimes related to trafficking in human being • Improving technical equipment, enhancing surveillance capabilities, & developing high-speed communication networks at the state border • Digitalisation of the border security management information system • Improvement of the delimitation and demarcation of Georgia's borders • Maintaining & improving document security standards • Improving capacities of personnel responsible for fighting irregular migration
Reintegration of returned migrants	Facilitation of sustainable reintegration of returned migrants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tailoring of reintegration programmes to the needs of different groups of returnees • Establishing unified approaches to returnee reintegration • Raising public awareness on reintegration opportunities in Georgia • Improving data on returnees in Georgia • Supporting the labour market inclusion & integration of returnees
Engagement of diaspora in the development of Georgia	Enhancing connections with the Georgian diaspora & creating opportunities for diaspora to engage in development in Georgia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting maintenance of national & cultural identity of Georgians abroad • Facilitating engagement of high-skilled Georgian diaspora in national development • Enhancing links & increasing communication between the Georgian state & diaspora abroad

PRIORITY AREA	GOAL	OBJECTIVES
Development of asylum system	Developing the international protection system through further improvement of asylum procedures & institutional framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further improvement of asylum procedures • Enhancing & ensuring sustainability of the institutional framework of the asylum system
Integration of foreigners	Improvement of approaches to integration of foreigners in Georgia & the creation of pro- development integration programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing the State Programme for Integration of International Protection Holders and Asylum Seekers • Facilitating reintegration of victims of human trafficking • Designing coherent approaches to immigrant integration • Raising public awareness on the development potentials of immigration • Supporting language acquisition among immigrants

Source: Compiled from State Commission on Migration Issues (2020)

The sectoral priorities and accompanying goals and objectives in the 2021-2030 Migration Strategy further emphasise the need to develop state capacities related to different dimensions of migration management, as several sectoral areas have specific objectives related to enhancing the knowledge and skills of personnel. The strategy also identifies further needed legislative changes or additions, and it outlines several domains in which coordinated approaches (potentially linking national to local level agencies and their responses) need to be developed (e.g., related to reintegration programming).

The growing sophistication of the migration governance framework in Georgia reflects a commitment to identifying migration as a cross-cutting policy issue that can best be addressed using a so-called “whole of government” approach. Given the strong ties among the concepts of policy mainstreaming, coherence, and “whole of government” approaches, the following section examines these concepts.

III. POLICY COHERENCE, MIGRATION MAINSTREAMING, & THE “WHOLE OF GOVERNMENT” APPROACH

An important component of this assessment is understanding what policy mainstreaming and policy coherence really entail—and how these components relate to “whole of government” approaches to migration governance. This section reviews these concepts and explains how they relate to Georgia’s governance framework related to reintegration and to migration and development.

Policy coherence, policy mainstreaming, and “whole of government” approaches all fundamentally relate to the coordination of policy responses to complex, multifaceted public policy issues. Coordination across both institutions and agencies at the same administrative level (referred to as “horizontal” coordination) and between institutions/agencies and their subsidiaries or counterparts at different administrative levels (referred to as “vertical” coordination) is important for improving responses to cross-cutting policy issues like migration. The multifaceted nature of migration may require policy responses that fall outside of any single institution’s mandate; such responses may require specific expertise and resources beyond what can reasonably be mobilized within one agency.

Poor or absent inter-institutional cooperation on cross-cutting policy issues like migration may limit both the efficiency and effectiveness of policies and interventions. In some policy contexts, different institutions or agencies may target the same beneficiary populations (e.g., non-nationals) through different mechanisms and for different objectives, and in some cases, different institutions or agencies may have policies or interventions that actually address similar objectives or outcomes despite having different mandates. Overlaps in policies or interventions related to beneficiary populations and/or outcomes may create duplication of efforts and may sometimes inspire competition for resources or “turf wars” between government bodies. In some instances, lack of coordination may also produce policy incoherence, which can undermine both the effectiveness and legitimacy of public policies.

The concept of policy (in)coherence began emerging in the political science literature in the early 2000s, particularly related to international development cooperation policy and the coordination of international development programming with national development objectives. The essence of policy coherence is that the objectives of a particular policy or intervention are not undermined by policies or activities, either in the same or another policy domain (Hoebink, Deuss, de Haas, & Wagemans, 2005). Policy *in*coherence may arise at different levels: within governments (horizontally or vertically), between governments, on the multilateral level (related to international standards) or in multistakeholder settings characterized by a diversity of viewpoints from different types of actors (e.g., government, non-government/civil society, private sector). Policy incoherence can also occur by design or may arise because of unpredictable circumstances. For example, some policy incoherence may be unavoidable because of external factors that cannot be sufficiently anticipated—for example, complex emergencies like the COVID-19 pandemic may create unintended consequences of a policy, which was designed under different circumstances. In other cases, unintended incoherence may arise because of lack of knowledge, leading to the design of policies or interventions that undermine others due to insufficient understanding of a policy trend or impact, or population dynamic. Some forms of incoherence are intended in the sense that they arise because a policy or intervention was designed to favor one interest group over another, sometimes at the expense of the objective of another policy. Finally, policy coherence may arise because it simply

cannot be avoided, as limited fiscal space may lead policy bodies to select a policy option that is not optimal and may lead to undermining of another policy (Picciotto, 2005).

While the concept of policy (in)coherence emerged related to development more generally, the concept has recently been applied specifically to the field of migration and development. Within the domain of migration and development, Hong and Knoll (2016) defined policy coherence for migration and development as occurring when migration and development-related policies: “pursue synergies to advance shared objectives; actively seek to minimize or eliminate negative side effects of policies; prevent policies from detracting from one another or from the achievement of agreed-upon development goals” (pp 9). This definition, while developed primarily in reflection of intergovernmental and multilateral incoherence, has meaningful insights for intra-governmental incoherence. The definition particularly emphasizes the necessity of understanding the interactions of migration with other policy fields for the sake of fulfilling development objectives, and it also underscores that promoting policy coherence can help government reduce unintended, negative policy spillovers. The definition also importantly suggests that policies related to migration and development should not detract from broader development goals, requiring calibration of migration and development-related policies and their objectives to overarching development policies, objectives, and outcomes. (Hong & Knoll, 2016).

One mechanism of promoting policy coherence for migration and development is encouraging policy mainstreaming. The mainstreaming of different policy issues into (international) public policy agendas has occurred for some time, with wider mainstreaming movements arising related to gender and to environmental issues. On a basic level, mainstreaming entails the integration of a particular lens or perspective into all stages of policy (see, e.g., Beveridge, Nott, & Stephen, 2011) with the objective of ensuring that policies are sensitive to the unique characteristics, needs, and vulnerabilities of specific population groups (e.g., based on gender) or to specific trends (e.g., environmental protection). Mainstreaming can thus address the challenge of policy incoherence arising because of lack of knowledge or because of poor anticipation of the potential spill over effects created by policy.

Within the migration and development field specifically, the concept of mainstreaming has gained increasing attention and traction since the early 2000s, when bodies like the Global Migration Group began providing guidance for policy makers and practitioners on how migration can be mainstreamed into development planning (Global Migration Group, 2010). A number of handbooks and documents have since been published that provide good-practice examples of how migration has been integrated into the design of development projects and interventions (UN-EU Joint Migration and Development Initiative, 2010), that provide guidelines for mainstreaming migration into local development planning (UN-EU Joint Migration and Development Initiative, 2017), and that provide guidelines for mainstreaming migration into international cooperation and development⁵.

Despite the growing attention to the issue of mainstreaming migration into different dimensions of development policy and planning, the conceptualization and definition of migration mainstreaming into development remain ambiguous. Following the guidance of Wickramasekara (2015), this assessment views migration mainstreaming as both process and outcome. In essence, it understands migration mainstreaming for development as: 1) the process of anticipating the two-way interactions between migration and development, and the implications of migration for the design and implementation of development policies and interventions, and 2) the extent to which migration is recognised as a cross-cutting issue requiring coordinated, cross-sectoral policy response. In line with this definition, migration mainstreaming is considered an integral part of

⁵ The IOM-led project on mainstreaming migration into international cooperation and development ([Mainstreaming Migration into International Cooperation and Development \(MMICD\) | Regional Office for the European Economic Area, the European Union and NATO \(iom.int\)](#)) is supporting the development of sector-specific guidelines on integrating migration into international development cooperation.

promoting policy coherence of migration for development, as it recognises the importance of promoting inter-agency and inter-ministerial cooperation and coordination.

This understanding of migration mainstreaming into development also requires understanding of what development is and includes (or does not include). The term *development* can be conceptualised, defined, and operationalised in radically different ways by academics, international organizations, and policy makers. In this assessment development is understood as the progression of human and economic growth, encompassing (positive) changes on micro- (individual), meso- (communities, institutions), and macro- (societies, systems) levels. Development is understood as inherently multidimensional, occurring not only through improvements in financial capital endowments but also through improvements in human capital endowments (e.g., education, skills) and social capital endowments (e.g., networks), as well as through normative, cultural shifts. Understanding development in this way invites more nuanced assessments of the two-way interactions with migration, as migration and its consequences (e.g., remittances, brain drain/brain waste, knowledge exchange) can affect development, just as development can shape both opportunities for and consequences of migration.

The selected conceptualization of migration mainstreaming implies that institutional cooperation on migration and development issues must occur, which relates to another concept—namely the “whole of government” approach. The whole of government approach, similar to mainstreaming, can be considered one mechanism for reducing policy incoherence and reducing the treatment of specific policy issues in isolated policy “silos”. This approach is often a strategy to support a shared vision and culture of policy making across the entire government, creating a system of collaboration that can support the pooling and maximization of resources (e.g., finances, personnel, equipment) needed to tackle cross-cutting policy issues. How a whole of government approach is executed can vary. For example, strong centralized leadership on a policy issue through the establishment of central government functions like strategic units under a prime minister’s office is one way of enforcing inter-institutional cooperation. Less “extreme” mechanisms for promoting cooperation and the development of unified approaches to policy making are the establishment of institutional coordination mechanisms like cabinet committees, inter-ministerial/inter-agency units, and task forces that require participating institutions to provide (permanent) members. On the level of programmes and interventions, whole of government approaches can entail the creation of coordination teams, like technical working groups and steering committees (Christensen & Laegreid, 2007).

Taken together, the concepts of policy (in)coherence, migration mainstreaming into development, and whole of government approaches demonstrate the importance of approaching a cross-cutting policy issue such as migration with a more holistic policy lens. The concepts will be used to assess select national development policies and programmes and to suggest ways that migration (including reintegration) can be more comprehensively included in the development agenda. The next section of the report addresses more specifically how the assessment and development of recommendations was done.

IV METHODOLOGY

To meet the main objective of this assessment—to identify how migration, including return and reintegration, can be more effectively mainstreamed into the Georgian development agenda—a methodological approach based primarily on thematic coding of policy documents was developed. The methodological approach was determined through consultations between the project lead within IOM Georgia and two consultants undertaking the assessment. Before describing the key concepts driving the assessment and the specific methods used to meet the assessment objective, an important dimension of the methodology is the overarching rationale for the assessment and its timing.

The *Assessment of Policy Documents to Support Mainstreaming Migration into the Development and Reintegration Agenda of Georgia* has been commissioned by IOM and SDC to complement their activities in the migration and development domain, with due consideration of sustainable reintegration, as these areas that have gained increasing relevance given the Georgian government’s interest. The review coincides with renewed state commitment to developing a coordinated and strategic approach to migration management, which is well articulated in the *2021-2030 Migration Strategy of Georgia*. The *Strategy* recognizes the importance of coordinated institutional approaches to migration policy and addresses the role of inter-institutional coordination mechanisms, such as the State Commission on Migration Issues and its Secretariat, in ensuring coordinated, “whole of government” approaches to migration. The *Strategy* also explicitly recognizes the importance of bottom-up approaches to migration policy coherence, proposing activities to build the capacity and involvement of local-level authorities to design and implement migration-related policies. The national migration policy context in Georgia very much inter-alia reflects the evolution of international migration management and governance norms and frameworks, particularly that of the *Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration* (GCM). The *2021-2030 Migration Strategy of Georgia* emphasizes the expansion and improvement of development-oriented migration opportunities, particularly through legal labour migration channels. The assessment is therefore a timely contribution to the Georgian government’s long-term commitment to supporting migration *for* development and in implementing the objectives of the GCM.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

As described previously, the overall objective of the assessment is to identify how migration, including return and reintegration, can be more effectively mainstreamed into the Georgian development agenda. Several research questions have been used to guide the review in meeting this objective. The main research question underlying the assessment is: *To what extent is migration, including return and reintegration, embedded in development-focused policy documents and institutional arrangements?* To answer this main research question, four sub-questions have been posed:

In what stages of the policy cycle are migration trends and migrant populations included, and are there stages in the policy cycle in which migration/migrants are not included at all?

1. What migrant categories or populations (e.g., returnees, diaspora, labour migrants) are most addressed in policies and policy documents?
2. Are migration trends/migrant populations systematically embedded differently in the policies and policy documents of different institutions?
3. How is institutional coordination on migration and development-related policy issues supported?

Taken together, the answers to these questions can help in understanding the extent to which key development policies and policy documents meaningfully include and reflect on migration trends and migrant populations. The assessment reflects primarily on policies and institutional coordination mechanisms embedded in such policies. To fully understand the extent to which migration is mainstreamed into development policy, it is important to not only understand the policies themselves but to also understand the scope and sustainability of inter-institutional cooperation and coordination mechanisms that can support coherent approaches to migration mainstreaming. This element can only be partially addressed through the current assessment given its focus on development strategies and policies. One important limitation of this assessment is therefore that a complete stakeholder mapping and evaluation of institutional coordination mechanisms has not been completed, potentially meriting additional study.

RESEARCH DESIGN

KEY DEFINITIONS

In line with the description of concepts in Section III, this assessment views migration mainstreaming as both process and outcome. Migration mainstreaming for development is understood as encompassing: 1) the process of anticipating the two-way interactions between migration and development, and the implications of migration for the design and implementation of development policies and interventions, and 2) the extent to which migration is recognised as a cross-cutting issue requiring coordinated, cross-sectoral policy response. Practically, this conceptualisation of migration mainstreaming for development implies that both development strategies/policies/interventions *and* institutional arrangements supporting cooperation on migration and development issues must be examined.

DOCUMENT SELECTION

To answer the research questions identified above, this assessment involved thematic analysis of textual sources, namely policy strategies, programmes, and supporting documents (e.g., action plans). Whereas institutional mainstreaming was assessed through evaluation of the state Migration Strategy 2021-2030, the extent to which migration is mainstreamed in policy was assessed through specific development policy documents. The documents used in this analysis were sourced in two ways: first, based on a list of documents provided by the SDC and, second, based on identification of related documents through review of documents and consultations with policy stakeholders.

The SDC provided the following list of documents for review:

- The 2021-2030 Migration Strategy of Georgia and accompanying Action Plan;
- Decentralization Strategy 2020-2025 and its Action Plan;
- Strategy for Development of High Mountain Settlements 2019-2023 and its Action Plan;
- Village Support Programme;
- *Integrated Development Programme 2020-2022 for Pilot Regions*;
- Resolution of the Government of Georgia of March 27, 2020 №200 “On Approval of the Procedures and Criteria for Selection the Projects of the Integrated Development Program for the 2020-2022 Pilot Regions;

- Business support state programmes by Enterprise Georgia, GITA, ARDA and other state supported programmes (to be expanded in consultation with municipal stakeholders);
- Regional and municipal development strategies, plans and programmes in the selected municipalities in Tbilisi, Imereti, Kakheti and Guria.

As some of the proposed documents required further specification (e.g., business support state programmes) and some were not made available within the research period (e.g., regional and municipal development strategies, plans, and programmes), the list of analysed documents slightly differed. Table 2 below provides an overview of the reviewed documents, specifying the type of document, policy sector, and the lead agency or authoring institution.

Table 2: Summary of development policy documents analysed for migration mainstreaming

Document name	Type	Policy sector	Lead agency/authoring institution
Decentralization Strategy 2020-2025	Strategy	Public management; local development	Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure of Georgia
Strategy for Development of High Mountain Settlements of Georgia 2019-2023	Strategy	Regional development	Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure of Georgia
Pilot integrated regional development programme for Guria, Imereti, Kakheti and Racha Lechkhumi, and Kvemo Svaneti 2020-2022	Action programme	Regional development	Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure of Georgia
Village Support Programme	Governmental Programme	Rural Development	Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure of Georgia
Produce in Georgia	Governmental Programme	Private Sector Development; MSMEs Support	Enterprise Georgia, Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development
Plant the Future	Governmental Programme	Agriculture Development	Rural Development Agency, Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture
Preferential Agrocredit	Governmental Programme	Agriculture Development	Rural Development Agency, Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture

Document name	Type	Policy sector	Lead agency/authoring institution
Agroinsurance	Governmental Programme	Agriculture Development	Rural Development Agency, Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture
Agriculture Machine Co-Financing Programme	Governmental Programme	Agriculture Development	Rural Development Agency, Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture
State Programme for Tea Plantation Rehabilitation	Governmental Programme	Agriculture Development	Rural Development Agency, Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture
Co-financing of Processing and Storage Enterprises	Governmental Programme	Agriculture Development	Rural Development Agency, Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture
Innovation Matching Grant	Programme of the GITA	Innovation Support	Georgia's Innovation and Technology Agency, Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development
Co-financing Grants for Start-ups	Programme of the GITA	Innovation Support	Georgia's Innovation and Technology Agency, Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development
Small Grants Programme	Programme of the GITA	Innovation Support	Georgia's Innovation and Technology Agency, Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development
Local Economic Development Plan 2020-2021	Municipal development programme	Local development	Municipality of Akhmeta

The reviewed documents were available in Georgian or English; consultants with different language competencies therefore reviewed the different documents following consultation on the document analysis methodology outlined below.

DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

The documents identified by SDC and through forward/backward referral to connected documents are analyzed using thematic coding. In this analysis method, documents are reviewed for specific words and phrases that relate to specific themes, with select passages coded according to descriptive labels that correspond to a particular code or theme. An initial coding scheme was devised based on review of international literature on policy mainstreaming more generally and mainstreaming migration in development planning more specifically (see reference list for an abbreviated list of consulted resources). Such literature provides guidance on the indicators that can be used to assess the extent of mainstreaming, and it also provides insight into the components of policy that other assessments of migration mainstreaming have focused on. The coding structure used to guide the analysis, with the main code (“parent node”), sub-code (“child node”), and a description of the code, is summarized in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Summary of proposed coding structure

Code/Node	Description
Policy stage	Stage in the policy/intervention process or policy/intervention context in which the role of migration/migrants is identified
<i>Agenda setting</i>	Inclusion in stage of framing and identifying policy problems, including through, e.g., needs assessments, consultations
<i>Formulation</i>	Inclusion in stage of defining policy parameters and designing policies/interventions, including as (formal) part of coalition of acknowledged policy actors
<i>Adoption</i>	Inclusion as formal actors in process of deciding on proposed policy solutions/interventions, e.g., as part of (permanent) representative function (such as dedicated parliamentary seats)
<i>Implementation</i>	Inclusion as actors contributing to policy/intervention implementation, including as providers of resources (e.g., finance, knowledge), responsible implementation partners, etc.
<i>Monitoring and evaluation</i>	Inclusion as mechanism to assess policy/intervention efficacy, efficiency, and/or transparency
Policy role	Assigned role of migration/migrants in different stages of the policy/intervention process
<i>Co-owner</i>	Migrants identified as “co-owners” of policy or intervention process, often implying shared responsibility, resources, and decision-making capacity
<i>Stakeholder</i>	Migrants identified as peripheral stakeholders, with limited influence and segmented responsibility in specific dimensions or stages of policy/interventions
<i>Beneficiary</i>	Migrants identified as (passive) beneficiaries or recipients of policy/intervention

Type of migration	Form of migration referred to in policy
<i>Immigration</i>	In-bound migration of non-nationals into the country
<i>Emigration</i>	Out-bound migration of both nationals to other countries
Diaspora	Community of persons of (ancestral) Georgian origin living elsewhere, including second- and further-generation descendants of Georgian nationals or persons born in Georgia
Labour migration	Individuals who work abroad, in varying sectors and varying skill levels, for differing periods of time (including, e.g., circular labour mobility, seasonal work)
Return migration	Nations or persons born in Georgia who return to the country after residing abroad for some period, and who may return as part of both voluntary or compelled movements
<i>Non-migrants affected by migration</i>	Individual and communities remaining in the country of origin affected by migration (e.g., stay-behind or left-behind families)
Extent of inclusion	Extent to which migration and migrants are holistically addressed or integrated into the policy/intervention
<i>Integrated approach</i>	Migration/migrants are an embedded, integral element, with integration of their profiles, needs, and capacities throughout the policy/intervention document
<i>Strategic inclusion</i>	Migration/migrants are included as a key, strategic element of a policy/intervention, generally in reference to a specific dimension or activity pillar
<i>Contextual inclusion</i>	Migration/migrants are included as part of situation analysis or contextual/background description of policy problem; used primarily in framing or as a beneficiary without meaningful tailoring or targeting
<i>No identification</i>	Migration/migrants are not mentioned in the policy/intervention

The coding scheme provided analytical categories that correspond directly to the sub-research questions used to guide the analysis. Using the described coding scheme, each policy document was reviewed and coded, and the results of the coding exercise were summarized in an Excel document. In addition to allowing archiving of main themes and findings, the Excel-based document allowed for the frequency of specific codes to be calculated by features of the policy document such as responsible institution and policy sector. This analytical method allows for identification of trends across policy documents, revealing gaps related to when in the policy cycle migration/migrants are most addressed, what types of migration/migrants are most commonly identified, and the role migrants are ascribed in the policy. Taken together, these three features can help in identifying the extent to which migration is included in the policy. The following sections summarise the findings of the assessment process, first related to the extent of migration/migrant inclusion in the policy documents, and then by the institutional coordination mechanisms that can foster further mainstreaming.

V. RESULTS: MIGRATION MAINSTREAMING IN DEVELOPMENT POLICY DOCUMENTS

A first important result of the assessment is that the three identified dimensions of migration mainstreaming (how migration/migrants are embedded in different policy stages, what roles migration/migrants are ascribed in the policy process, and what categories of migrants are identified) could not be assessed, as **only three of 15 reviewed documents mentioned migration or migrants at all**. Whereas the Migration Strategy 2021-2030 explicitly recognises the two-way interactions between migration and development, such two-way interactions were absent from the reviewed development policy documents. The absence of any direct or indirect reference to migration, either internal or international, in such a large share of documents is marked. Given the relatively limited number of policy domains addressed in the selected documents, it would be inaccurate to assert that migration is missing from development policy strategies or plans across the board. It does seem as if there is no systematic reflection of migration in important policy documents in some policy domains such as agricultural development, however, which may suggest limited institutional coordination given the focus on rural depopulation as a result of internal migration in the *Strategy for Development of High Mountain Settlements of Georgia 2019-2023*, which addresses communities whose main economic activity is agricultural production.

EMBEDDING OF MIGRATION ACROSS THE POLICY PROCESS

The three documents that addressed migration in any capacity were the *Strategy for Development of High Mountain Settlements of Georgia 2019-2023*; the *Pilot Integrated Regional Development Programme for Guria, Imereti, Kakheti and Racha Lechkhumi and Kvemo Svaneti*, and; the *Local Economic Development Plan 2020-2021 of Akhmeta Municipality*. Whereas the first two documents are regional development strategies, the third is a development plan at municipal level. The three documents addressed migration in a similar way by describing migration trends as part of a general context motivating the policy/strategy or underscoring the need to take particular actions. For example, in the *Strategy for Development of High Mountain Settlements of Georgia 2019-2023*, migration was framed in an exclusively negative sense, with migration described as arising as an externality or consequence of poor development and absent livelihood opportunities in specific settlements. The document recognised two-way interactions between migration and development but only through negative feedback cycles; for example, migration was stated as reflecting poor development opportunities and was identified as contributing to further development dysfunction through further skewing demographic profiles and reducing available labour pools. A similar framing was used in the *Pilot Integrated Regional Development Programme for Guria, Imereti, Kakheti and Racha Lechkhumi and Kvemo Svaneti*. Although this document more explicitly reflected on the mutual interactions between migration and development at local level and made explicit reference to the *2016-2020 Migration Strategy for Georgia*, including to potential positive feedback cycles between migration and development, it also referred to migration only as part of a context of rural depopulation. The Akhmeta municipality's Local Economic Development Plan identified migration within a SWOT analysis as one reason contributing to unmet demand for qualified local workforce, with the document identifying poor wages as a reason for qualified, specialised personnel to turn to emigration. **The policy documents that described migration trends as part of the general policy context therefore largely locate migration as part of policy agenda setting.**

The incorporation of migration dynamics into the situation analysis underlying the development of a strategy/programme suggests that **migration is perceived as being part of the policy problem that the document**

seeks to address. Doing so requires some nuanced understanding of population dynamics, including assessment of the driving factors that influence movement. The two regional development strategies provide specific statistics to support the framing of migration as an expression of development dysfunction, suggesting that data is being collected and analysed that allows for (limited) linkage of migration motivations to the local development context. The statistics used to demonstrate the scale of population movements reflect only the first stages of the migration trajectory, however, as they only attest to reasons for which populations move into urban areas. Neither document addresses circular migration or return, both of which are likely to occur among at least some portion of the population.

While problem analysis is an important part of the agenda-setting stage of the policy process, it is only one element of agenda setting. Another important component of agenda-setting relates to how specific problems and their potential solutions are raised and gain traction with policy makers and the wider public; a process that generally includes consultation. While migration/migrants were recognised as “belonging” to the general problem of regional underdevelopment and in the sense reflect inclusion in the agenda-setting stage of the policy cycle, none of the three documents the explicitly included reference to migration identified migrants as sources of information that could be consulted in the definition of the policy problem or its potential solutions.

The two regional development strategies that mentioned migration/migrants explicitly also included at least brief reference to migration in the final stage of the policy cycle, related to monitoring and evaluation (M&E). The M&E stage of the policy cycle relates to how the efficiency, effectiveness, or transparency of a policy or intervention can be evaluated. In many policy strategies, programmes, and plans, indicators are given that can support the assessment of a policy’s progress to achieving a specified objective. **Both the *Strategy for Development of High Mountain Settlements* and the *Pilot Integrated Regional Development Programme* mention migration as an outcome indicator that can be used to assess progress.** For example, the *Strategy for Development of High Mountain Settlements* indicates reduced outward migration as an indicator of progress toward achieving Objective 8, support for improved demographic standing (pp41-42). The *Pilot Integrated Regional Development Programme* similarly used reduced out-migration as an indicator of progress toward a desired impact of “increased social equality and improved delivery of public services” (pp 32). In line with the overall framing of migration as an expression of poor development outcomes and opportunities, **the two documents identify reduction of migration as the only meaningful indicator of progress**, not recognising that indicators such as increased in-migration, return, and sustainable reintegration of former residents into local communities and labour markets can be meaningful indicators of progress.

THE ROLE OF MIGRATION/MIGRANTS IN THE POLICY PROCESS

Migration as a trend or migrants as a specific population may be ascribed different roles in the policy process, often changing according to the stage in the policy process. During the agenda-setting stage, for example, **migrants in the analysed documents were ascribed the passive role of being part of the general problem construction**, rather than ascribed more active roles as articulators of policy dilemmas or their potential solutions. While none of the reviewed documents included migrants or migration in the formulation stage of the policy process, where specific solutions and the targeted groups they should include are constructed, one can imagine migration/migrants having a clear role. For example, interventions could be designed based on needs assessments conducted among migrants, or specific policies or programmes could be designed to respond to specific migration trends (in terms of, e.g., migrant demographic profiles). In the stage of policy adoption, migrants could be included as part of formal consultation processes on the concrete policy solutions. Migrants could also be envisioned as part of the implementation stage, for example, as part of technical working groups or steering committees for interventions, or as part of civil society organizations (for example, diaspora associations) that may be partners for delivery of services. **In the final policy stage, migrants were**

included in monitoring and evaluation as passive components of a larger trend, but they were not ascribed a role in the policy process. Migrants as such were not even identified as beneficiaries of interventions. **As reduced out-migration was used as an indicator of intervention process, non-migrants rather than migrants were given the role of beneficiary.** In this sense, *potential migrants* were implicitly described as being potentially affected by a policy or intervention (for example, the *Strategy for Development of High Mountain Settlements* notes the importance of revitalising local businesses to reduce emigration or incentivise return), but they were not explicitly targeted by tailored interventions or policy solutions.

The inclusion of migrants as part of the general context of the policy problem and their neglected inclusion particularly in the formulation and implementation phases reflects limited recognition of the potential pro-development aspects of migration. Migrants were not conceptualised as potential stakeholders who could contribute resources, including financing or expertise, to the design or execution of components of the policy or interventions described. The lack of recognition of migrants as contributors to development is marked given existing programmes to incentivise the immigration of investors, suggesting limited correspondence between specific migration policies or programmes and wider development strategies. **While the documents did recognise the resources generated by migration, particularly remittances, they did not describe how those resources could be specifically mobilised within the envisioned policy or entailed actions.** Migrants were never described as being co-owners in the policy or related interventions, even though there are formal mechanisms to include migrants in national policy-making apparatuses (e.g., through dedicated parliamentary representation). The very limited roles given to migration/migrants in the policy process likely reflects a limited understanding of how diverse migrant populations truly are, and how diverse the drivers and potential benefits of migration may be—which is addressed in the next section.

CATEGORIES/FORMS OF MIGRANTS/MIGRATION IDENTIFIED

Within the policy documents that identified migrants, **very few forms of migration or categories of migrants were identified, revealing limited reflection of the heterogeneity of migration trends.** Migration was generally limited to the outward movement of people from “less developed”, generally rural or marginal areas to urban areas both within and beyond Georgia, generally for employment or education purposes. **Internal labour migrants were the most mentioned specific category of migrants,** and sometimes smaller groups of labour migrants, like youth or skilled workers, were also mentioned. For example, the *Strategy for Development of High Mountain Settlements* explains that:

“Negative demographic and migration dynamics are caused by young residents’ search for education and employment opportunities and means for the improvement in living conditions in other areas. Villagers choose to move to administrative and tourist centres of the same municipalities or bigger cities of Georgia. Economically-active citizens leave the places of habitation in search for seasonal jobs for more than three months.” (pp31)

The focus is therefore mostly on internal movement for better (long-term) livelihood opportunities, and to a certain extent on international migration, with higher expected prevalence among younger residents. The two policy documents that explicitly included migrants did identify other specific forms/categories of mobility, with very limited mentioning (<5 occurrences throughout the document). These included:

- **“Ecomigrants”:** The *Strategy for Development of High Mountain Settlements* identifies this group by name but does not explain what the term means or includes. The document notes that natural disasters such

as landslides have worsened due to increased precipitation, and presumably some internal displacement due to natural disasters has occurred, but the document does not identify this trend explicitly.

- **Ethnic minorities:** Both the *Strategy for Development of High Mountain Settlements* and the *Pilot Integrated Regional Development Programme* mention ethnic minorities as particular populations affected by regional development challenges. While it may be presumed that at least some of these populations are part of historical immigrant groups (e.g., people from Azerbaijan or Armenia), neither document identifies them as being part of historical diasporas.
- **Diaspora:** The *Pilot Integrated Regional Development Programme* recognised the existence of the diaspora, linking this particular category to understanding the potential for migration to affect regional development. The group was only mentioned in passing as a population addressed by the Migration Strategy.
- **Returnees:** Returning migrants were explicitly identified in the *Pilot Integrated Regional Development Programme*, where—similar to the *diaspora*—returning migrants were mentioned in passing in reference to the targets of the Migration Strategy. The *Strategy for Development of High Mountain Settlements* implicitly identified returnees in a SWOT analysis, where “encouragement of reversal of migration of economically active local residents” (pp36) was identified as an opportunity.

Given the complexity of migration trends in Georgia, one could imagine diverse categories or groups of migrants being included in development strategies, plans, and programmes. International emigrants as a very broad category are very relevant in the Georgian context and could include specific subpopulations, including educational migrants, labour migrants, and the diaspora. The diaspora as a broad category may be readily connectable to policy programmes for agricultural development, rural tourism development, (micro) small and medium enterprise/private sector development, and innovation support; particular sub-groups such as diaspora entrepreneurs and diaspora direct investors could also be identified. While specific figures on return migration from both international and internal destinations are lacking, there are very clear implications of return migration for development of local communities, as returnees are absorbed into specific local contexts. While the documents did recognise return, different groups of returning migrants could be explicitly identified. Internal returning migrants may face different challenges and create different opportunities than migrants who have returned, either voluntarily or with compulsion, from international destinations. The limited recognition and disaggregation of migrant populations reflects limited analysis of the specific interactions between development and different forms of migration, which are not unpacked in a nuanced way that would support further tailoring of policy solutions.

Taken together, the findings related to the stage of the policy process in which migration/migrants are included, the policy roles ascribed, and the specific migration trends/migrant populations identified, suggest limited mainstreaming of migration into the selected policy documents. A very small number of the reviewed policy documents addressed migration at all. In the two policy documents that did explicitly reference migration, the two-way interactions between migration and development were generally superficially described, and the potential contributions of migration to development were not (systematically) addressed. The policy documents had only contextual inclusion of migration/migrants. While migrant populations or migration trends were included as part of a situation analysis or contextual/background description of the policy problem, migration was used primarily in framing the policy problem and, when mentioned as part of future policy solutions, *potential* migrants were described as beneficiaries without meaningful tailoring or targeting of solutions to their particular characteristics. Means of better supporting the embedding of migration, specifically issues around return and reintegration, into different development strategies, programmes, and plans is addressed in Section 7.

VI. RESULTS: MIGRATION MAINSTREAMING AS OUTCOME

As an outcome, migration mainstreaming is indicated by the extent to which migration is recognised as a cross-cutting issue requiring coordinated, cross-sectoral policy response. While the extent to which migration is being actively mainstreamed into development policy in Georgia seems somewhat diffused, there nevertheless seems to be clear recognition—at least on the national level—that leveraging migration for development requires coordinated, cross-government responses.

On the national level, the State Commission on Migration Issues (SCMI), created in 2010, and its Secretariat, which was created in 2012, is responsible for coordinating the migration-related issues based on the competences of different institutions and agencies across the government. The Commission has nine member agencies, representing different mandates and concerns related to migration. These agencies are:

- The Ministry of Justice (chair)
- The Ministry of Internal Affairs (co-chair)
- The State Security Service
- The Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- The Ministry of Internally-Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Labor, Health and Social Affairs
- Ministry of Education and Science
- Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development
- The Ministry of Finance
- The National Statistics Office

In addition to the Commission members, there are also 5 international/intergovernmental organizations (e.g., Delegation of the European Union to Georgia, International Organization for Migration [IOM], International Centre for Migration Policy Development [ICMPD], German International Cooperation Society [GIZ], the UN High Commissioner for Refugees [UNHCR]) and 4 national NGOs with a consultative status to the SCMI (State Commission on Migration Issues, 2017).

By itself, the SCMI may be regarded as an example of successful migration mainstreaming because it formalizes inter-institutional cooperation and coordination, particularly as its mandate includes coordinating competences. As was described at length in Section 2, the SCMI's competencies and increasing portfolio of migration management-related tasks unveils different dimensions by which the body supports and continues to expand institutional coordination related to migration topics. **Key tasks that foster greater inter-institutional collaboration in the migration field include:**

- **Creation of the Unified Migration Data Analytical System**, which requires participating agencies to provide their share of generated migration data in real time, develop common methodologies for migration-related data, nuanced enough understanding of migration trends to meaningfully interpret data, and institutional commitment to the ongoing training/professionalization of involved staff.
- **Creation and support for use of Migration Risk Analysis System**, which requires participating agencies to develop and adapt workflows that relate to novel migration-related topics and to ensure continuous training and qualification upgrading among staff responsible for drafting analytical reports.

- **Production of migration profiles**, which not only require collection and analysis of migration-related data from various agencies, but also requires reflection on the migration governance environment. The migration profile requires assessment of the migration policy frameworks, migration legislation framework, and institutional framework, requiring the SCMI and its members to examine institutional contributions to the migration governance system and to identify further areas for improvement.
- **Drafting of the Migration Strategy (MS), creation of annual action plans (APs), coordination and monitoring of implementation of the MS, and APs**, all of which require the participation of all member agencies of the SCMI, endorsement of the final documents from the SCMI voting members, approval by the government and commitment of human resources by participating agencies to the SCMI

The evolving task list of the SCMI has required the creation of standard operating procedures for cooperation and management of resources and responsibilities across the institutions. In its reflection on further needed enhancements to the migration management system in the Migration Strategy of Georgia 2021-2030, the SCMI noted that the creation of a unified national migration management system resulted from collaboration with the European Union on migration reform but also required national-level mechanisms to support intra-governmental institutional links. Consolidating the inter-institutional collaboration later required the creation of “complex, multi-sectoral mechanisms according to the 2016-2020 MIS that outlined the nature and implementation instruments of these mechanisms.” (SCMI, 2020; pp 13). In recognizing the strategic importance of a unified national migration management system in supporting Georgia’s ambitions for further integration with the EU, the SCMI notes that the 2021-2030 MS should focus on creating a sustainable migration management system that meets common European standards.

The *2021-2030 Migration Strategy* is, in itself, another indicator of migration mainstreaming as outcome. **The Strategy is explicitly framed as a mechanism to support migration for development; the Strategy⁷ is a means to further enhance the positive effects of migration for development while minimising the negative effects through supporting a coordinated approach to migration management.** The following quote, taken from the concept of the *Strategy*, makes very clear that a whole-of-government approach to migration policy is being endorsed:

“This mainstreaming principle should be enforced in practice through the elaboration of the country development-oriented migration policy and by ensuring a coordinated and interlinked action of all agencies and their thematic spheres involved in migration policy elaboration and management.” (State Commission on Migration Issues , 2020; pp 2)

The quote illustrates a specific vision of a what a “whole of government” approach to migration for development means in the Georgian context, and it addresses key elements of both migration mainstreaming and policy coherence for migration and development. As described in Section 3, mainstreaming of migration implies 1) anticipating the two-way interactions between migration and development, and the implications of migration for the design and implementation of development policies and interventions, and 2) the extent to which migration is recognised as a cross-cutting issue requiring coordinated, cross-sectoral policy response. The above quote demonstrates that migration and development are viewed as distinct yet intersecting policy areas that have specific sectoral interactions. It also recognises the need for inter-agency responses. The

⁶ See the respective documents here: (Government https://migration.commission.ge/index.php?article_id=216&clang=1).

⁷ The SCMI created the Strategy, by means of renewed inter-agency Working Group (WG) within the Migration Lab to draft the Strategy. The interagency group worked on the strategy development, and the SCMI Secretariat was designated as a body in charge of coordination of the process.

description of mainstreaming provided above also echoes components of policy coherence for migration and development, particularly related to the recognition and pursuit of synergies toward shared objectives.

The migration management system sketched in the 2021-2030 MS suggests that institutional migration mainstreaming in Georgia has multiple dimensions, namely 1) related to creating a “whole of government” approach to support interactions with EU counterparts with a unified voice, and 2) related to consolidating and strengthening national migration governance capacities to improve the potential pro-development consequences of migration. The dual objectives require cooperation on inter-governmental/multilateral level and on intra-governmental level, and they may also require assessments of the extent policy coherence for migration and development bearing in mind the potential sources of incoherence on the intragovernmental, inter-governmental, and multilateral levels.

The SCMI and the *2021-2030 Migration Strategy for Georgia* support migration and development coordination on different levels. The SCMI supports collaboration with international bodies, both through the inclusion of international/intergovernmental organizations as consultative bodies in the SCMI and through the prioritization of specific policy issues for sake of fostering coherence with international approaches. The SCMI primarily fosters cooperation and coordination on the national level, *horizontally* across ministries and agencies. While many of its activities will also support coordination and cooperation on lower administrative levels, it really functions to encourage joint consultation and decision making on the highest levels of governance. Similar consultative bodies do not seem to operate on lower governance levels, and it is unclear how policy coherence and coordination is encouraged *vertically*, meaning from national level to regional and eventually municipal level. To a certain extent, the *Strategy* supports coordination and the further mainstreaming of migration into development at local level. It explicitly accounts for the further development of migration policy and project capacity at municipal level, and it also envisages enhanced coordination between international donors, national stakeholders, and local implementors of specific migration-related projects. It also recognizes the importance of municipalities in supporting the sustainable reintegration of returning migrants, which signals understanding of the importance of mainstreaming at local level.

While the importance of lower level authorities in the migration and development policy cycle is recognized, systematic mechanisms to ensure coordination and coherence vertically are absent, signaling that further institutional migration mainstreaming can be pursued. The absence of integrated vertical mainstreaming is apparent in the *Decentralisation Strategy 2020-2025*, which elaborates objectives and needed support mechanisms to grant local government authorities with the power and capacities to make decisions related to local policy challenges. The exclusive focus of this strategy is on local institutional arrangements and frameworks for policy management. Migration was absent from this document, which is surprising given the problematization of rural depopulation in other policy documents that focus more planning development interventions on regional and local level, which would imply greater roles for local policy making apparatuses. Local authorities play a central role in different stages of the migration and development-related policy cycle, but particularly in the implementation stage, where they are often the first contact points between affected populations and the policy. In this sense, the lack of identification of migration as an integral part of the local policy portfolio may be a particularly important signals of needed further directions of institutional mainstreaming.

Beyond the SCMI, the government of Georgia has further emphasized the importance of migration as a cross-cutting issue requiring holistic response through the Guidelines for Elaboration of Development Strategy of Regions (Government of Georgia , 2012). While only addressing one policy domain—namely regional development strategies and their corresponding action plans—the guidance document explicitly instructs designers to include migration considerations in the situation analysis/diagnosis section of the strategy and to link those elements of the situation analysis to the proposed priority development areas. The explicit inclusion of migration considerations in a guidance document that is intended to support developers of re-

gional development strategies to approach the development process in similar, systematic ways signals that migration is understood as a trend that is relevant for all regions. In how far this guidance is followed requires further investigation, as such guidance documents could be powerful tools to ensure consolidated approaches to mainstreaming migration in new strategies.

The investments of the government of Georgia in creating centralized coordination mechanisms to support migration mainstreaming are laudable, allowing for further tailoring through evaluation of the effectiveness of the SCMI as a coordinating body. The migration strategies of 2016-2020 and 2021-2030 reflect the process of evolution of the migration governance system in Georgia, observing the achievements of the SCMI in terms of policies and laws related to migration that have been made possible by the body. The vision of mainstreaming and for a whole of government approach are also clearly articulated, and arrangements have been made to support systematic interactions across government institutions. The new Migration Strategy the need of permanent enhancement through evaluating how institutional memory across focal points is assured, how the needed competencies of its members are inventoried and addressed, and what barriers (if any) undermine the body as a means of fostering institutional migration mainstreaming, also among its member agencies, with socio-economic development portfolios. Proposed means of strengthening institutional migration mainstreaming, including related to evaluating the performance of centralization and coordination mechanisms, are provided in the following section.

VII. CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

The overall objective of the assessment was to identify how migration, including return and reintegration, can be more effectively mainstreamed into the Georgian development agenda. Two elements of mainstreaming can be distinguished, namely related to 1) anticipating and addressing the two-way interactions between migration and development in the design and implementation of development policies and interventions, and 2) the extent to which migration as a cross-cutting issue is addressed through coordinated responses and supported through systematic inter-institutional cooperation.

Several research questions guided the assessment in meeting this objective. The main research question underlying the assessment was: *To what extent is migration, including return and reintegration, embedded in development-focused policy documents and institutional arrangements?* The main research question was decomposed into four sub-questions:

1. In what stages of the policy cycle are migration trends and migrant populations included, and are there stages in the policy cycle in which migration/migrants are not included at all?
2. What migrant categories or populations (e.g., returnees, diaspora, labour migrants) are most addressed in policies and policy documents?
3. Are migration trends/migrant populations systematically embedded differently in the policies and policy documents of different institutions?
4. How is institutional coordination on migration and development-related policy issues supported?

The answers to these research questions are relatively straightforward. There was limited reference to or reflection on migration in the reviewed policy documents. **Only three of the 15 reviewed documents made mention of migration. In these documents, migration was included in only two policy stages—agenda-setting and monitoring and evaluation. In the agenda-setting stage, migration was explained as part of the situation analysis and used to frame the policy problem**, with the documents relating internal migration to depopulation generally from rural or marginalized communities to urban areas as the result of limited livelihood opportunities. **In the monitoring and evaluation stage of the policy, two documents described reduction of outward migration as indicators of policy progress** but neglected return and the sustainable reintegration of former community members into local community structures as indicators of policy progress. **The policy documents did not reflect the diversity of migration trends or migrant categories that are meaningful in the Georgian context; two focused primarily on internal migration, mentioning internal labour and education migrants most frequently.** Returning migrants were largely neglected in the documents. Given the predominant inclusion of migration as part of the wider policy framing, **the documents did not ascribe meaningful roles to migrants in the policy cycle.** Migrants as such were not identified as beneficiaries of development actions, as the use of ‘reduced outward migration’ as a progress indicator actually addresses *potential* rather than *actual* migrants as the beneficiaries of development interventions.

While mainstreaming of migration into the reviewed development documents was limited, **there appear to be strong institutional coordination mechanisms that would support the mainstreaming of migration into the policy portfolios of institutions and agencies with diverse mandates.** The State Commission on Migration Issues (SCMI) functions as a centralized coordination mechanism that brings

together the competencies and resources of a diversity of national-level policy stakeholders. As an inter-ministerial collaboration framework, **the SCMI has made vital contributions to a unified migration and development-sensitive policy framework.** It has used the creation of a common migration data infrastructure and a system of migration data for risk analyses as a means of further fostering inter-institutional cooperation and of encouraging the development of further migration-related competencies within participating institutions. It has also consolidated cooperation through the production of periodic migration profiles and, essentially, through the development, implementation, and monitoring of state migration strategies.

Taking together findings related to migration mainstreaming into development policy documents and review of institutional coordination mechanisms, the assessment concludes that **migration is incompletely mainstreamed into development planning**, particularly in the holistic assessment of the two-way interactions between migration and development that would be needed to inform nuanced, particularly local, development policy. The assessments and conclusions give rise to two sets of recommendations related to: 1) strengthening both vertical and horizontal institutional coordination on migration; 2) reviewing and revising the inclusion of migration in existing policies, and ensuring embedding of migration and migrants in future policies and development-focused programming.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In recognizing the significant achievements of the Georgian government in fostering institutional coordination on migration and development issues, the **first set of recommendations focuses on means of further strengthening vertical and horizontal institutional coordination.** Recommendations focus primarily on assessing mechanisms to foster vertical and horizontal coordination and on benchmarking and improving the functioning of existing coordination mechanisms. Specific action points include:

- **Performing a full stakeholder analysis to identify government institutions and their subsidiary agencies with mandates, policies, and programmes related to migration and development concerns:** A number of government bodies will have migration or specific migrant groups (e.g., educational migrants, asylum seekers, diaspora investors) within their policy portfolios. While a mapping of bodies engaging in return and reintegration support has recently been conducted by IOM Georgia, a similar assessment may be supported for different categories of migrants. A stakeholder mapping related to migration and development concerns would naturally be wider in scope but would serve to reveal where different institutions address the same target populations, require similar resources or inputs, and where existing interventions could potentially build off of or complement each other. At a later stage, such a mapping could be expanded to include development cooperation partners, which could potentially reveal duplication of efforts, opportunities to create economies of scale, and potentially sources of policy incoherence.
- **Assessing mechanisms to promote vertical coordination or horizontal coordination at lower governance levels:** The existing migration governance system and the emergence of a strong centralized coordination mechanism in the form of the SCMI has supported the establishment of a clear government vision on migration and development. The “whole of government” approach to migration and development espoused in the current migration strategy rests on strong collaboration horizontally at the national level, focusing on cooperation across ministries and agencies. Such inter-agency representation and cooperation provides for moving ahead the mainstreaming agenda of migration into the policies and programming of the development agencies represented at the Commission. Also,

given the central role of local governance authorities in designing, implementing, and supporting the monitoring and evaluation of migration and development-related policies, it is important that the national level migration and development vision can be translated “down” to lower levels of governance. For this reason, it is important to assess how coherence in visions and policy approaches is assured vertically, between national-level bodies and their subsidiary agencies. One mechanism that could support vertical coordination relates to supporting the representation of local governance interests and concerns in SCMI membership or participation. This could include, for example, supporting structural exchange between bodies like the National Association of Local Authorities of Georgia (NALAG) and the SCMI. It is also important to assess how local-level governance bodies in different sectors, both at regional and municipal level, coordinate their policy strategies, plans, and programmes. Just as the SCMI functions as a coordination mechanism at national level, it may be worthwhile to assess what cooperation mechanisms exist to support inter-agency collaboration and competence-building at regional and municipal levels. The SCMI’s experience and competence in supporting inter-institutional cooperation will be instructive in this; it may therefore be considered whether it would be appropriate for a SCMI working groups to also investigate vertical coordination mechanisms, by engaging local actors as well in the work process.

- **Assessing the potential two-way exchanges between local government authorities and migration data systems such as UMAS:** Local governments may be an important source of nuanced information on localized migration dynamics, for example, related to emigration trends within the community, but they could also benefit from access to migration indicators that may inform the design of future strategies, policies, and plans. While migration data systems like UMAS, are currently restricted to a rather small number of central government agencies, future strategic plans may consider if and how access to migration data systems can be expanded to include local government authorities, both as data contributors and data users.
- **Benchmarking the overall migration governance framework using international tools such as the dashboard of tools for measuring policy coherence for migration and development and IOM’s Migration Governance Index:** The Georgian migration governance framework has undergone important changes since the early 2000s, often with the aim of bringing the migration governance system closer to the standards of regional partners like the European Union. International and intergovernmental bodies like IOM, ICMPD, and the SDC are active in the migration and development policy field in Georgia, creating the space for both complementary as well as potentially contradictory migration and development initiatives. It may be helpful to use international tools like the KNOMAD/UNDP/OECD [measuring policy coherence for migration and development dashboard of indicators](#) to assess national migration policy coherence, establishing a baseline that may be used to further evaluate and guide improvements in the overall coherence of the migration and development framework. Similarly, the [Migration Governance Index](#) indicators may provide valuable reference points for improvements to the migration governance approach. Indicators related to the “whole of governance” approach may be particularly beneficial to guide further consolidation of inter-institutional interests and collaboration. The SCMI has developed its own set of monitoring and evaluation system and indicators to guide its work, and it may be valuable to review how the existing M&E indicators can complement or expand these international tools.

In terms of **reviewing and revising the inclusion of migration in existing and future policies**, two sets of recommendation are given. The first set of recommendations relate broadly to fostering a more holistic conceptualisation of migration across the policy cycle. The second set of recommendations suggest specific entry points for bringing migration into existing policy documents, reflecting on the content and scope of specific policy documents.

The reviewed development policy documents demonstrated a limited representation of migration, which excludes the potential contributions migration can make to achieving desired development outcomes.

Future policy documents may be better able to recognise and leverage specific development-relevant dimensions of migration through:

- **Collecting examples of programmes and interventions that more comprehensively address interactions between migration and development in the Georgian context:** There are a proliferation of international examples of development interventions that explicitly include migration (see, e.g., UN Joint Migration and Development Initiative, 2011). Such initiatives may demonstrate the pro-development potentials of specific migrant populations at different governance levels and with development interventions of widely differing scope. While international examples are instructive, the specific social, economic, cultural, and political landscape of Georgia may not allow for complete translation of international good practice into the local context. It may therefore be instructive to collect examples of synergies between migration and development in the Georgian context and to provide these examples to the different governance bodies at both national and regional/municipal level that contribute to the design of development strategies, policies, plans, and programmes. Sensitizing different government stakeholders to how policy can foster better migration *for* development through concrete, localized examples may complement other initiatives to support migration-related capacities of different levels of governance authorities.
- **Explicitly mapping out the potential ways in which different groups of migrants may support development policy across the entire policy cycle:** Migrants may support the creation of innovative development policies across all stages of the policy cycle. Particularly when development interventions seek to address (perceived) needs of different migrant populations, directly engaging migrants in consultations that support the definition of a policy problem and the potential solutions to solving it can help foster better pro-development potentials. For example, engaging returned migrants in research on motivations for (internal or international) mobility and the services or interventions that would have supported their continued residence in specific communities may help in promoting more specific, targeted development challenges into the national policy agenda. Migrants may also be engaged in the design of policies. For example, policies that focus on internationalization of higher education or updating of training curriculum in specialised technical fields may benefit from the knowledge of skilled diaspora members who were either trained in or who are employed in foreign countries. Similarly, migrants can support the implementation of policies by acting as co-owners, stakeholders, or beneficiaries of policies or interventions. For example, migrant remittances may be used to finance elements of a development intervention, like by funnelling remittances into community-based agricultural credit associations, which can support the expansion of financing needed for agricultural technology, inputs, or insurance. Finally, migrants may be involved in monitoring and evaluation. For example, migrants with expertise in impact or process evaluations who have worked in similar sectoral development policy areas internationally may be called in as external evaluators or interventions or programmes. These are just brief examples of the different roles migrants can play across the policy cycle, but it may be valuable to more systematically assess the opportunities for including migrants across the policy cycle in select development policies or strategies within the specific Georgian context.
- **Providing disaggregated information on the intended and actual target beneficiaries of development interventions, identifying where (specific groups of) migrants are included or may need to be better targeted:** Many development interventions or programmes define beneficiary populations broadly, potentially based on locale or on characteristics like gender. Migrant groups may benefit from development initiatives without being explicitly identified or targeted within the intervention

rationale. Conversely, migrant populations who should be included within the beneficiary population may be systematically excluded because of constraints tied to their migration status (e.g., lack of specific documentation, difficulty in proving duration of residence). To assess the inclusion of migrants in development intervention beneficiary pools, it would therefore be important to collect disaggregated information on how different populations of migrants (e.g., returnees, educational migrants) benefit or do not from development interventions that (should) include them. Related to the previous recommendation, it may also be valuable to assess where migrant populations may need to be better targeted. For example, returning migrants facing the challenges of reintegrating into the social and economic fabric of their local communities may need targeted assistance and may have additional vulnerabilities that the general population targeted by a development intervention do not face.

- **Creating opportunities for multi-stakeholder approaches to migration-related development policy, allowing migrants—as part of a wider civil society—to contribute to the design, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation of development policy:** Ongoing reforms on the national level address the need for greater inclusion of a range of societal stakeholders in policy processes, particularly on the local level. Participation in policy by specific demographic groups like women or youth, or by representatives of the private sector or of civil society organizations are addressed in several of the reviewed development strategies. Including migrants in local policy processes is an important way of ensuring more holistic mainstreaming of migration issues into development planning, but specific mechanisms may need to be created to facilitate that process. For example, internet-based consultation platforms that allow the Georgian diaspora to digitally participate in local policy processes may be one potential way of fostering inclusion.
- **Reviewing how guidance documents, such as the Guidelines for Elaborating the Development Strategy of Regions, are used in the development of specific strategies, policies, and plans to support migration mainstreaming in different policy domains:** The Guidelines for Elaborating the Development Strategy of Regions are one example of how a government can support policy designers to follow a similar system of development that can ensure the representation of migration considerations in future policy. As no regional development strategies were reviewed in this assessment, it is unclear whether the inclusion of migration in guidance for the elaboration of regional development strategies actually correspond to explicit identification of migration and development interactions in development strategies and their corresponding action plans. It is therefore important to assess how such guidance documents are followed in the elaboration of strategies. It is also important to inventory how migration is included (or not) in other types of guidance documents that support the coordination of policy elaboration processes in other policy domains.

Most of the proposed recommendations do not have an inherent order, yet it may be sensible to first address selected recommendations related to improving institutional coordination before addressing future policy strategies, plans, and programmes. Improved institutional coordination is one mechanism for fostering more comprehensive inclusion of migration and development-related issues in policy. Some of the recommendations related to institutional coordination may help to overcome some of the barriers that led to the reviewed development documents not responding holistically to migration, and it may therefore be more efficient to address coordination first.

Migration mainstreaming can be achieved not only through improved institutional coordination mechanisms and the integration of migration perspectives into future policy documents; it can also be supported through revision of existing policy documents. The below **recommendations identify specific ‘entry points’ for bringing migration further into the policy documents reviewed in this exercise:**

1. Decentralization Strategy 2020-2025: This strategy outlines objectives for decentralization, noting that local government often does not have sufficient powers or capacity to make decisions related to local policy challenges. As many migration-related policies and programmes are implemented on the local level, local-level authorities are often the first contact points between migrants and the state. In recognition of the central role of migration in contributing to community revitalization and the importance of local authorities in engaging with local populations, the following recommendations are given for how migration can be better mainstreamed into the Decentralization Strategy:

- a. The Strategy may explicitly *identify that some migration-related policies (e.g., integration, education for returning migrant children) require local authorities to implement decisions made at higher level, requiring both capacity (e.g., content-specific knowledge, access to advice and knowledge at higher levels, coordination platforms) and decision-making autonomy (related to, e.g., provision of support services).* The migration policy domain may be explicitly defined related to identification of which powers should be transferred to local-level authorities in activity 1.2.1.
- b. The Strategy may recognize that *returned migrants and diaspora communities can be important parts of the population in a local area who should be engaged in local policy processes or should be consulted/informed about policy decisions.* This can be tied to objective 3.1 and specifically activity 3.1.6, related to the need for contemporary local data to guide decision-making. Objective 3.3, related to public participation in decision-making and implementation at local level, is also relevant in this regard, as it identifies the need to create mechanisms through which members of the local population can inform policy processes. In this objective, specific sub-population groups, such as youth and women, are identified as being particularly relevant for engagement. Immigrants and members of the diaspora with retained ties to the community may also be identified as specific, relevant sub-populations that should be engaged in local policy processes.
- c. The document identifies that local civil servants may not have adequate expertise or capacity to lead local policy processes. Migration may potentially affect local governance in two ways: 1) the emigration of knowledgeable staff may create or exacerbate capacity shortfalls, and; 2) knowledge of migration processes and impacts may be important elements of the expertise or capacity that local civil servants miss. *To this end, the SWOT analysis contained in the strategy may be extended to reflect on how emigration/immigration trends affect the stock of expertise of civil servants in local governments.* Migration may also be identified as a policy domain in which local policy actors need additional capacity-building or training.

2. Strategy for Development of High Mountain Settlements of Georgia 2019-2023: This ambitious strategy addresses the conditions leading to depopulation of high-mountain settlements and the conditions that prevent further growth of high-elevation communities. The strategy focuses on how (largely rural) high-mountainous communities can leverage the unique location-based economic opportunities, for example, related to tourism and production/sales of local food and culture products, to revitalize local communities. While the document does recognize migration as both a result of a contributor to limited local development, the role of migration in contributing to community revitalization is not well recognised. The document could better integrate the pro-development potentials of migration through the following recommendations:

- a. *The document can better identify and recognize the intersecting nature of migration and development-related challenges on local level.* Several sections of the strategy recognise the

intersecting nature of public policy challenges facing high mountainous settlements. For example, the situation analysis recognises that professional education is not available, leading to migration to places where education is available. The situation analysis also recognizes that migration can further exacerbate mismatches between labour supply and (skilled) labour market needs. These elements could be more explicitly connected together, for example, by recognising that depopulation disinclines investment in educational services, that migrants may take the knowledge and capacity with them that is needed to support educational services, and that return migration may be a way to address local skills gaps. The document also mentions “ecomigrants” in passing, yet there is limited discussion of the circumstances that create them and the need to tie local development planning to environmental planning. The SWOT analysis does recognise climate change as a threat to the quality of life and livelihood opportunities in high mountainous areas, but there is no direct connection made between climate-induced displacement or movement and the deterioration of living conditions due to climate events. The recommendation is therefore to review the situation analysis and SWOT analysis through a migration lens, to better identify how *both* emigration and immigration affect the integrated, co-occurring challenges facing high-elevation communities.

- b. The strategy notes how economic diversification and growth are hampered by the absence of skilled professionals and entrepreneurs. *Immigration, internal migration, and/or return migration could potentially support the closing of skills needs gaps*, yet no form of migration is identified as a potential solution to skills mismatches. The strategy further notes that absence of medical personnel is a problem, and while objective 6 (access to quality health services) does discuss incentives for medical staff to work in high mountainous areas, it does not identify or discuss the possibility of promoting internal mobility or return migration to support placements among medical staff. The strategy could therefore better integrate different groups of migrants as potential stakeholders or co-owners in policy processes, including as implementation partners or designers of policies or interventions. Migrants may be better recognized as potential resource contributors—for example, as skilled or knowledgeable employees, as potential entrepreneurs, or as networkers who can disseminate information or raise resources within transnational networks. Returning migrants are particularly important in this regard. Migrants returning from abroad may have skill sets and competencies that would be needed to revitalize local communities, and they may also have both the interest in and resources needed to start or invest in local enterprises. Assessing the scope of immigration and return migration in high-mountainous communities, profiling the characteristics of select migrant populations, and then creating mechanisms to encourage the matching of migrant skill supply with local enterprise demand may be meaningful actions to ensure better take up of migrant groups in the Strategy.
- c. The strategy could benefit from a more holistic recognition of the multi-way relationships among individual development, community development, and migration. Reduced emigration is identified as an outcome indicator used to measure success in meeting objective 8 (support for improved demographic standing). Emigration is framed in the document as development failure, with no recognition of how immigration, circular migration, and exchange can support the resilience and growth of high-mountainous communities. Similarly, objective 10 (support for youth) explicitly recognizes that youth migration occurs because of lack of education and labour possibilities, yet the outcome indicators do not address the issue of skill production and retention in high mountainous communities. The objective proposes greater support for youth to pursue higher education through greater availability

of study financing, but if high education is provided elsewhere (and calibrated to the need of another local labour market), the pursuit of this objective may actually disincentivise youth retention in high mountainous communities. This particular objective suggests potential policy incoherence by not fully integrating migration and development dynamics into action planning. A recommendation to address this potential incoherence is therefore to *ensure that action planning is informed by a multiplicity of stakeholders from different policy domains, including migration*. Cross-sectoral consultative bodies—for example, technical working groups or steering committees with members from different policy sectors like education, labour, and migration—may contribute to the design of specific actions with clear migration linkages.

- d. The strategy identifies the government of Georgia as the exclusive funder and identifies international partners and donor organizations as implementing partners. *Migrants, particularly diaspora communities, could be linked in as sources of development financing* through, e.g., philanthropic contributions, remittances matching funds, diaspora direct investment. *Migrants may also be integrated as potential design/implementation partners*. For example, Georgian diaspora entrepreneurs based in other countries may be important contact points to support local producers of heritage and cultural goods to sell their products internationally. Such diaspora entrepreneurs may not only be able to link local producers to export/import partners but may also be able to advise on regulatory environments in specific countries into which Georgian products may be sold. The Strategy may therefore integrate particularly diaspora members as financing and implementing partners in particular activity areas where they can leverage their knowledge, transnational social capital, and financial resources.

3. Pilot Integrated Regional Development Programme for Guria, Imereti, Kakheti and Racha Lechkhumi, and Kvemo Svaneti 2020-2022: The regional development programme for the specified regions provides a nuanced analysis of the challenges facing the development of communities in specific natural and economic environments. It identifies both shared challenges across the regions and particular challenges that are more acute in specific locations. As each region has specific set of circumstances, and potentially unique ways in which migration can be better integrated into local development planning, the recommendations given below address over-arching observations from the regional development programme:

- a. *The pilot integrated regional development programme could better identify how migration intersects with development in specific regional/local contexts, which can help motivate better-calibrated interventions that link migration to development solutions on regional and local level.* The programme does not extensively engage with migration and the multi-way interactions with development. The document makes reference to the relationship between migration and development and does explicitly identify that integrating migration more systematically into regional planning can support better development outcomes, but it does not conduct specific analyses of these interactions in the specified regions. The document instead makes reference to the state migration strategy as the “lead” document governing these relationships, yet the migration strategy is not as calibrated to regional migration dynamics and development needs as would be needed to support the development objectives identified in the pilot programme. The document could therefore provide short analyses of how different forms of migration (namely rural-urban internal migration and return of international migrants) affect development dynamics in the specific regions, focusing, if possible, on how the characteristics of migrant groups (in terms of age, education level, sector of work, etc.) relate to regional demographics and future development prospects.

- b. *The programme may better leverage the unique resources diaspora and returned migrants can bring to local development, focusing on using migrant resources for supporting action planning in select, priority development areas.* The programme had limited consideration of the advantages migration can offer to regional development, even in sectors (such as tourism) where migrants could provide the resources need to establish or expand local business. For example, members of the diaspora could help promote tourism offers abroad, diaspora youth may be courted to return under heritage tourism programmes, and Georgians working or trained in the tourism sector abroad may be encouraged to return and to set up or support small businesses in the hospitality sector. The potential contributions of specific migrant populations could be better integrated into the planning of actions for specific priority development areas, particularly in domains like tourism that have a high potential for growth and that can benefit from internationalisation.

4. Village Support Programme: The goal of the village support programme is to address social and economic challenges of local populations, to support the development of local infrastructure, and to encourage the employment of local populations in the implemented projects. Many of the recommendations given to particularly the Strategy for Development of High Mountain Settlements of Georgia 2019-2023 and the Pilot Integrated Regional Development Programme for Guria, Imereti, Kakheti and Racha Lechkhumi, and Kvemo Svaneti 2020-2022 apply to the Village Support Programme as well, as all of these documents could benefit from more extensive engagement of migrant populations in the design, financing, and implementation of actions targeted to the development needs of specific local communities. Specific recommendations for the Village Support Programme include:

- a. The Programme largely addresses retention of local populations through development, but it could also *emphasise how the further development of local communities can facilitate attraction of immigrants and returning migrants.* The improvement of social and economic conditions and infrastructure in villages may serve to incentivize inward mobility, including of former residents who migrated either internally or abroad. The migration of new community members or return of former residents may therefore be considered as important indicators of policy success. Another indicator of policy success could be the retention rate of returned migrants, which connects to the concept of sustainable reintegration. The retention of returned migrants in the local community may be supported through labour market inclusion, improved community infrastructure, improved access to health and education services, and so on. Many of the improvements that would support continued residence of the local population in general would likely also encourage the sustainable reintegration of returned populations. The programme could therefore more explicitly connect community revitalization to sustainable reintegration, particularly in the situation analysis and monitoring and evaluation dimensions.
- b. *The resources generated through migration processes may be directly addressed in action planning, particularly related to interventions aimed to support community infrastructure.* While the majority of financing for community infrastructure improvements may indeed come from state budgets, collective remittances may be a useful complementary source of financing. Mechanisms like remittance matching schemes—where remittances sent into a development fund are matched by contributions on state, regional, and municipal level—may be one vehicle for both increasing remittance values and of matching remittances to local development needs. Other financial products that target either remittance senders or remittance recipients, like agricultural development funds or microfinance schemes that

allow prospective lenders to use remittances as proof of repayment capacity, may also be useful to consider to support the implementation of particular desired interventions.

5. Produce in Georgia: The governmental programme *Produce in Georgia* emphasizes the development of entrepreneurship through support to entrepreneurs, the creation of new enterprises, the expansion and modernisation of existing enterprises, and means of increasing competitiveness and export potential via access to finance, real estate and technical assistance. It also emphasizes support to micro- and small enterprises via access to financial and technical assistance. Recommendations for this programme relate primarily to better leveraging migrant capacities for entrepreneurship and include:

- a. As in other development documents, it is important for Produce in Georgia to *recognize the two-way interactions between migration and development*. For example, members of the diaspora and returned migrants can be important contributors to the revitalization of local communities, particularly through providing demanded knowledge and skills to the development or expansion of local enterprises. Migrant groups may also benefit from improved enterprises and the labour opportunities enterprises create on local level. As noted in recommendation 4a above, retention of returned migrants in local communities may be a meaningful indicator of development. In this regard, the programme may explicitly identify how migrants may both strengthen local enterprise development and may also be beneficiaries of improved local entrepreneurship.
- b. *Specific migrant populations, namely returned migrants and the diaspora, as well as the origin households of international migrants, may be explicitly targeted with information on the initiatives promoted under the Produce in Georgia programme*. The programme identifies the need to create online tools to promote information about the programme and to encourage application for financing under the programme. The online tools may be selectively targeted to members of the Georgian diaspora abroad as well as to returned migrants, who may need some tailored information on the programme and on the application procedures.
- c. *The programme may set aside a specific quota or budget for financing (M)SMEs started by returning migrants*, ensuring that returned migrants are able to create and sustain the small businesses that can support their long-term reintegration into the local community. The programme envisions a micro- and small-enterprise support budget, which is available to the owners of small-scale businesses based on submitted business plans. As the support needs of return migrants may be distinct from other members of the community, and as they may struggle to re-enter the labour market as employees, allocating a certain amount of finance to the support of businesses created by returned migrants may help ensure their continued residence in the community of return.
- d. *Supporting the “matchmaking” between (M)SME owners in local communities and enterprise mentors from within the diaspora* may support the exchange of knowledge and advice between local enterprise owners and knowledgeable entrepreneurs living elsewhere. Particularly for businesses that produce goods that can potentially be exported to foreign markets, diaspora mentors may provide valuable support to local business owners. The form of support or mentoring diaspora entrepreneurs may offer can vary, from advice on drafting a business plan to advice on navigating regulatory environments in different export markets. Diaspora mentors may also be able to link local business owners with supply chain partners and potential investors, both from within the diaspora and from among interested investors

in countries of diaspora residence. This recommendation calls for extending action planning and reflecting migrant populations as implementation partners.

6. Plant the Future: The Plant the Future programme seeks to support the sustainable production of diverse agricultural products through providing financial and technical assistance for the development of high-quality seedlings, perennial crops, and for anti-hail and irrigation systems. As a programme that is implemented across all regions of Georgia, which may have diverse migration dynamics, the recommendations address means of integrating migration into the overarching programme:

- a. *The programme may extend existing situation analyses to reflect how both immigration and emigration affect the availability of needed human, physical, and financial capital used in local agricultural production.* In some regions, immigration from countries such as South Africa and India has been integral to the development and modernization of the agricultural sector. In other regions, the emigration of young, able-bodied workers (creating a so-called “brawn drain”) may affect agricultural productivity, as there may be too few workers to assist in crop planting, maintenance, and harvesting. Different regions, which may specialise in different forms of perennial crops with different technological needs, may be affected by both immigration and emigration differently, and it is thus important to have a specified analysis of how local agricultural production is affected by mobility trends.
- b. *The overall goals of the programme, and the indicators used to measure programme success, may explicitly include reintegration of returning migrants.* The revitalization of agricultural communities through technical and financial support of sustainable perennial crops may certainly help ensure that returned migrants can be sustainably reintegrated into communities of return. Particularly given the scale of population movement from rural and agricultural communities, the retention of returning migrant populations in communities receiving support under the *Plant the Future* programme may be a meaningful indicator of programme success.
- c. *Action planning may be extended to include seasonal migrants who work in agricultural production abroad as stakeholders in implementation, potentially as providers of technical advice or as beneficiaries of targeted supports.* Georgian migrant workers involved in the agricultural sector abroad may have knowledge and skills that can benefit local agricultural sectors, and the action planning may therefore consider how to facilitate the exchange of information between Georgian agricultural workers and programme beneficiaries in target communities. Agricultural workers may also be targeted as potential beneficiaries of the programme, which may also support such workers to remain in the local economy.
- d. *The programme may set aside a certain share of financing to support return migrant entrepreneurs, which may help ensure the sustainable reintegration of returnees into local communities.* As with recommendation 5c, providing financial support for the entrepreneurship of returnees who start or expand enterprises in the agricultural sector may ensure that they can maintain profitable livelihoods in local communities. Support for returnees may be beneficial from two perspectives—both that of the individual recipient and of the wider community, which can benefit from the retention of agricultural business owners.

7. Co-financing of Processing and Storage Enterprises: This programme has two distinct clusters of activities. The first component, related to processing enterprises, seeks to establish and rehabilitate agricultural processing enterprises, supporting greater geographical diversification of processing en-

terprises and creating more energy-efficient processing facilities. The second component, on storage enterprises, seeks to raise the self-sufficiency of agricultural households by supporting farmers of both annual and perennial crops to store their yields. Given the overlap of objectives between this programme and the Grow the Future programme, the recommendations are similar between the two programmes. An additional recommendation for this programme relates to *facilitating the creation of collective remittance schemes that channel remittances into infrastructure investments*. As in recommendation 4b, community infrastructure projects may be financed through remittance matching programmes. Other investment programmes to attract diaspora finance for infrastructure development projects could include targeted development bonds, although such mechanisms are generally expensive to create, monitor, and guarantee, suggesting that they may be better linked with broader national development objectives.

- 8. Preferential Agrocredit:** This governmental programme supports primary agricultural production by enhancing access to finance (e.g., co-financing of bank loan interest rates and leasing) for enterprises involved in processing or storing of agricultural products. Migration may be integrated into this programme through similar mechanisms as identified in other policy documents. Recommendations 4b (on *leveraging remittances for the creation or expansion of financial products*) and 5b (on *targeting diaspora members, return migrants, and the households of international migrants for information dissemination and programme support*) are of particular relevance to this programme as well.
- 9. Agroinsurance:** The objective of this programme is to support the development of safety nets for entrepreneurs in the agricultural sector by stimulating the agricultural insurance market and supporting the resilience of agricultural activities. As with the Preferential Agrocredit programme, the Agroinsurance programme can better reflect the needs and potentials of migrant communities in different ways. Remittances can be linked to the development of agricultural insurance products, and information about the programme may be targeted to returning migrants. An additional recommendation that is more specific to this programme relates to the *profiling of the agricultural production behaviours and risks of migrant households*. In some cases, migration may be undertaken as a way to diversify household income sources and to reduce risks endemic to the main sector of a household's livelihood. In some cases, migrants may also send back remittances explicitly to overcome failures in local credit and insurance markets. To that end, it may be meaningful to evaluate whether migrant households (that is, households with an international migrant working elsewhere) experience higher livelihood risks related to the production of specific crops (e.g., crops more sensitive to blight or climate shifts), or whether such households have higher agricultural production because of the use of remittances to develop risk reduction or offsetting strategies. Profiling the characteristics of migrant households involved in agricultural production for sale (rather than just subsistence) may support the design of targeted financial products that both meet the needs of such households and allow for better integration of remittances into insurance products.
- 10. Agriculture Machine Co-Financing Programme:** The objective of this programme is to enhance access to agricultural machinery through provision of co-financing. As with other programmes, *remittances and other forms of migrant investment* may be brought into the implementation of the programme. Collective remittances raised through diaspora associations or organizations abroad may be used to co-finance agricultural machinery on community level; indeed, a matching scheme where local governments, diaspora organizations, and local agricultural cooperatives support the purchase of (shared) agricultural machinery may diffuse the costs of machinery investment across stakeholders. Diaspora investors may also be engaged in the programme if, for example, they purchase the machines and charge usage fees to members of the community who use it.

11. State Programme for Tea Plantation Rehabilitation: This programme, which supports the development of the tea production sector and aims to increase export potential, is specific to the Guria region. There are several areas in which migration can be engaged in this programme, including:

- a. *The programme can evaluate to what extent migrants come from tea-producing areas and may target migrant households involved in tea production for support.* As in several other government programmes, emigration may result from lack of stable livelihood opportunities in local areas, including those that rely on tea production. The stimulation of development of the tea sector may both attract back migrants and may help support the continued stay of returned migrants. Before targeting support to current- or returned migrant households, however, it would be worthwhile to investigate whether significant emigration occurs from tea-producing regions.
- b. *Members of the diaspora can provide mentoring and advice to tea producers wishing to enter global markets,* which can be particularly valuable given the strict import regulations in countries (particularly within the European Union) for agricultural and food products. Strengthening the export potential of the Georgian tea sector requires supporting entrepreneurs to navigate often complex and strict regulatory regimes. Barriers to trade in agricultural and food products are often higher than for other types of products due to sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) measures that aim to reduce the risk of pathogens and other contaminants that can affect humans, animals, and plants. Given the specificity of SPS measures in different markets, entrepreneurs wishing to export agricultural products often need tailored advice and guidance on specific markets, which diaspora entrepreneurs may be uniquely oriented to provide given their knowledge of regulatory regimes in specific product destination countries.
- c. *Promotion of diaspora direct investment into the tea sector* can provide needed financing to small-scale tea farmers to start or expand their tea production and sales capacities. Particularly as the programme aims to support the export capacity of tea producers, small-scale producers may need to upscale their production and to ensure their production, packaging, and transport processes meet SPS standards in target destination countries. Upscaling can require a producer to take out a loan or receive financing from an investor. Members of the diaspora may be connected to tea producers as investors, who may provide capital on anticipation of future returns.

12. Innovation Matching Grant: The objective of this programme is to stimulate innovation in the Georgian economy through product, technological, or business process innovations. It also emphasizes the adoption of technology through a grant co-financing mechanism. Integrating migration perspectives into this programme can be supported through facilitating diaspora direct investment (see recommendation 11c) and supporting knowledge transfer from return migrants and diasporas to local entrepreneurs (see recommendation 5d). One programme-specific recommendation relates to *creating opportunities for Georgian diaspora entrepreneurs to create consortia with local enterprises*. The grant scheme within this programme allows enterprise consortia to apply for financing, and allowing transnational consortia comprised of local businesses and diaspora entrepreneurs can stimulate the exchange of practices and processes that can support sector-specific innovation processes. It may be challenging for local enterprises to identify and connect with diaspora-created or run enterprises abroad, however, suggesting a role for government in connecting local and diaspora entrepreneurs.

13. Co-financing Grants for Start-ups: The emphasis of this programme is on stimulating innovation

and the creation of innovative enterprises through development/adoption and commercialization of innovative products and services with the potential for internationalization. While the recommendations for the Innovation Matching Grant apply to the Co-financing Grants for Start-ups as well, additional recommendations related to *supporting returnee start-ups* may be added to this programme. Returning migrants with exposure to other economies and business environments may return with ideas of how a specific sector or business niche may be innovated upon. To support their further reintegration into local communities, and to further fuel the revitalization of local communities, this programme may selectively target return migrant entrepreneurs for support. For example, a small portion of financing may be earmarked for returned migrants, or the government may explore whether this initiative can be complemented by other interventions—such as IOM’s assisted voluntary return and reintegration programme—to increase the financial support available for returning migrants with a potentially innovative or transformative start-up idea.

14. Small Grants Programme: In line with the previous programmes, the Small Grants Programme aims to support the piloting and adoption of innovations, emphasizing the integration of Georgian enterprises into the international technological and innovation ecosystem. Specifically, the programme emphasizes support for the development and adaptation of electronic services, and facilitation of knowledge and experience sharing in the field of innovation and technologies. In this programme, a clear entry point for migration relates to *facilitating knowledge exchange between local entrepreneurs and members of the Georgian diaspora*. The Georgian diaspora may have sector-specific knowledge and competencies related to innovative processes and innovation standards used in other countries that could benefit local enterprises. In line with other recommendations, this programme may consider how diaspora entrepreneurs or sector experts can be matched with local entrepreneurs, and it could also consider how the diaspora could provide mentoring and advice to wider groups of entrepreneurs through mechanisms such as digital workshops and consultation sessions.

15. Local Economic Development Plan 2020-2021: The only local development plan reviewed in this exercise was specified to the Akhmeta municipality, which developed a short-term vision for local economic development focusing on specific development priorities. The Plan has three main goals, related to 1) improvement of the municipality’s visibility and investment environment; 2) improvement of knowledge in the private sector and skills of entrepreneurs, and; 3) improvement of entrepreneurial opportunities and business environment. Integrating migration into this local development plan could be supported through different means:

- a. *As part of further action plans, the plan could construct a nuanced profile of the skill supply of different migrant populations (focusing on returned migrants) and on the skill demand of local (high growth-potential) enterprises, which would be needed to determine in how far the second objective could be addressed by bridging skill gaps through connection of (returned) migrants to local enterprise. The skills of local entrepreneurs could potentially be augmented with the skills and knowledge of returned migrants; it is therefore important to know to what extent the skills and competencies of such migrant groups are matched to the needs of local entrepreneurs.*
- b. *Information on local investment opportunities could be provided to diaspora investors, potentially through online investment information hubs. Members of the diaspora may want to invest in local enterprises and may also serve as informal investment ambassadors between enterprises in their origin communities and potential investors in countries of residence. For diaspora members to play this role, however, they would need to be made aware of what business are in need of growth capital. Targeting information on investment opportunities*

to the diaspora may support achievement of objectives within this plan, yet it may also be sensible to better engage the Local Economic Development Plan in other diaspora investment-related interventions (for example, as pursued under a national diaspora engagement strategy or policy).

The recommendations provided for specific development programmes and plans should not be viewed as completely independent from each other. Many of the recommendations relate to similar actions and objectives—for example, related to understanding pathways of influence between migration and specific development domains, or related to better leveraging migrant-specific resources for local development. As such, some of the recommendations given related to *future* policy design and to fostering *institutional mainstreaming* are therefore important to support reform of existing development programmes and plans. While certainly the individual policy documents reviewed could be updated to better reflect a holistic inclusion of migration in different policy stages (e.g., agenda-setting, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation), the objectives and mechanisms of achieving the objectives of different development plans and programmes could also be supported by addressing them in migration-related strategies and policies. For example, reintegration support programmes or diaspora engagement initiatives may reflect on the individual development plans and programmes, seeking synergy and cooperation with the authorities responsible for these different initiatives.

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