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Evaluation of the **Council of Europe project** "Democracy Starts in Schools - Engaging School Children in Decision Making Processes in Schools and Communities in Georgia"

FINAL EVALUATION REPORT

SUBMITTED BY:
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Evaluation of the Council of Europe project "Democracy Starts in Schools - Engaging School Children in Decision Making Processes in Schools and Communities in Georgia"

Location of the project: Georgia

Commissioned by the Council of Europe

Produced during September-December, 2023 by **Strategicus Consulting SRL**, Bucharest, Romania
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1. Executive summary

The project "Democracy Starts in Schools - Engaging School Children in Decision Making Processes in Schools and Communities in Georgia" is a follow up to the Joint EU/Council of Europe Project "Supporting Education Policies in Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education in 6 Eastern Partnership countries" (2015-2017). This broader initiative targeted six Eastern Partnership countries: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine, and aimed to integrate democratic citizenship and human rights education into national education systems in line with the Council of Europe's Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education.

Implemented by the Council of Europe in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia, the project receives financial support from the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC). The total budget of the project was EUR 700,000. Its primary objective is to enhance democracy in Georgia by promoting the active involvement of young people [boys and girls] in decision-making processes at the local level through democratic citizenship education within schools.

The project focuses on addressing the imperative for increased youth participation in social and political life in Georgia. It centers on involving secondary school children [schoolboys and schoolgirls] in decision-making processes as a vital element of competence-based democratic citizenship education. The project aligns with the Council of Europe's comprehensive approach to civic education, emphasizing knowledge, skills, values, attitudes, democratic school development, and integration of civic experiences in the wider community.

The initiative supports national education authorities, professionals, and institutions in Georgia through various measures:

- developing methodological guidance for schools on democratic school governance and student participation.
- supporting 20 pilot schools in implementing the guidance.
- enhancing the professional competencies of school principals in democratic school governance.
- assisting in the implementation of school and community-based projects in collaboration with civil society organizations.
- providing non-formal education opportunities through summer academies.
- establishing a network of Education for Democracy Schools to facilitate networking and peer exchange.

This evaluation report concludes the end-of-project evaluation commissioned by the Division of Formal and Non-formal Education of the Education Department of the Council of Europe in accordance with the guidelines for external evaluations of the organization.

The purpose of the evaluation is to assess the relevance, effectiveness and sustainability of the project "Democracy Starts in Schools - Engaging School Children in Decision Making Processes in Schools and Communities in Georgia".

The research was based on three of the six DAC/OECD criteria: relevance, effectiveness and sustainability, as well as the additional criterion of the Council of Europe on added value - and specifically addressed the key evaluation issues presented in the terms of reference, as well as cross-cutting topics. The evaluation also identified key lessons from project

implementation for its possible follow-up and activities required to further consolidate results - to be used by the Council of Europe (CoE) and its cooperation partners, mainly the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia (MES). It also provides input into the activities to be proposed within the follow up project in order to build on and consolidate the results of the current project.

In the context of Georgia's general education landscape, the project operates within a framework that **prioritizes teacher professional development** and embraces a **student-centered approach**, departing from the historical Soviet Union methodology. The government's commitment to enhancing teaching methodologies has been emphasized by many participants to the interviews, the role of the National Center for Teacher Professional Development - partner in the implementation of this project - being of utmost importance. Teacher professional development is a top priority, with extensive training throughout the year.

The evaluation of the Council of Europe (CoE) project on democratic citizenship and human rights education in Georgian schools reveals a **commendable achievement of proposed objectives and the establishment of a robust model for good practices** in the field. The project exhibited high relevance, effectiveness, and sustainability, attributing its success to strategic approaches and collaborative efforts. Here are the key highlights and recommendations:

Empowering through capacity building and local ownership

The project demonstrated a **strong commitment to sustainability** through capacity-building initiatives, knowledge transfer mechanisms, and institutionalization of outputs. A deliberate effort to engage national experts ensured a transfer of expertise to Georgian policy and decision-makers. The methodological guidance developed aligns with the Ministry's plans, signifying a clear pathway to institutionalization.

Local ownership and leadership were prioritized, fostering a decentralized and inclusive leadership model. The project **strategically aligned with existing national programs**, contributing to a **harmonized approach to educational development**. The involvement of European and national experts ensured a balanced combination of international and local knowledge. The human rights-based approach, cross-cutting dimensions, and focus on democratic competences showcased comprehensive understanding and integration.

Promoting non-formal education and stakeholder collaboration

Small grants schemes facilitated **practical application of acquired competences by school children**, promoting non-formal education activities. Synergies with other initiatives, such as the USAID Civic Education project, demonstrated a coordinated approach to civic education in Georgia. Stakeholder collaboration, involvement of NGOs, and a small grants program showcased a commitment to long-term impact and sustainability. Challenges to sustainability include societal reluctance and personnel changes, emphasizing the need for cultural persistence and stable leadership.

Leveraging strengths and addressing challenges

The project strategically **complemented and synergized with national initiatives**, leveraging the CoE's extensive presence in Georgia since 1999. The human rights-based approach, international and local expertise, and cross-cutting dimensions were identified as significant

strengths. A risk assessment highlighted challenges, including potential limited local ownership, emphasizing the need for careful consideration.

Positive precedent and forward-looking recommendations

The project **effectively addressed democratic citizenship and human rights education in Georgian schools**, setting a positive precedent for future initiatives. The emphasis on local ownership, collaboration, and strategic alignment showcased the project's effectiveness and relevance.

The project achieved its proposed objectives, with activities consistently proving **relevant**, resources **efficiently** utilized, stakeholders **actively engaged**, **adaptability** to context showcased, and a **positive impact** observed on both learners and institutions.

Practical orientation
Organize smaller groups during training sessions for a more interactive learning experience; continue meticulous planning for logistics, safety, communication, and time management.

Strategic approach
Include school board members in interventions for democratic school governance; identify and address the pivotal role of school principals and school board members in the change process.

Maintaining engagement
- encourage ongoing dissemination of experiences among pilot schools
- consolidate the network for continuous sharing of insights, challenges, and success stories.

Wider dissemination
Explore opportunities for broader dissemination beyond pilot schools; encourage sharing of project outcomes through conferences, publications, and collaboration.

Project transition
Acknowledge calls for transitioning project activities and develop a strategic plan for a smooth transfer.

Engaging schoolboys and schoolgirls
Establish an alumni mechanism to keep participants connected even after moving on to university .

2. Introduction

2.1. Purpose of the evaluation

This evaluation is an end-of-project evaluation. It is commissioned by the Division of Formal and Non-formal Education of the Education Department of the Council of Europe in accordance with the guidelines for external evaluations of the organization. The evaluation should identify key lessons from the implementation of the project for a possible follow-up and to be further used by the Division of Formal and Non-formal Education in its cooperation and capacity building projects. It should also provide input into the activities to be proposed within the follow up project in order to build on and consolidate the results of the current project.

The evaluation process was guided by the CoE Evaluation Policy and Evaluation Guidelines and other relevant instruments such as the Council of Europe's Gender Equality Strategy 2018-2023. The evaluation approach, the data collection, the analysis methods, the assessment of results and the evaluation process shall incorporate a gender equality perspective and human rights-based approach.

The purpose of the evaluation is to assess the relevance, effectiveness and sustainability of the project "*Democracy Starts in Schools - Engaging School Children in Decision Making Processes in Schools and Communities in Georgia*".

2.2. Objectives of the evaluation

The evaluation objectives are to assess the following:

- has the project been implemented as planned, what obstacles were faced and how were they addressed during implementation?
- what tangible results were achieved by the project?
- what lessons can be learned from the way in which the Council of Europe managed the implementation of the project?

The primary beneficiaries of this evaluation are the Division of Formal and Non-formal Education of the Education Department of the Council of Europe, the donor of the Project, and project partners. The secondary beneficiary is the Council of Europe as a whole, in terms of broader organizational learning.

The scope of the evaluation covers the activities carried out by the Council of Europe within the project "*Democracy Starts in Schools - Engaging School Children in Decision Making Processes in Schools and Communities in Georgia*" from the project start in March 2022 and until its end in December 2023. It considers both the intended and the un-intended or spillover results of the project. Other activities carried out by the Council of Europe in Georgia in the field of education before and during the project period were not considered.

2.3. Evaluation methodology

The evaluation was based on three of the six DAC/OECD criteria[1]: relevance, effectiveness and sustainability, as well as the additional criterion of the Council of

[1] https://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm

Europe on added value - and specifically addressed the key evaluation issues presented in the terms of reference, as well as cross-cutting topics.

The evaluation also identified key lessons from project implementation for its possible follow-up and activities required to further consolidate results - to be used by the Council of Europe (CoE) and its cooperation partners, mainly the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia (MES). Furthermore, the proposed approach:

- measured and analyzed the progress of project activities, as well as their relevance to the proposed objectives;
- examined and assessed organizational aspects, in terms of coordination and management, as well as risk management (identification/response);
- performed a systematic overview of the results, achievements, key challenges and lessons learned to date, and provide recommendations with the aim of actively and positively influencing future efforts;
- analyzed thoroughly the institutional environment, and measure the existing and potential synergies and complementary roles of other actors (CSOs working in the education sector, donors, the private sector, other government counterparts etc.) in providing support or managing common initiatives;
- examined the overall sustainability of the initiative and factors that enhance or undermine long-term sustainability of positive interventions.

Inclusive data collection methods

The assignment was also used as a **reflective learning exercise**, which considered the work done within the project and break it down into its most significant aspects.

The research was designed exclusively with a **collaborative, participative approach**. Therefore, all methods and tools used by the consultants fostered and supported interaction, dialogue, learning and action.

Desk research (secondary data analysis): this phase included a thorough review of project documents and monitoring data (see annex 2).

Online survey: to better assess the project's progress and obtain key stakeholder input concerning various aspects of the implementation, potential impact and sustainability, the evaluation included an online survey, composed of a structured questionnaire addressing the 20 schools involved in the project activities.

Field / online research (primary data collection and analysis): data collection focused on gathering relevant information, opinions, suggestions and challenges faced by the stakeholders involved in the project: project staff, cooperation partners, donors and other relevant stakeholders (school principals, CSO representatives etc.). Data was gathered from stakeholders using **face-to-face and online semi-structured, individual or group interviews**.

A limited number of face-to-face and online **focus groups** was performed with a selection of key stakeholders: school principals, teachers, parents, schoolboys and schoolgirls. Their use was justified in order to provide qualitative data to complement (and observe) the results of the online survey. The topics of the focus groups followed the same target issues covered by the individual/group interviews.

The face-to-face interviews, focus groups, group discussions and meetings with stakeholders were organized during a field mission performed by one of the evaluation

consultants to Tbilisi and Rustavi, Georgia between 23-27 October 2023 (5 working days).

Data sources and the chosen methods for this evaluation were based on the research objectives and questions, the target audience, and the budget and time constraints. They were also fine-tuned and piloted so that they would produce evidence supporting their reliability and validity.

Consideration for accessibility and inclusivity

Since the project includes several schools and communities in Georgia, and travel is difficult and time-consuming - in order to cover as many stakeholders as possible, most of the events took place mainly in the CoE Tbilisi office's premises, whilst the consultant visited a limited number of locations.

The stakeholders from other locations and who cannot travel to Tbilisi were covered through online meetings by the other evaluation consultant. The CoE staff in Tbilisi notified stakeholders on the incoming site visits and made the necessary arrangements.

3. The project and its context

3.1. Brief description of the project

The project "*Democracy Starts in Schools - Engaging School Children in Decision Making Processes in Schools and Communities in Georgia*" is a follow up to the Joint EU/Council of Europe Project "Supporting Education Policies in Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education in 6 Eastern Partnership countries" (2015-2017). This broader initiative targeted six Eastern Partnership countries: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine, and aimed to integrate democratic citizenship and human rights education into national education systems in line with the Council of Europe's Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education.

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The initiative supports national education authorities, professionals, and institutions in Georgia through various measures:

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- supporting 20 pilot schools in implementing the guidance.
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- assisting in the implementation of school and community-based projects in collaboration with civil society organizations.
- providing non-formal education opportunities through summer academies.
- establishing a network of *Education for Democracy Schools* to facilitate networking and peer exchange.

The project's expected results / outcomes are:

1. Educational institutions and staff develop school children's competences for democratic culture.
2. Schoolgirls and schoolboys exercise their democratic rights and responsibilities by participating in decision-making processes.

The project's activities / outputs are:

1. Policy recommendations on strengthening the legislative and policy framework for democratic governance in schools.

2. Methodological guidelines for democratic school governance, developed and piloted in schools.
3. Capacity building for school directors and teachers through a professional development program.
4. School projects in collaboration with civil society organizations, addressing key community issues.
5. School children peer exchanges, conferences, and summer academies on democracy and human rights.
6. Establishment of a national Education for Democracy Schools network.
7. Awareness-raising activities, including a national conference and communication initiatives.

The project has been based on the following Council of Europe standards:

- Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture (volumes 1-3).
- Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education.
- Democratic Schools Governance.

The project has developed and published two publications:

- Baseline Assessment on the State of Democratic School Governance and Democratic Citizenship Education in Georgia (October 2022, in English and in Georgian).
- Methodological Guidelines on Democratic School Governance and Student Participation (in Georgian only, will be available in December 2023).

3.2. Social and political context[2]

Georgia declared its independence after the Soviet Union's collapse on April 9, 1991, and is now an independent republic following democratic principles. Situated at the crossroads of Eastern Europe and Western Asia, Georgia has experienced political changes and developments in recent years. The political landscape has been marked by a mix of democratic reforms, regional geopolitical tensions, and internal political dynamics.

Georgia has been working on strengthening its democratic institutions since gaining independence from the Soviet Union. Efforts have been made to improve electoral processes, enhance the rule of law, and combat corruption. Georgia has a multi-party system. The political scene is characterized by the presence of various political parties with different ideologies and policy priorities.

Georgia's geopolitical position has made it a focus of regional attention, particularly in relations with Russia. The issues related to the breakaway regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia remain significant, influencing both domestic and foreign policy decisions. Georgia has expressed aspirations to join the European Union and NATO, seeking closer ties with Western institutions. This has implications for its foreign policy

[2] Sources of information: statements and releases from the official website of the Government of Georgia or relevant ministries; reliable news agencies i.e. BBC, Reuters, Al Jazeera; reports from international organizations i.e. Freedom House: Nations in Transit (2017-2023), Transparency International, World Bank country data; websites of foreign embassies in Georgia; Council of Europe: Georgia Handbook on Transparency and Citizen Participation.

and domestic reforms.

According to several sources of information[3], civil society plays a crucial role in Georgia, and there have been instances of public protests expressing various concerns, including electoral issues and perceived shortcomings in governance.

Public participation in decision-making is a crucial element for democratic development, particularly in countries transitioning from non-democratic regimes. The absence of a tradition of public involvement during the Soviet era has made the integration of public participation in Georgia a challenging but necessary endeavor, to cover legislation gaps and a lack of detailed procedures hindering effective public involvement, raising transparency levels for successful public engagement.

The country displayed positive trends since 2012–13; however, the nation has witnessed occasional reversal of progress that has impacted the country's political landscape, policy determinations, and media landscape.

Policy-making in Georgia exhibits elements of transparency and citizen engagement, although openness is often limited to specific policy processes. The absence of a uniform legal framework for open policy-making results in varying levels of transparency and citizen participation across central and local public institutions. Recent years have seen significant success in open policy-making, with citizens and public institution representatives recognizing the benefits of co-creating policies.

Despite the shift towards democracy, public participation in decision-making, is a relatively new concept in Georgian society. As Georgia strives for democratic development, public participation in decision-making stands out as a vital instrument. Overcoming financial, legal, and cooperation challenges can pave the way for increased transparency and successful public engagement, aligning with global efforts to integrate public participation in decision-making processes.

3.3. The education[4] system in Georgia

In the last two decades, Georgia has undergone substantial educational reforms, marked by the decentralization of school governance, the implementation of competence-based curricula, and the establishment of a teacher professional development scheme. These initiatives have significantly enhanced key educational indicators, leading to nearly universal enrollment in primary education and improved student performance on international surveys.

Despite these advancements, various stakeholders reported that a considerable proportion of Georgian students still exit the educational system without acquiring essential life and work competencies. Furthermore, issues of equity persist, with significant and widening disparities observed among regions and ethnic groups.[5]

[3] Georgia 2023 Report; CSO Meter 2022: Georgia Country Report, European Center for Not-for-Profit Law; Nations in Transit: Country Report, Freedom House, 2020-2023 editions; World Report 2022, Human Rights Watch; https://agenda.ge/; "Russian law is not the will of Georgia" Statement; "Georgian civil society concerned over threats to democracy in election law changes"; Human Rights Watch, Report of the Associate Director: "Protests Erupt in Georgia over Failed Electoral Reforms".

[4] This sub-chapter highlights the general education system.

[5] Source: OECD.

While Georgia has made remarkable strides in educational participation and outcomes, challenges remain in ensuring equitable progress across diverse demographic groups. Many students in Georgia face difficulties in mastering fundamental competencies; this indicates systemic challenges in modernizing the teaching profession, such as leveraging evidence in policy-making, and reinforcing school oversight.

The regulation of general education in Georgia is governed by key laws, including "The Law on General Education" and "The Law on Education Quality Enhancement", operationalized through the National Curriculum and supplementary sub-legal acts. Full general education spans 12 years across three levels: primary (I-VI grades), basic (VII-IX grades), and secondary (X-XII grades), with mandatory primary and basic education. Instruction in general educational institutions aligns with the National Curriculum, overseen by the National Curriculum Department of the Ministry of Education and Science.

In 2005, Georgia introduced its first national curriculum, outlining targeted learning outcomes and the allocation of instructional hours for all subjects and grade levels. Subsequent revisions in the 2011 and 2018 editions of the curriculum underscored a more comprehensive learning approach, prioritizing the cultivation of student competences and social-emotional skills over routine memorization of facts. Furthermore, the 2018 reforms introduced a stage-based methodology, organizing student learning outcomes around specific stages rather than traditional grade levels.

The Ministry of Education, Science, Culture, and Sport (MoESCS) formulated the "Unified Strategy for Education and Science for 2017-2021", aimed at steering the nation's education system toward delivering high-quality education for everyone. The primary focal points of this Unified Strategy encompassed integrating student-centric teaching methodologies, allocating resources to enhance the teaching workforce, and establishing secure school environment.

The mid-term evaluation of the implementation of the Unified Strategy recommended, among other, to take measures for quality improvement and to develop a relevant policy, increase of investment in the development of teacher resources, propose changes to teachers' career advancement scheme, infrastructure construction and rehabilitation etc.

The mid-term and final assessments of the 2017-2021 strategy, undertaken by the Ministry of Education and Science (MES) in 2019 and early 2022, identified that the strategic goals and objectives lacked clear formulation and corresponding support from relevant indicators. The presence of imprecise or non-measurable indicators hindered the evaluation of activities aligned with the goals, making it challenging to precisely determine the success ratio and overall impact. Furthermore, the education and science sector in Georgia encountered substantial challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic. These challenges encompassed the shift to distance and hybrid learning models, the imperative to ensure equal opportunities for participation in the learning process, and the attainment of educational objectives. Additionally, efforts were directed towards providing teachers and students with digital learning resources during this period.

A new national education and science strategy for the period 2022-2030 has been formulated, highlighting the significance of evidence-based policymaking and

engagement with stakeholders. This approach aims to secure effective priority setting, alignment of strategic goals, feasibility, and financial sustainability, reflecting Georgia's political vision for constructing a European state. Actively involved in developing recommendations on the Council of Europe Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture, Georgia was among the first countries to implement the framework in educational practice at various levels of the education system.

Several specialized bodies of the ministry assist in the implementation of education policy, among them:

- the Teacher Professional Development Centre (TPDC): ensures professional teacher development via regional training centers. It is also responsible for managing the Teacher Pre-service, Professional Development, and Career Advancement Scheme. Additionally, TPDC supervises the formulation of professional standards for both teachers and school leaders.
- the National Centre for Education Quality Enhancement (NCEQE): responsible for accrediting programs in vocational and higher education institutes, as well as overseeing school authorization.

Both institutions suffered substantial transformation and **their activity is of utmost importance for the implementation of the project** "*Democracy Starts in Schools - Engaging School Children in Decision Making Processes in Schools and Communities in Georgia*".

There are 2,086 public schools distributed across Georgia, with a significantly higher number of students concentrated in Tbilisi and major urban centers. General education constitutes the largest sub-sector, representing 78% of total enrollment (excluding pre-school). While general education in Georgia is primarily centered in public schools, the private sector (approximatively 200 schools) is experiencing an increase in enrollments, attributed to a perceived higher quality compared to public schools. This trend is expected to persist, supported by growing disposable incomes, urbanization, and favorable demographic trends in the medium term.

Notably, there is a diverse range of schools in terms of size and geographical location. Some schools are very small, while others, particularly in urban centers experiencing internal migration, are large. Schools in mountainous regions may have as few as 1 to 10 students, while regional or district schools might be overpopulated, affecting the student-to-classroom ratio. Additionally, factors such as ethnic diversity and displaced populations contribute to the complexity of the education landscape.

Number of general education schools and pupils in Georgia (2018-2023)[6]

(at the start of the school year)

NO OF SCHOOLS / YEAR	2018/2019	2019/2020	2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023
General education schools	**2,313**	**2,313**	**2,309**	**2,308**	**2,302**
Public schools	2,085	2,086	2,086	2,086	2,086
Private schools	228	227	223	222	216
No of pupils (*thousands*)	**584.4**	**592.9**	**609.1**	**624.5**	**633.3**
Public schools	524.0	530.1	549.1	564.5	569.6
Private schools	60.4	62.8	60.0	60.0	63.7

[6] Source: Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia.

Number of pupils in public & private schools in Georgia, by municipality (2018-2023)[6]

(at the start of the school year)

MUNICIPALITIES	2018/2019	2019/2020	2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023
TOTAL in Georgia	**584,374**	**592,883**	**609,095**	**624,524**	**633,302**
Tbilisi	200,198	205,829	212,425	219,155	224,081
Abkhazia AR	2,325	2,337	2,372	2,423	2,422
Adjara AR	57,826	59,068	61,273	63,645	66,440
Batumi	31,497	32,962	34,651	36,592	39,483
Guria	14,241	14,165	14,371	14,495	14,490
Ozurgeti	8,188	8,110	8,294	8,356	8,396
Imereti	76,603	76,914	78,682	80,421	80,829
Kutaisi	29,962	30,544	31,564	32,581	33,203
Kakheti	42,707	43,100	44,343	45,386	45,547
Telavi	8,095	8,197	8,463	8,694	8,773
Mtskheta-Mtianeti	11,899	12,079	12,491	12,888	12,821
Mtskheta	7,153	7,337	7,625	7,921	7,962
Racha-Lechkhumi Kvemo Svaneti	2,954	2,928	2,939	2,907	2,883
Ambrolauri	1,001	1,030	1,039	1,036	1,041
Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti	43,684	43,840	44,691	45,608	45,605
Zugdidi	14,384	14,574	14,885	15,365	15,568
Samtskhe-Javakheti	24,532	24,424	24,695	24,732	24,477
Akhaltsikhe	6,318	6,325	6,460	6,502	6,457
Kvemo Kartli	69,606	70,427	72,311	73,649	74,253
Rustavi	21,906	22,332	22,994	23,501	23,701
Shida Kartli	37,799	37,772	38,502	39,215	39,454
Gori	18,806	18,710	19,183	19,580	19,663

The education system plays a pivotal role in shaping individuals into active, responsible citizens who actively engage in society and communities. Thus, the education system introduces schoolboys and schoolgirls to the principles of democracy, civic rights, and responsibilities. Civic education provides an understanding of the political system, the rule of law, and the importance of active participation in civic life. It equips individuals with critical thinking skills, enabling them to analyze societal issues, form informed opinions, and contribute to constructive problem-solving. This encourages citizens to engage with complex challenges and make informed decisions. Exposing students to diverse perspectives and social issues within the education system fosters social awareness and empathy. Students learn to appreciate different cultures, understand social and gender inequalities, develop a sense of responsibility towards building inclusive communities, enhance communication and collaboration, ethical values, community involvement and so on.

In summary, the education system plays a multifaceted role in preparing individuals to be active, responsible citizens who contribute positively to society and communities. Through a combination of knowledge, skills, and values, education shapes individuals

who are not only capable professionals but also engaged participants in the civic and social fabric of their communities.

3.4. Policy and project context

In the context of Georgia's general education landscape, the project operates within a framework that prioritizes teacher professional development and embraces a student-centered approach, departing from the historical Soviet Union methodology. The government's commitment to enhancing teaching methodologies has been emphasized by many participants to the interviews, the role of the National Center for Teacher Professional Development - partner in the implementation of this project - being of utmost importance. Teacher professional development is a top priority, with extensive training throughout the year.

The Education Resource Centers have an important role, acting as intermediaries between the ministry and schools, sharing information and having monitoring functions.

The Civic Education Teacher Forum has been actively involved, especially in the early stages of the project.

Several key contextual factors emerged during the desk research and the field and online data collection phase, among them:

- the Soviet Union legacy that has influenced Georgia's educational methodology, which traditionally was not student-centered, and the current efforts aim to shift towards student-centered classrooms, aligning with the third-generation national curriculum.
- the third-generation national curriculum places a strong emphasis on project-based learning (PBL) as a methodology, encouraging students to collaborate on projects to achieve learning outcomes, fostering essential skills and competencies.
- the focus on 21st-Century Competencies, the curriculum seeking to develop competences for democratic culture, to equip schoolboys and schoolgirls with the skills necessary for active participation in a democratic culture.
- challenges in diverse school settings – there are over 2000 schools in Georgia, each facing unique challenges based on size and geographical location. Moreover, migration patterns impact student populations, leading to varying classroom sizes and affecting overall learning outcomes.
- schools operating in ethnic minority areas presenting specific challenges, particularly regarding language instruction (the Ministry of Education and Science actively addresses language barriers to integrate minority students into the broader societal framework.)
- teacher professional development is a top priority, with ongoing training initiatives throughout the year.
- the ongoing process of electing school principals is a major factor, affecting the composition of school leadership. While the impact on projects (such as this one) is minimal in terms of numbers, there's an ongoing analysis to understand the extent of the changes. The election process, spanning a year, involves tests, interviews, and board approval.

- school authorization process: A recent development involves a school authorization process akin to university quality assurance assessments, around 300 schools participated in the initial stage, with evaluations determining adherence to nationally approved quality standards for schools. Although being emphasized that the authorization process focuses on providing support to schools falling short of standards, the ongoing assessment makes in some cases changes in the school leadership and the processes may affect the project dynamics.

The project operates in a dynamic educational landscape, aligning with national priorities to support the development of a democratic culture, prioritize student-centered education, creating learning environments that are 'safe and supportive', 'open' and 'collaborative', and equip schoolboys and schoolgirls with the skills needed for active citizenship[7]. It aims to create opportunities for student involvement in decision-making processes at both school and community levels. The project collaborates with school principals, teachers, parents, and students to build a more democratic culture in schools and school communities.

Developing methodological guidelines marked a significant milestone. The objective was to empower schools with practical insights for effective student participation. While the project introduced unified tools for data collection, challenges surfaced in standardizing indicators. This is mainly due to the different outputs or responses collected.

[7] 2022-2030 Unified National Strategy of Education and Science of Georgia.

4. Findings

4.1. Relevance

To what extent do the intervention objectives address identified needs of the target group(s)? How far did the design of the intervention address the problems identified?

In assessing the relevance of the "Democracy Starts in School" project according to the OECD-DAC standards, several aspects have been observed. Firstly, the project strategically aligns with the educational priorities outlined by the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia. This alignment ensures that **the initiative is consistent with - and supportive of - national goals in education**.

The "Democracy Starts in School" project also aligns strategically with the educational landscape in Georgia, **responding to the challenges and opportunities within the general education system** (briefly presented in the context section). The project's relevance is supported by the educational reforms undertaken in the last two decades, emphasizing competence-based curricula, teacher professional development, and decentralization of school governance.

It harmonizes seamlessly with Georgia's educational priorities by aligning with the country's commitment to citizenship education. In sync with recent reforms that have integrated the Council of Europe Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture (RFCDC) into the National Curriculum, **the project reinforces and amplifies the goal of fostering democratic values and human rights education**. Its emphasis on engaging students in decision-making processes resonates with the mandatory inclusion of Citizenship Education across all grades in public schools, demonstrating a shared commitment to nurturing active, informed, and civically responsible citizens.

Stakeholders surveyed by the evaluation team frequently mentioned that the project is **aligned with the national standards for general quality in education**. They also praised the project's focus on shared responsibility for decision-making, involving students in the process.

In addressing Georgia's education and democracy priorities, the project not only **harmonizes with the nation's new school curriculum**, which accentuates citizenship education and student participation, but also **complements the overarching general education law**. This alignment extends to Georgia's education strategy and the ongoing school authorization procedures, reinforcing the project's commitment to consistency and synergy within the national education framework. Furthermore, by falling under the governance umbrella, the project is inherently linked to broader objectives, supporting human rights and the rule of law.

Despite Georgia's notable progress in improving participatory democracy through enhanced, citizen-centric local governance, challenges persist in realizing substantial public engagement in decision-making. Issues include the lack of effective implementation of innovative participatory consultation methods and of the reinforcement of civic engagement councils, as well as the limited use of existing civil engagement mechanisms, contributing to insufficient rates of citizen participation. Participation in the elections process is appreciated by observers as low. For example, in the parliamentary elections, the voters' turnout suffered a relatively constant

decline[8]. The voters' turnout for the last presidential elections suffered an even steeper decline to 46%, from 68% in 1992, while showing a higher interest in 2004, 87%.

Based on this data, we consider that the project, building a culture of participation based on 21st century competences, **fully aligns with Georgia's identified needs**.

In conclusion, the project's relevance is deeply rooted in its alignment with national educational priorities, its integration into legal frameworks, and its responsiveness to identified challenges within the Georgian education system.

The "Democracy Starts in School" project also **aligns well to the SDC criteria**, contributing to governance and participatory approaches, a key aspect of Switzerland's system. Moreover, the project resonates with broader international development objectives, particularly the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The emphasis on instilling democratic values and fostering active citizenship aligns flawlessly with SDG 4 (Quality Education) and SDG 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions). This international alignment underscores the project's broader significance within the global development framework.

The **inclusivity of the project** is a notable aspect, engaging schools from all diverse backgrounds and regions within Georgia. The decision to include schools from various ethnic backgrounds demonstrates a commitment to addressing specific needs and ensuring a more equitable distribution of project benefits.

Addressing critical challenges within the education system, such as low student participation and limited involvement of schoolboys and schoolgirls in decision-making processes, reflects the project's responsiveness to identified needs. This is crucial for ensuring the project's relevance and effectiveness in the Georgian context.

The project's commitment to sustainability is proven by its emphasis on creating guidelines and establishing networks. This strategic approach aims to ensure that the impact of the project extends beyond the initial pilot phase, contributing to the long-term enhancement of democratic values within schools.

From the interviews conducted, and analysis of project documents (in particular the Baseline Study), it is evident that the project's objectives align with the identified needs of the target group, which include school children (boys and girls), teachers, parents and principals. The interviewed stakeholders emphasized **the importance of fostering democratic principles within the educational system**, addressing the gaps in decision-making processes within schools.

Demonstrating the alignment of educational initiatives with societal needs is a crucial aspect of any assessment. A participant emphasized the societal preference for professional development programs, stating: "Professional development is gaining popularity, reflecting societal aspirations for enhanced skills".

Lastly, the harmonization with partner organizations, including government entities and the Council of Europe, underscores the project's commitment to working within existing structures and networks. This collaborative approach ensures a **cohesive and integrated effort** towards achieving the project's goals.

[8] At the 1992 parliamentary election the turnout was 74%, in 2020 it was 56%.

As the conclusion of the project is near, it is obvious that **the implemented activities have been executed with remarkable meticulousness and dedication**, aligning closely with the project's goals and objectives. The success of the project can be attributed to the planning, strategic execution, and the collaborative efforts of all stakeholders involved.

The project demonstrates relevance by addressing the identified needs of the target group through its objectives and design. The emphasis on fostering democratic principles and the practical implementation of a professional development program enhances the project's potential to contribute meaningfully to the promotion of democratic values in schools and communities.

In conclusion, the "Democracy Starts in School" project demonstrates a comprehensive understanding of and alignment with national and international priorities, strategically addressing identified needs within the education system while fostering inclusivity and collaboration with key stakeholders.

4.2. Effectiveness

What has been the progress made towards achievement of the expected results? What are the reasons for the achievement or nonachievement? To which extent the management of the relationships among stakeholders was effective in establishing a real partnership aiming at the success of the intervention? To what extent has the project been effective in helping the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia with the on-going education reforms? To what extent has the project been effective in helping to strengthen the capacity of schools, school directors and of other stakeholders in the area of democratic school governance and student participation?

The primary objectives of the "Democracy Starts in School" project were clearly articulated and aimed at enhancing youth participation in social and political life in Georgia. The focus on involving secondary school children in decision-making processes was identified as a crucial component of competence-based democratic citizenship education. The alignment with the Council of Europe's comprehensive approach to civic education, encompassing knowledge, skills, values, attitudes, democratic school development, and community integration, formed the cornerstone of the project's objectives.

The key objectives were well-defined, focusing on youth participation and competence-based democratic citizenship education.

The project has demonstrated a high degree of effectiveness in achieving its stated objectives. The comprehensive understanding of the existing educational environment laid the groundwork for subsequent activities, creating a solid foundation for addressing the key issues identified:

- the baseline assessment "Engaging School Children in Decision Making Processes in Georgia" has provided an in-depth analysis of the current state of affairs in democratic school governance and democratic citizenship education at school level thereby improving the project's understanding of the existing needs.
- the assessment developed a series of initial recommendations on strengthening the legislative and policy framework for the democratic governance of schools.

- the project launched with a conference which gathered about 100 education decision makers, school principals, teachers and experts, and provided a forum for key stakeholders to take stock of Georgia's progress in competence based civic education and identify needs for further development and reform.
- the methodological guidelines on the democratic school governance were developed, with support from international and national experts.
- the professional development program for school principals, teachers and other members of the school community emphasized the importance of democratic school governance and democratic practices at school level.
- 20 schools were selected to pilot the methodological guidelines; they developed action plans for implementing activities targeting an increase of student participation in different areas of policy, program and management at schools and in communities.
- small projects have been implemented by schoolboys and schoolgirls in their schools and respective communities.
- the Education for Democracy Schools Network has been created and is functional.

The project successfully contributed to competence-based education by **actively involving secondary school children (boys and girls) in decision-making processes**. The emphasis on knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes was reflected in the project's outcomes.

The project's activities, observed through desk research and confirmed by the meetings with stakeholders, have consistently proven **appropriate and responsive to the identified needs within the Georgian education system**. The targeted professional development program for school principals and teachers - focusing on democratic school governance - addressed a critical gap, has been properly delivered, and also highly appreciated. The partnership between schools and civil society organizations, as well as the sharing of best practices through a study visit to Moldova, reflects understanding of how activities can contribute to broader educational objectives.

The project has demonstrated commendable efficiency in the utilization of resources. The Steering Committee's periodic meetings have ensured streamlined decision-making, contributing to the efficient oversight of project activities. The use of national experts (as opposed to international experts) for specific components of the project **aligns with OECD standards for resource efficiency** (despite the challenge of identifying the experts), promoting local ownership and sustainability.

Stakeholder engagement has been a cornerstone of the project's success. The active involvement of educational institutions, civil society organizations, and community stakeholders in the development and implementation of projects linked to learning outcomes signifies a **robust engagement strategy**.

The establishment of the *Education for Democracy Network* further amplifies the effectiveness of stakeholder engagement by creating a platform for ongoing collaboration and knowledge-sharing. The cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Science, and other institutions, such as the National Centre for Education Quality Enhancement (NCEQE) and the National Center for Teacher Professional Development, resulted in promoting the methodological guidelines and the training curriculum to

these institutions. For example, NCEQE requested to post the methodological guidelines to their website, as best practice or guide for the standards developed, providing guidelines to schools. The interviewed stakeholders stated that the project has contributed to the ongoing education reforms by **providing a methodology accepted by the Ministry of Education and Science**. The collaboration with the Ministry and the integration of the project's principles into broader educational policies suggest an **effective contribution to the reform initiatives**.

The project's adaptability to the context, highlights its effectiveness in navigating unforeseen circumstances. The emphasis on **online delivery options for many activities**, coupled with in-person events, showcases a proactive approach to maintaining project momentum. The successful execution of activities, including the study visit to Moldova and the organization of summer academies, highlights the project's ability to **adapt without compromising its core objectives**, showing effective project management in dynamic contexts.

The project displayed a **positive impact on learners and institutions alike**. The emphasis on democratic competences, coupled with the focus on values, attitudes, skills, and knowledge, has contributed to a tangible shift in the participatory culture within schools. The establishment of a *Education for Democracy Schools Network* will contribute to institutional impact, fostering a culture of collaboration and best practice sharing. The project's effectiveness in achieving its objectives is further evidenced by the successful organization of two summer academies, empowering schoolboys and schoolgirls to exercise their democratic rights and responsibilities.

The school principal plays a focal role in shaping the school's democratic culture, influencing student participation and overall management style. Acknowledging this, the project placed particular emphasis on engaging school principals in its initiatives. The **professional development program "Developing a Democratic School"** was designed as a comprehensive course rather than mere training. Focused on practical aspects, the course comprised three blocks of two-day sessions, allowing intervals for school principals to implement and practice the acquired knowledge. The emphasis on practical application was underscored by case studies, where participants addressed scenarios at the course's beginning and end to assess the impact of the nine-week program. The meticulous approach to data collection in every activity, utilizing case studies as an evaluative tool instead of questions, ensures a nuanced understanding of the course's effectiveness in fostering democratic values within school management.

However, challenges tied to school principals' elections introduce an element of uncertainty, potentially impacting the effectiveness of school-level initiatives. The ongoing school authorization process, modeled after university quality assessments, signifies an attempt to ensure institutional effectiveness but requires ongoing evaluation.

The interviewees provided insights into the progress made by the project in terms of achieving the expected results. They mentioned positive changes observed in the behavior and communication styles of teachers and principals after participating in the professional development program. An interviewee notes a "slight but distinct difference" in how teachers address specific situations, indicating progress in instilling democratic principles.

The **facilitators in this project played a key role in guiding and supporting schools** through the implementation of democratic practices. They have been involved in the development of guidelines aimed at promoting democratic practices in schools.

The facilitators actively engaged with the 20 pilot schools, collaborating with school administrators, teachers, students, and parents to integrate democratic practices into the school environment, working closely with schools to implement the guidelines. They facilitated discussions, brainstorming sessions with schoolboys and schoolgirls, parents, teachers (together), and activities to encourage schools to reflect on their strengths and weaknesses in terms of democratic practices, provided support to addressing any challenges, clarifying doubts, and motivating schools to actively participate in the implementation of democratic initiatives.

They have also collected feedback from the pilot schools, gathering insights into the effectiveness of the guidelines, challenges faced, and areas of improvement. This feedback likely contributed to refining and enhancing the guidelines.

Facilitators mediated the exchange of experiences among the 20 pilot schools. This could involve sharing success stories, challenges faced, and innovative approaches to implementing democratic practices. Facilitators maintained close communication with each other, coordinating efforts to ensure a smooth implementation process. They discussed challenges, shared experiences.

Facilitators were involved in developing additional resources, such as cases and examples derived from successful experiences in the piloting schools. These resources were intended to assist new schools in implementing the guidelines effectively.

In summary, facilitators in this project played a multifaceted role, involving the development and testing of guidelines, close collaboration with schools, feedback collection, and advocating for the continued expansion of democratic practices in the education system.

During data collection, many respondents mentioned the excellent collaboration with the project stakeholders, specifically mentioning cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Science, the National Centre for Education Quality Enhancement and National Center for Teacher Professional Development, as well as with all other actors involved, indicating **capacity to establish effective partnerships**.

All surveyed stakeholders agreed that **the project has been highly effective in strengthening the capacity of schools, school principals, parents, schoolboys and schoolgirls as well as of all other stakeholders**, which provides evidence of the project's effectiveness. The professional development program is highlighted as a successful tool in equipping teachers and principals with knowledge and skills. The emphasis on building a democratic culture within schools and the selection of key individuals such as principals and deputies for training demonstrates targeted and thoughtful efforts.

Overall, the changes in behavior and communication styles, the successful collaboration with stakeholders, and contributions to ongoing education reforms all point to the project's effectiveness in achieving its objectives, its intended outcomes. **The collaborative efforts of key stakeholders contributed to the effectiveness of the intervention**.

In conclusion, the project has been highly effective in achieving its objectives, with activities consistently proving relevant, resources efficiently utilized, stakeholders actively engaged, adaptability to context showcased, and a positive impact observed on both learners and institutions. Its effectiveness stands as a **model for good practice in the field of democratic citizenship and human rights education**.

The baseline assessment[9]

The project placed a significant emphasis on professional development of school principals and their deputies. Guided by the RBC principles, the team demonstrated commitment to meticulous data collection, laying a solid framework for evidence-driven decision-making, as for shaping the intervention, a needs-assessment has been conducted, resulting in a report: "Baseline Assessment on the State of Democratic School Governance and Democratic Citizenship Education in Georgia". The report focuses on democratic school governance and citizenship education in Georgia, providing a deeper understanding of the actual situation.

The methodology employed for the assessment, which includes a mix of desk research, face-to-face and online focus group discussions, and interviews with diverse stakeholders, reflects a comprehensive and multi-faceted approach. The report meticulously covers nine critical aspects of school life, emphasizing their importance for student participation. These aspects range from school climate and leadership to curriculum, teaching and learning, civic education, and professional development.

A notable strength of the report lies in the identification and presentation of a clear overview of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats associated with the current state of democratic school governance in Georgia. By highlighting considerable variations in opportunities for student participation across schools, the report sheds light on key influencing factors, such as teaching staff attitudes, access to professional development, and the availability of educational resources.

The assessment is regarded as **a critical document of significant value in shaping the intervention strategies** in schools. The report serves as a foundational overview, providing insights into the political and educational context of Georgia while emphasizing the pivotal role of the Council of Europe project and the concept of student participation in democratic citizenship education.

The report underscores the role of school principals in influencing democratic school governance, revealing the impact of their values, attitudes, and leadership styles on student participation. It advocates for a strategic approach, calling for a focus on the school principal's role and the implementation of a whole-school approach to student participation.

The key recommendations presented in the report encompass new obligations and capacity-building for school principals, strengthening student representation, providing training for teachers, and increasing parental involvement in school administration. The specific policy and practice recommendations, tailored to address challenges and

[9] Baseline assessment on the state of democratic school governance and democratic citizenship education in Georgia conducted within the Council of Europe project "Democracy Starts in Schools - Engaging School Children in Decision Making Processes in Schools and Communities in Georgia".

opportunities in each thematic area, further enhance the practical utility of the document.

What the report **does not identify** is the role that the school board has, or should have, in shaping the educational policies.

In summary, the baseline assessment report stands as a comprehensive and insightful guide, offering a detailed understanding of the existing landscape of democratic school governance in Georgia. Its strategic recommendations provided a valuable roadmap for shaping interventions and fostering meaningful schoolboys and schoolgirls participation in decision-making processes within schools.

Endline project survey[10]

By the end of the project, an endline survey (internal evaluation study - quantitative research, particularly online surveys and questionnaires) has been conducted, involving participants of relevant categories for school life. The research surveyed school principals, teachers and students, as well as local community members and representatives of self-government (20 persons, 301 teachers, 729 students, 500 community representatives, and 30 local government officials). The gathered data was compiled into six thematic directions: 1. Students' rights; 2. Awareness of the functions of the school's decision-making bodies and the rate of engagement in activities; 3. Planning and participation of school and community projects; 4. Collaboration with local authorities, businesses and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). 5. Evaluation of the project by target groups; 6. Results of a survey of local government officials; 7. Local community research results.

The overall assessment regarding the use of rights in schools was positive. For example, when it came to the component concerning students' ability to participate in the formation of the school budget, the baseline figures rose from 27% to 57%. In terms of the involvement of principals, teachers, and students in the activities of decision-making bodies, the majority of all three groups reported that young people were actively involved.

The participation rate in school or community projects for all three target groups (principals, teachers, schoolboys and schoolgirls) also improved. Principals reported that the stable student engagement rate in out-of-school community activities increased from 53% to 77%. The percentage of participants and the target groups involved has also increased in relation to the baseline data. Students' involvement in initiating their own projects and activities has increased from 21% to 38%.

In terms of cooperation with local authorities, businesses and NGOs, the rate of cooperation of schools and community events increased from 59% to 90%. Collaboration rates with NGOs and local businesses also improved (baseline figure 41% and final result 66%). According to the assessment survey data, 85% of respondents answered positively to the statement that in the decision-making process in their school, students are considered equal partners along with principals and teachers.

[10] The assessment covered principals, teachers and students of the participating schools, in addition to interviewing local community and self-government representatives.

The baseline survey data shows that 61% of schools had high motivation to participate in the project, but according to the final assessment data, 96% of principals, 91% of teachers and 85% of students consider the results achieved within the project to be positive. In relation to the local government officials surveyed, 86% said that they often cooperate with general education institutions and 14% stated that they are more or less likely to do so.

A survey of 500 local community members showed that 71% were parents of the school students involved in the project. 91% of the respondents consider education for democratic citizenship important, and 82% of the community have heard about the events implemented under the project "Democracy starts in school", while 35% of respondents participated directly in the activities planned and implemented within the project.

The evaluation study highlights significant positive changes in various aspects of school life. There is obvious improvement in students' perception of their rights, active engagement in decision-making processes, and increased participation in projects. The collaborative efforts with external entities, especially local authorities, have strengthened substantially. The overwhelmingly positive feedback from principals, teachers and students underscores the success of the project in enhancing democratic values and active citizenship within the school community. Parental involvement and community awareness further contribute to the project's overall success. The findings suggest that the project has successfully achieved its goals in promoting democratic citizenship education and fostering a collaborative school environment.

The communication strategy

The communication strategy for the project "Democracy Starts in Schools - Engaging School Children in Decision Making Processes in Schools and Communities in Georgia" is positively assessed by the evaluation experts. The strategy is valued for its clear objectives in promoting democratic school governance and principles, emphasizing democratic values, participation rights, and informing the public about the project. The evaluators highlight the **segmentation of target audiences**, ensuring tailored communication for different stakeholders.

The strategy sets comprehensive targeting, reaching out to public officials, school administrators, parents, schoolboys and schoolgirls, local communities, media, and civil society organizations. The focus on visibility through success stories, digital products, and partnerships is noted as enhancing reach and impact.

The selected mix of channels i.e. social media, websites, traditional media, and project activities is acknowledged for effective dissemination, and proportional to the intended reach, with quantifiable and reasonable metrics, covering multimedia products, communication activities, audience reached, and web analytics. The strategy's attention to both quantitative and qualitative measures for assessing content quality and impact is appreciated.

The communications strategy is recognized for its comprehensive and well-structured approach, combining various communication channels and engaging a balanced and wide range of stakeholders.

The Summer Academy on civic engagement

This component has been developed with involvement of international experts, aiming to empower students by fostering a sense of partnership among schoolboys and schoolgirls, school principals, teachers and other members of the school community.

Success stories were cited, showcasing the transformative journey of schools previously unaware of democratic principles.

a) **Transformation in a mountain area-based school**: one notable success story shared by stakeholders involved a school situated in the mountains. Initially unfamiliar with democratic principles, the school underwent a significant transformation. It now boasts an active self-government, showcasing how the project effectively introduced and implemented democratic values in a previously unaware educational setting.

b) **Addressing gender disparities**: another highlighted success story focused on a specific school where the project concentrated on increasing participation and engagement, particularly addressing gender disparities. The initiative in this school demonstrated that even small steps can lead to a significant impact, showcasing how the project actively worked towards creating a more inclusive and equitable educational environment.

c) **Students as mentors and project implementers**: stakeholders shared success stories of students actively taking on mentoring roles for their peers. These students were not only mentors but also implemented projects within their schools, such as setting up democratic corners, conducting surveys, and addressing communication issues with teachers. This showcased the tangible impact of the Summer Academy in empowering students to take leadership roles and initiate positive changes in their school communities.

The Academy's success was attributed to effective networking among students, engaging activities, and project management training. However, challenges and areas for improvement were acknowledged. Recommendations included increasing the number of participants from each school, conducting more training for school principals, and organizing follow-up activities.

As revealed by different categories of participants, the Summer Academy's impact extended beyond the training sessions. It successfully increased youth participation in schools, empowered students to initiate positive changes in their communities, and created a ripple effect influencing peers, parents, and the formation of various clubs. Despite challenges, continuous mechanisms were proposed, involving students in their creation, and emphasized the importance of skills training over financial incentives.

Logistical challenges in managing a large group were addressed, emphasizing the importance of well-planned logistics. Safety concerns and communication challenges, particularly with teenagers who were still minors, were discussed, highlighting the need for thorough planning.

Stakeholders also drew comparisons with other civic engagement initiatives, emphasizing the thematic nature of the Summer Academy and its real-world impact on participants. The selection process, piloting schools in vulnerable regions, ensured

diversity, while language barriers were overcome through translation and team-building activities.

The main achievements of the Summer Academy included effective networking, sharing experiences, and design of concrete projects. Beyond the school, students engaged in community initiatives, showcasing the Academy's success in creating future leaders committed to positive change. The interviewees expressed satisfaction in working with kids and commended the dedicated team from the Council of Europe for their support throughout the project.

4.3. Sustainability

To which extent are the outcomes of the project likely to continue producing effects after the end of its funding? What are the factors that hampered the impact and sustainability of the assistance?

Capacity building and knowledge transfer

The project demonstrated a strong commitment to sustainability through robust capacity-building initiatives and knowledge transfer mechanisms. The involvement of European experts, coupled with a deliberate effort to engage national experts, has contributed to a transfer of expertise to Georgian policy and decision-makers. The strategic decision to work primarily with national experts in the development and delivery of key project components, such as the professional development program for school directors, aligns with good practices for building local capacities. The emphasis on empowering national experts and target groups to continue implementing project outputs beyond its conclusion reflects a **sustainable approach to knowledge transfer**.

Institutionalization of project outputs

A key marker of the project's sustainability is the deliberate integration of project outputs into existing national processes. The development and piloting of methodological guidance on democratic school governance align with the Ministry of Education and Science's plans to reform school management. The **anticipated adoption of the methodological guidelines as a normative act** and its subsequent rollout at the national level signify a **clear pathway to institutionalization**. Similarly, the professional development program for school principals, developed in alignment with the Ministry's process of appointing new school directors, is ready for accreditation and inclusion in the regular training offer.

Local ownership and leadership

The project has prioritized local ownership and leadership, ensuring that Georgian cooperation partners lead the comprehensive process of change. The Steering Committee, consisting of representatives from the Ministry of Education and Science, the National Center for Teacher Professional Development, and other key stakeholders, reflects a **collaborative approach to decision-making**. The involvement of Georgian educational institutions, civil society organizations, and community stakeholders in the development and implementation of projects linked to learning outcomes showcases a decentralized and inclusive leadership model. The participation of local experts and development of their expertise, despite all the outstanding efforts, has been a good

practice in advancing local ownership and leadership. The project's support for the establishment of an Education for Democracy Schools Network further exemplifies a commitment to local ownership.

Small grants scheme

The implementation of the small grants' schemes enabled school children to put into practice the competences acquired by school children in formal education settings, within their schools and classrooms and in their communities, through non-formal education activities, focusing on child participation, encouraging a creative thinking and leading to a more in depth understanding. By the cutoff date of data collection, the small grants program for civil society organizations implementing projects in the pilot schools was ongoing.

Synergy with other initiatives

Preliminary discussions showed a certain ambiguity regarding the identity of the projects implemented, due to the engagement of schools at the same time in a USAID Civic Education project. The two projects implemented by USAID and the Council of Europe share some similarities. Most respondents contacted by the evaluation team opiniated that the added value of the Council of Europe project, although working in a much smaller number of schools, is that it has addressed the full range of democratic competences in addition to the support provided to school decision-making bodies, while at the same time linking these in a clear and explicit manner to the formal education process.

At the same time, **the project strived to achieve synergies with other initiatives**. For example, the Civic Education Forum, funded among others by the USAID Civic Education project, is member of the Steering Committee for the Democracy Starts in School project, as is the PH International USAID-funded project mentioned above.

While there are other initiatives targeting civic education in Georgia, such the USAID-funded project with a more extensive scope, the project recognizes the significance of coordination. To facilitate seamless collaboration, regular steering committee meetings are conducted, involving implementing partners from diverse organizations. Acknowledging the potential for improvement in coordination mechanisms, the project has proactively taken steps to engage with and exchange information with other organizations, fostering a spirit of collaboration.

The Civic Education Teachers Forum has been actively involved in the design and delivery of project activities in the beginning of the CoE project; later on it has been less connected due to its capacity to participate, besides its activities with the USAID project. One of their representatives is also one of the facilitators in the current project, creating thus strong link.

The implementation team made efforts to reach synergies with other Council of Europe projects, by inviting other experts from different projects to participate in the Summer Academy. It also collaborated with a Council of Europe project supporting municipalities and citizen participation in local decision-making.

Cooperation with NGOs has been substantial, as illustrated by the expertise provided by the NGO "Helping Hand", which designed and delivered the summer academies and the final project conference.

Collaboration between schools and the NGO sector has been limited otherwise, being only few organizations focusing specifically on citizenship education; in the evaluators' opinion, engaging a school-NGO collaboration is still possible, and advisable, by finding creative ways of applying the experiences learned in this project.

Another example of creating synergies is the Forum Theatre, one of the methodologies that the project has supported in schools through the small grants program being highly appreciated by some of the schools. They intend to share their experience to other schools, through the Education for Democracy Schools Network. The network is a platform used for these schools to share their experience with other schools. It is the platform used for the collaborative and community practice perspective. Some of the interviewees appreciated that the network hasn't been used to its full potential; it is advisable the network should be consolidated, to play a more important role in a follow up of the project.

In conclusion, the project demonstrated a **strong commitment to sustainability and ownership through capacity building, institutionalization of outputs, and local leadership**.

What are the factors that hampered the impact and sustainability of the assistance?

"Societal reluctance to accept participation and changes in personnel, like teachers leaving and new teachers arriving, pose challenges. We need to ensure that the culture of having meetings and democratic practices persists even with changes" (quote from focus groups).

"Building democratic culture within schools is crucial for sustainability. The core people need to stay the same or at least have a stable number who are on board with this culture. However, societal reluctance and personnel changes pose challenges to continuity" (quote from focus groups).

4.4. Council of Europe added value

How did the implementation of the project ensure complementarities and generate synergies with other programs at national level? What are the strengths and weaknesses of having the Council of Europe implement the project?

The implementation of the project has strategically aligned with and leveraged complementarities with existing national programs, fostering synergies for enhanced impact. The project's collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Science and other key stakeholders reflects a deliberate effort to align with ongoing education reforms in Georgia.

By conducting an evaluation of existing school standards and regulatory frameworks, the project has ensured that its outputs complement and reinforce the existing national educational landscape. The establishment of the Education for Democracy Schools Network provides a platform for sharing best practices that can inform and enhance other educational initiatives at the national level.

The project's focus on cooperation and synergy building aligns with national priorities and contributes to a harmonized approach to educational development. The deliberate cooperation with external partners, such as the Zürich University for Teacher Education

(PHZH) and USAID, showcases **a commitment to synergies with diverse stakeholders**.

The long and well-established Council of Europe's presence in Georgia, since 1999, demonstrates its **commitment to act as a reliable and collaborative counterpart**, rather than an imposing one, responding to the actual needs of the partner.

The involvement of European experts (also for the Summer Academy), coupled with collaboration with national experts, ensures a **balanced combination of international and local knowledge**. This expertise contributes to the development and delivery of high-quality outputs that align with the Council of Europe's standards and best practices. The distinctive capacity to mobilize international expertise from a well-established network from all Member States, recommends the Council of Europe as an **expertise provider**. Stakeholders stated that the Council of Europe offered full, continuous, efficient and up-to-date expertise and support throughout the whole duration of the project.

The Council of Europe's human rights-based approach, embedded throughout the project, is, likewise, a significant strength. Through integration at all project levels, the implementation reflects a **commitment to advancing human rights in education**.

The incorporation of cross-cutting dimensions, such as gender mainstreaming and civil society participation, reflects the Council of Europe's commitment to holistic and inclusive approaches. The emphasis on democratic competence and competences for democratic culture aligns with the Council of Europe's Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture, showcasing a comprehensive understanding of democratic education.

Strengths of the Council of Europe's project implementation approach

a) **Human rights-based approach**: the Council of Europe's human rights-based project management methodology, embedded throughout the project, is a significant strength. By integrating European human rights standards and principles into all project levels, the implementation reflects a commitment to advancing human rights in education.

b) **Expertise and experience**: the involvement of European experts, coupled with collaboration with national experts, ensures a rich blend of international and local knowledge. This expertise contributes to the development and delivery of high-quality outputs that align with Council of Europe standards and best practices.

c) **Cross-cutting dimensions**: the incorporation of cross-cutting dimensions, such as gender mainstreaming and civil society participation, reflects the Council of Europe's commitment to holistic and inclusive approaches. The emphasis on democratic competence and competences for democratic culture aligns with the Council of Europe Reference Framework, showcasing a comprehensive understanding of democratic education.

d) **Monitoring and evaluation framework**: the implementation's commitment to a robust monitoring and evaluation framework, including a gender dimension, contributes to effective oversight and adaptability. The adherence to the

Council of Europe's Project Logframe ensures a systematic and comprehensive assessment of project activities.

Risk assessment of the Council of Europe's project implementation approach

a) **Using international and local expertise**: The involvement of international experts was kept to a minimum (as stated by the respondents) and relied on national experts. Project outcomes could be even more sustainable if additional local capacities are built to ensure independent continuation.

b) The Council of Europe usually supports specific national reforms in the most relevant manner possible, however the **timing of some national reforms is difficult to predict**. In this project the professional development program was planned to be delivered to the newly elected school principals and their deputies. The election process was delayed until mid-2023 and therefore adjustments had to be made to this component of the project.

c) **Potential for limited local ownership**: despite efforts to involve national experts and stakeholders, there may be challenges in achieving full local ownership. This is particularly relevant when considering the potential normative act adoption and rollout of project outputs, which might require sustained local commitment beyond the project's conclusion.

In conclusion, while the Council of Europe's implementation strategy brings substantial strengths in terms of a human rights-based approach, expertise, and cross-cutting dimensions, there are inherent challenges that need careful consideration for the sustained success of the project.

How did the implementation of the project ensure complementarities and generate synergies with other programs at the national level?

"*The project aligns with the Ministry's goals, creating complementarities with ongoing education reforms. The emphasis on practical implementation adds value to the existing initiatives*" *(quote from group interviews).*

What are the strengths and weaknesses of having the Council of Europe implement the project?

"*The Council of Europe brings a strong policy background. However, challenges arise when the project needs practical adaptation. Local expertise and understanding of the ground reality are crucial for effective implementation*" *(quote from group interviews).*

5. Conclusions and recommendations

5.1. Main conclusions and recommendations for follow-up

The overall conclusion of the evaluation is that **the project has achieved its proposed objectives**, with activities consistently proving relevant, resources efficiently utilized, stakeholders actively engaged, adaptability to context showcased, and a positive impact observed on both learners and institutions. As stated in the previous chapter, its effectiveness stands as a model for good practice in the field of democratic citizenship and human rights education.

Recommendations	Remarks
Implement consolidation measures for the network to transform it in a sustainable knowledge-sharing platform. **Sustain and expand school engagement.**	*This platform will serve as a hub for continuous sharing of experiences, insights, challenges, and success stories among schools. The goal is to foster a collaborative environment not only within the existing participants but also to include new ones on a regular basis.* *Maintain engagement of pilot schools in an ongoing dissemination of their experiences. Consolidate the network, transforming it in a platform where these schools can continue sharing insights, challenges, and success stories with each other and with new participants on regular basis. The limited duration of the project, the rate of personnel turnover, including those due to the assessment by the MoES, suggests that the schools already involved need continuity until a self-sustainable stage is achieved.* *Explore the opportunity for wider dissemination beyond the schools involved in the pilot project or the upscaled initiative. Encourage the sharing of project outcomes through conferences, publications, and collaboration with educational institutions to create a ripple effect.*
As the resources and logistics allow it, organize smaller groups during training sessions for a more effective and interactive learning experience.	*An important step of the project was the **publication of methodological guidelines**. The interviews acknowledged the importance of empowering schools with practical insights. The project undertook the publications for aligning with the Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture, offering thus a systematic approach to school governance and student participation from the RFCDC perspective. The interviews revealed the meticulous work, providing*

	a robust foundation for guiding schools in embracing participatory methodologies, praised by all the interviewed teachers and principals. *Smaller groups could facilitate better communication, engagement, and personalized support for each participant.* *Continue meticulous planning for logistics, in managing safety and communication in large and diverse spaces, and time management.*
Enhance facilitator resources by implementing focused training programs and skill development initiatives specifically tailored for former trainees.	*The difficulty of elaborating the guidelines lays in steering away from theoretical explanations, especially delving into the intricacies of the role of student participation. While theoretical discussions have their place, the intention was to streamline the guidelines, providing concise yet effective insights. The efforts were concentrated towards assisting educators in* ***understanding the practical aspects and guiding facilitators to support schools effectively****. The objective was to foster a practical orientation, urging schools to delve specifically into student participation rather than persisting on theoretical discussions without actionable outcomes. This shift in approach, though challenging, was essential for driving effective implementation in the educational setting. The concerns related to the limited number of facilitators involved for an extended project, may be addressed by prioritizing the consolidation of experts' capacity and leverage the expertise of former trainees by involving them in co-training or other activities, like sharing their expertise. Their firsthand experience with the initiative can contribute to its continuity and success.*
Increase the number of facilitators that act as mobile outreach teams. **Set up distance learning and resource centers (in the Education Resource Centers) in accessible locations.**	*The expert's selection posed a significant challenge. The process needed several open calls for the selection of the experts, due to the lack of the specific proficiency, at the level of skills and expertise required.* *Increasing the number of facilitators who could travel to remote areas and provide on-site support, training, and resources to schools will ensure a broader coverage.*

	Establishing such dynamic hubs, if feasible, will increase the efficiency of providing essential materials, training resources, and support for schools in remote areas. Through these hubs, schools can efficiently access the necessary tools and assistance, thereby enhancing the quality of education and fostering better engagement of school children in their communities.
Implement tailored capacity-building programs for school board members, focusing on their crucial role in decision-making processes.	*As mentioned in the report, school principals emerge as a **pivotal factor affecting change in democratic school governance**. The baseline assessment emphasizes that values and attitudes of school principals, including their leadership style, significantly impact the degree of student participation in decision-making processes. The report advocates for a more strategic approach to democratic school governance, focusing on the school principal's role and implementing a whole-school approach to student participation.* *The project managed to identify and successfully address the important stakeholders, the importance of the school principals has been repeatedly reported and it has been presented in this report. Although not frequently shared during the data collection phase by interlocutors, a category has been mentioned, the school boards members. The school board members play an important role in the chain of decision in school, making them appropriate stakeholders for facilitating the implementation of the new curriculum. Building their capacity supports the climate of democratic school governance.*
Design the baseline assessment and final evaluation to gather the same data while mitigating response biases from previous assessments	*The baseline assessment report demonstrates the **need for a strategic shift in democratic school governance and a holistic approach involving all stakeholders**. It also sets the stage for the development of methodological guidance and policy recommendations to strengthen democratic school governance and citizenship education. The report effectively combined research methods, identifies key issues in democratic school governance, and provides actionable recommendations. It laid a solid foundation for the Council of Europe project and future initiatives to*

	enhance student participation in decision-making processes in Georgian schools. *Designing the baseline assessment and final evaluation to gather the same data while mitigating response biases from previous assessments is of utmost importance for several reasons:* • ***consistency and compatibility** are essential to assess the impact of interventions or changes over time accurately;* • *when the same data is collected, it helps to establish the **reliability of the findings**. If there are significant changes observed, it can be attributed to the interventions or changes implemented rather than variations in data collection methods or instruments;* • *gathering the same data at both stages helps in attributing observed changes to the interventions implemented rather than external factors. This enhances the **validity of the assessment**, ensuring that any improvements or challenges identified can be confidently linked to the initiatives undertaken;* • *bias in responses, whether positive or negative, can distort the true impact of interventions, and addressing this issue, **mitigation of response biases**, ensures more reliable outcomes;* • *consistent data collection allows for better-informed and **effective decision-making**.*
Increasing the number of participants from each school in the Summer Academy. Setup follow-up activities after the summer school (conference, workshop etc.)	*Stakeholders highlighted the significant impact of the Summer Academy on civic engagement. The program instills practical skills, including project management, and promotes collaboration between students and self-government representatives. The interviewees observed tangible changes in students (boys and girls): "Students have become mentors for their peers. They are actively implementing projects, such as setting up democratic corners in schools, conducting surveys, and addressing communication issues with teachers. The impact is*

	tangible, even if it's just the beginning of a transformative journey" (quote from focus groups). *A larger number of participants from each school will enhance the impact and effectiveness of the program, allowing more students to benefit from the training and fostering a larger network of empowered individuals.* *Evaluate the possibility of organizing a follow-up activity, a post-Summer Academy, where participants can share their experiences and projects (conference, workshop etc.), physical or online (depending on the availability of resources). The extended timeframe and framework could provide more opportunities for practical implementation of learned skills and a deeper engagement with the material, and would provide a platform for ongoing networking, collaboration, and the development of a supportive community among the participants.*
Develop a strategic plan for a smooth transfer of responsibilities in the foreseeable future ensuring that the initiative aligns with the Georgian government's broader goals and policies.	*The initiative piloted in the selected 20 schools **has been instrumental in steering the schools towards democratic practices**. The insights gained during the data collection phase of the evaluation and the feedback received from piloting schools provide a solid foundation for the potential upscaling of the initiative. Although there have been participants suggesting that it is time the initiative makes the transition to a governmental organization, the majority shared their concerns - motivated by the short duration of the project, the limited number of schools participating, and the necessity to consolidate the experts' capacity and the number of experts involved.* *Adding this target to the collaboration can contribute to the initiative's scalability and ensure that it aligns with broader educational policies.*
Keep school children connected even after they move on to university as much as possible.	*Engaging children in the decision-making process, beyond the student council members, has proven to be a challenge. This difficulty is rooted in the overarching issue of low overall participation levels, coupled with a prevailing inclination toward prioritizing access to higher levels of education. Fostering a culture that emphasizes the value of*

	active involvement and considers diverse student voices in decision-making will contribute to overcoming the observed difficulties in engaging children more comprehensively in the school governance framework. *Consider the establishment alumni mechanism. This could involve establishing an alumni board or mentorship system, where successful participants return to share experiences and insights, fostering a continuous cycle of engagement and contribution to the program's objectives.*
For the follow-up of the project, prioritize the involved schools based on need and impact.	*Participants to the interviews reported the high motivation and eagerness of the schools participating in the project. Many schools actively sought information about the project and expressed a strong desire to be involved, showcasing a positive response to the initiative.* ***Scaling-up the project experience to other schools*** *is the obvious next logical step, to preserve the momentum and extend the phenomenon to the entire education system.* *There are 2,086 schools in Georgia - 80% are rural schools, with less than 30% of all students, many schools having only ten or fewer students. While scaling-up the experience to other schools is the obvious logical step, the achievement of a critical mass of democratic school and extending the phenomenon to the entire education system will require tremendous resources, not available in a reasonable time span, to preserve the momentum. A balanced approach in the selection process is thus necessary.* *Prioritization should start with a phased approach, focusing on regions or schools with the greatest potential for change or those facing the most significant challenges. Gradually expand the program to other schools over time.*
Provide training in areas like project management and resource mobilization, such as fundraising, that could lead to empowerment to initiate impactful projects.	*Some schools successfully engaged with their communities beyond the school walls. Examples include initiatives such as basic cleaning of the school's surroundings, planting projects, and collaboration with local authorities for the establishment of traffic signs. These projects*

	demonstrated a positive impact on the broader community. The example of another school that collected recycled paper from the community, exchanged it with a specialized organization, and received coupons for books for the school library, has been reported. This showcases innovative resource management within the constraints of a low-budget school, and also maturity in decision. *Emphasize skills training over financial incentives. Instead of monetary grants, concentrate on developing practical skills and knowledge that lead to self-sufficiency, such as fundraising. This approach aligns with the project's focus on civic responsibility and empowers schoolboys and schoolgirls in the long run.*

5.2. Other recommendations

Given the concerns raised about the relatively short duration of the project, it is recommended to **upscale the initiative and extend the timeline**. This extension will allow for a more comprehensive implementation, ensuring sustainable changes within the educational institutions.

Recommendations	Remarks
Upscale the initiative and extend the timeline.	*Given the concerns raised about the relatively short duration of the project, it is recommended to **upscale the initiative and extend the timeline**. This extension will allow for a more comprehensive implementation, ensuring sustainable changes within the educational institutions.*
Leverage technology, such as online platforms and e-learning resources, to disseminate materials, provide training, and **connect with schools remotely**.	*This can reduce the need for physical presence and travel.*
Train local educators as **trainers who can then disseminate knowledge and resources** to schools in their regions.	*This cascading approach can significantly expand the reach of the program.*
The follow-up project should continue to be **open to adapting strategies** based on	*During the implementation of the project, contents of the guidelines have been adapted to the individual needs of the schools (including*

the unique challenges and opportunities in each region.	*additional examples illustrated by the particular experiences of the schools),* *Continuing the adaptation of project guidelines to the individual needs of schools, incorporating additional examples from their specific experiences, is crucial for several reasons:* • ***tailored relevance**: Each school operates within a unique context with its own set of challenges and opportunities. Adapting guidelines to individual needs ensures that the project remains relevant to the specific circumstances of each school. This customization enhances the practical applicability of the guidelines, making them more effective in addressing the diverse challenges schools may encounter.* • ***local ownership and engagement**: When guidelines are adapted based on the experiences and needs of individual schools, it fosters a sense of local ownership. Schools are more likely to engage actively with the project when they see their specific challenges and successes reflected in the guidelines.* • ***learning from successes and challenges**: Incorporating additional examples and experiences from schools allows for a continuous learning process. Success stories and challenges faced by one school can serve as valuable lessons for others. By documenting and sharing these experiences through adapted guidelines, the project can facilitate a collaborative learning environment among participating schools.*
Foster **collaborative partnerships** with relevant governmental bodies, educational institutions, and NGOs.	*Developing lasting competences of democratic culture requires, besides the educational process, a transformation beyond school borders; **increasing cooperation with civil society organizations** might strengthen the principles learned in school, making these organizations' platforms for engagement and practice.*
Collaborate with local and international organizations, NGOs, and community groups	*Partnerships can help in mobilizing additional resources and expertise, including for projects*

to share resources, expertise, and costs.	*implemented in schools. It is important for various reasons, including:* • ***leveraging expertise**: partnering with organizations and groups brings together a diverse pool of expertise. Each entity involved may have unique skills, knowledge, and experience, creating a more comprehensive and well-rounded approach to addressing challenges or implementing projects.* • ***resource sharing**: collaboration allows for the sharing of resources, including physical resources, facilities, and technology. This can result in cost savings, improved efficiency, and optimized use of available resources.*
Implement targeted strategies that actively involve a **broader spectrum of students**.	*This could include the development of initiatives to enhance awareness and enthusiasm for participation among schoolboys and schoolgirls, creating platforms for open discussions, and exploring innovative methods, including technology, to integrate student perspectives into decision-making processes.*

Recommendations for the communication strategy

The recommended enhancements aim to further optimize the strategy for maximum effectiveness:

- strengthen efforts to engage local communities by involving them directly in communication activities.
- explore interactive platforms for direct engagement with the target audience, such as forums or webinars.
- tailor communication content to regional contexts to resonate better with diverse audiences.
- establish mechanisms for continuous feedback to adapt communication strategies based on audience responses.
- further define the criteria for assessing the quality of content and its alignment with the initial goals.

By incorporating these recommendations, the democratic practices initiative can evolve into a sustainable, widespread movement that significantly influences the democratic culture within Georgia's schools.

5.3. Lessons learned

Communication: language barriers have been identified in certain schools, particularly those from ethnic minority regions. The challenges of translation and communication

slowed down the process, indicating the importance of considering linguistic diversity in future initiatives.

Timing and resources: schools with limited resources faced challenges in active engagement. Larger schools (sometimes working in shifts to accommodate all children) struggled due to time constraints. This underscores the need for flexibility and realistic expectations based on the individual contexts of schools.

Preparation time: facilitators expressed challenges related to the short time provided for preparing training materials. Adequate preparation time is crucial for facilitators to ensure effective delivery and understanding of the project materials.

Adaptability of guidelines: the success of the project was attributed, among other factors, to the adaptability of guidelines. Allowing schools to modify cases according to their specific circumstances proved effective, emphasizing the importance of flexibility in implementing guidelines.

Coordination and networking: facilitators highlighted the importance of close communication and coordination within their groups and the sustained support received from the management team. Additionally, the use of the social platform connected to the Education for Democracy Network to share experiences and collaborate contributes to the sustainability of the project.

6. Quotes from interviews

Relevance:

"Well, I think [the project] is very relevant, especially considering the democratic principles we aim to instill in schools. The project aligns with the need to engage schoolboys and schoolgirls in decision-making processes, fostering a more democratic culture within schools" (*group interview*).

"I was involved in the activities which I enjoy most at school but also in my free time. I wish more colleagues would consider joining in" (*focus group*).

"The project design was well thought out. It addressed the challenges of implementing democratic principles within the school system. For instance, the focus on headmasters and deputies acknowledges their crucial role in shaping the school culture" (*group interview*)

Effectiveness:

"I've seen changes in how teachers and headmasters address and respond to specific situations after the training. It's a slight difference, but it indicates progress in instilling democratic principles, and that's a significant achievement" (*individual interview*).

"[The project's] success lies in the practical approach. The training managed to plant seeds of democratic principles within a short program. However, challenges in changing indicators and societal reluctance might hinder broader success" (*group interview*).

"Teacher upskilling is pivotal; it has transformed classroom methodologies towards student-centered learning" (*focus group*).

"The project has contributed positively to ongoing education reforms. It provided a practical way of implementing democratic values, aligning with the broader goals of the Ministry" (*group interview*).

"The training was successful in equipping participants with knowledge and skills. It's a big success if applied to a wider group of teachers, bringing more attention to democratic principles and making it easier to translate into everyday work" (*individual interview*).

Sustainability and ownership:

"I feel better and motivated to do more. My initiative took life and I am grateful to the teachers and my colleagues for embracing it. It feels so rewarding to be part of such initiatives" (*focus group*).

"I've seen changes in how teachers and principals address and respond to specific situations after the training. It's a slight difference, but it indicates progress in instilling democratic principles, and that's a significant achievement" (*group interview*).

Council of Europe comparative advantage:

"The project aligns with the Ministry's goals, creating complementarities with ongoing education reforms. The emphasis on practical implementation adds value to the existing initiatives" (*individual interview*).

"The Council of Europe brings a strong policy background. However, challenges arise when the project needs practical adaptation. Local expertise and understanding of the ground reality are crucial for effective implementation" (*individual interview*).

Annex 1: List of participants to evaluation activities

NO	NAME AND SURNAME	POSITION AND INSTITUTION
PARTICIPANTS AT INDIVIDUAL AND GROUP INTERVIEWS		
1	Margareta Platon	Senior Project Officer, Education Department, Council of Europe
2	Tamunia Chincharauli	Senior Project Officer, Council of Europe Office in Georgia
3	Tamar Bukhrashvili	Project Assistant, Council of Europe Office in Georgia
4	Tsisana Khundadze	Council of Europe project management officer
5	Maia Araviashvili	Project M&E expert
6	Teona Silagadze	e-Twinning program coordinator, NCTPD
7	Kakha Khandolishvili	Head, International Relations Dept., Ministry of Education and Science
8	Ana Baramia	International Relations and Strategic Development Dept., Ministry of Education and Science
9	Eteri Khanjaliashvili	Division of EU Integration and Relations with International Organizations, Ministry of Education and Science
10	Kakhaber Eradze	Deputy director, National Center for Educational Quality Enhancement
11	Simon Janashia	Educational expert
12	Sopio Khvedelidze	Teacher & trainer, NCTPD
13	Nino Chikhladze	Teacher & trainer, NCTPD
14	Natia Natsvlishvili	Editor in Chief of the NTCPD Journal
15	Tamar Tsivtsivadze	Head of Program in Georgia, Swiss Cooperation Office for the South Caucasus
16	Nino Tsagareishvili	National Program Officer, Swiss Cooperation Office for the South Caucasus
17	Nona Popiashvili	Educational expert
18	Giorgi Arziani	Main specialist
19	Aluda Goglichidze	Associate professor
20	Lela Tsurtsumia	Teacher & trainer
21	Rati Pruidze	Leading specialist
22	Rusudan Lomtadze	Trainer/facilitator
23	Ketevan Chikovani	Head of university counseling
24	Tinatin Meskhi	Helping Hand NGO, Summer Academy team
25	Nino Todua	Helping Hand NGO, Summer Academy team
26	Nato Antia	Consultant on youth, Summer Academy team
27	Giorgi Tvaliashvili	EMT, Summer Academy team
28	Lali Gamisonia	Hub for Development, Summer Academy team
PARTICIPANTS AT FOCUS GROUP (PRINCIPALS)		
1	Mamuka Khamkhadze	Rustavi #4 School
2	Natalia Kurdgelashvili	Sagarejo #3 School
3	Gela Odishelidze	Tbilisi #177 School
4	Shorena Khukhua	Marneuli #2 School

NO	NAME AND SURNAME	POSITION AND INSTITUTION
5	Lika Gomarteli	Sachkhere #2 School
6	Eka Tabuashvili	Tbilisi #182 School
7	Salome Saralidze	Kutaisi #1 School
8	Lela Kirkitadze	Zestaponi #4 School
9	Maka Mamaladze	Ozurgeti #2 School
PARTICIPANTS AT FOCUS GROUP (TEACHERS)		
1	Mariam Iakobishvili	Rustavi #4 School
2	Lia Igarkava	Rustavi #4 School
3	Tocnike Khakonishvili	Rustavi #4 School
4	Natia Shevardenidze	Rustavi #4 School
5	Noni Markhvoshvili	Rustavi #4 School
6	Nino Baramashvili	Sagarejo #3 School
7	Davit Machavariani	Tbilisi #177 School
8	Temur Sukashvili	Marneuli #2 School
9	Maka Nebieridze	Sachkhere #2 School
10	Lika Beraia	Tbilisi #182 School
11	Sopio Kharshiladze	Kutaisi #1 School
12	Miranda Manchkhashvili	Zestaponi #4 School
13	Natia Tavartkiladze	Ozurgeti #2 School
PARTICIPANTS AT FOCUS GROUP (PARENTS)		
1	Maka Gobejishvili-Kamkamidze	Rustavi #4 School
2	Ela Kobakhidze	Sagarejo #3 School
3	Ana Ghvaladze	Tbilisi #177 School
4	Nargiz Mamedova	Marneuli #2 School
5	Lika Khvedelidze	Sachkhere #2 School
6	Maria Pilpani	Tbilisi #182 School
7	Natia Lomidze	Kutaisi #1 School
8	Lela Ghambashidze	Zestaponi #4 School
9	Sopio Vasadze	Ozurgeti #2 School
PARTICIPANTS AT FOCUS GROUP (SCHOOLBOYS AND SCHOOLGIRLS)		
1	Giorgi Vazagashvili	Rustavi #4 School
2	Nika Laperishvili	Sagarejo #3 School
3	Lizi Kamarauli	Tbilisi #177 School
4	Naz Mamishova	Marneuli #2 School
5	Sopia Mustapaeva	Marneuli #2 School
6	Saba Gelbakhiani	Sachkhere #2 School
7	Nani Melkadze	Tbilisi #182 School
8	Mirian Bochorishvili	Kutaisi #1 School
9	Elene Nozadze	Zestaponi #4 School
10	Nikoloz Takidze	Ozurgeti #2 School

Annex 2: Key documentation reviewed[11]

Annual report (January 2023)

Concept note: Democracy Starts in Schools

Project Baseline Assessment Report on Engaging School Children in Decision Making Processes

Project logframe

Report on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education Policy and Practice in Six Eastern Partnership Countries

The project communication strategy

Project media coverage

Unified National Strategy of Education and Science (2022-2030)

Ministry of Education Action Plan 2022-2024

Georgian education system: structure, levels, student age

Coaching reports from facilitators.

Facilitators' individual reports of workshops

Piloting overall workshop assessment (1st and 2nd rounds)

Methodological guidelines for democratic school governance

International consultant overall report on coaching and action plan implementation

Training assessment responses

Professional Development Program trends

Narrative reports from the Summer Academy

Session reports from the Summer Academy

Swiss FACE Program Description

Project website

Project social networks pages (Facebook)

[11] Parts of the documentation were delivered to the evaluation team in Georgian language. They were translated using online tools.

Annex 3: Interview and focus group guides

INTERVIEW GUIDE IG1

STAKEHOLDERS • PARTNERS • DONOR • EXPERTS

1. Please describe briefly how your organization relates to the "Democracy Starts in Schools" project.
2. From your point of view, how does the "Democracy Starts in Schools" project address the educational priorities of Georgia?

   In your opinion, how is the approach of this project different from other similar initiatives?
3. Please describe the information/consultation/reporting mechanisms used by the Council of Europe regarding the "Democracy Starts in Schools" project in relation to you / your institution.
4. What are, in your opinion, the most notable results obtained within the "Democracy Starts in Schools" project?
5. How do you assess the results achieved by the project in terms of impact and sustainability, and what suggestions do you have for them to remain viable?
6. What are your expectations regarding the future of this project and the activities initiated by it, after the end of SDC funding?

   What sources of funding are realistic to ensure the continuation of project activities?

INTERVIEW GUIDE IG2

FACILITATORS • SUMMER ACADEMY TEAM

1. Please describe briefly how you / your organization relates to the "Democracy Starts in Schools" project.
2. From your point of view, how does the "Democracy Starts in Schools" project address the educational priorities of Georgia?

   In your opinion, how is the approach of this project different from other similar initiatives?
3. Please describe the information/consultation/reporting mechanisms used by the Council of Europe regarding the "Democracy Starts in Schools" project in relation to you / your institution.
4. What are, in your opinion, the most notable results obtained within the "Democracy Starts in Schools" project?
5. How do you assess the results achieved by the project in terms of impact and sustainability, and what suggestions do you have for them to remain viable?
6. What are your expectations regarding the future of this project and the activities initiated by it, after the end of SDC funding?

   What sources of funding are realistic to ensure the continuation of project activities?

INTERVIEW GUIDE IG3

COUNCIL OF EUROPE PROJECT STAFF

1. Please describe the project and its components. What are the needs addressed by this project at national level? What major changes have occurred in the needs *initially* addressed by the project?

   How did the project components cover the identified needs?
2. From your point of view, how does the "Democracy Starts in Schools" project address the educational priorities of Georgia?

   In your opinion, how is the approach of this project different to other similar initiatives?
3. What are, in your opinion, the most notable results obtained within the "Democracy Starts in Schools" project? How were the project results generally measured? What obstacles or difficulties have you encountered in carrying out your activities and how have they been overcome?

   To what extent has the project been able to develop competences at teacher level and capacities at school level and other educational partners? What positive changes has it generated at ministry level?
4. How effective was the project in implementing the changes at the school level? How did the collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Science go?

   How can the performance achieved by the project be improved? What measures have been taken to improve performance?
5. How do you comment on the level of involvement in the project of the other partners? Has the involvement of the relevant educational actors in the partnerships been ensured?
6. Please describe the information/consultation/reporting mechanisms used by the Council of Europe on the "Democracy Starts in Schools" project in relation to its partners (including donors).
7. How do you assess the results achieved by the project in terms of impact and sustainability, and what suggestions do you have for them to remain viable? What are the risk factors you identified?
8. What are your expectations regarding the future of this project and the activities initiated by it, after the end of the SDC funding?

   What sources of funding are realistic to ensure the continuation of the project activities and which of these have already been addressed?
9. If this is the case - what are the most important lessons learned at this stage of the project? How has the project been integrated into the other complementary initiatives at national and European level?

Annex 4: Online survey

Introduction

Strategicus Consulting is coordinating and conducting the final evaluation of the project "Democracy Starts in Schools - Engaging School Children in Decision Making Processes in Schools and Communities in Georgia", implemented by the Council of Europe in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia and with funding from the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC). The purpose of the evaluation is to assess the relevance, effectiveness and sustainability of the project.

In this context, please **carefully fill in the following form** and answer its questions as accurately as possible.

The questions are connected to the experience you had with this project and your answers are essential for correctly identifying and understanding the results obtained and their correlated impact. All opinions and suggestions will be taken into consideration by the evaluators.

The deadline for completing the form is: November 17, 2023, 23:59.

This form is anonymous and the information obtained through it will be strictly confidential and used exclusively for the evaluation report. Data which results from this study will be analyzed by a team of experts and reported to the funders. The evaluation report will not be made public, will be presented exclusively in internal meetings and distributed to project partners. All materials related to the evaluation will be stored and archived in a secure location with restricted access.

The final evaluation of the project "Democracy Starts in Schools - Engaging School Children in Decision Making Processes in Schools and Communities in Georgia" is carried out by Strategicus Consulting SRL (Bucharest, Romania). Any questions related to completing this evaluation form can be addressed to tel.: +40 737 502289 or to the e-mail address: office@strategicus.ro.

General information

1. Your gender:
   - ☐ Female
   - ☐ Male
   - ☐ Other
   - ☐ I prefer not to say
2. Your age:
   - ☐ 18-25 years
   - ☐ 26-35 years
   - ☐ 36-55 years
   - ☐ 56-65 years
   - ☐ Over 65 years
   - ☐ I do not wish to answer
3. The region in which is located your school:
   [*Drop-down list with list of regions*]: *Abkhazia, Adjara, Guria, Imereti, Kakheti, Kvemo Kartli, Mtskheta-Mtianeti, Racha-Lechkhumi and Kvemo Svaneti, Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti, Samtskhe-Javakheti, Shida Kartli, Tbilisi*.

Project information

4. Please indicate how well you have been informed about the progress of this project and the support provided by the Council of Europe in implementing the related activities:
   - ☐ I was informed before the first activity I was involved in
   - ☐ I was informed during the activities in which I was involved
   - ☐ I was informed while filling in this questionnaire
5. Do you know of other initiatives supported or funded by the Council of Europe in Georgia?
   - ☐ No
   - ☐ Partially
   - ☐ Yes
6. How do you assess the **methodological guidelines on democratic school governance** which have been piloted in your school?
   - ☐ Poor, they need major improvements (please leave a comment)
   - ☐ Acceptable, but need to be improved (please leave a comment)
   - ☐ Good and useful for teachers and students
   - ☐ I don't know/I can't figure it out
   - [*space for comments*]
7. Please rate the general quality level (organization, trainers, materials used etc.) of any **training, mentoring and/or peer exchange** activities (related to the project) which you have attended:
   - ☐ I did not attend such activities
   - ☐ Very poor
   - ☐ Poor
   - ☐ Average
   - ☐ Good
   - ☐ Very good
   - [*space for comments*]
8. Taking into account your previous experience, please mention what is - in your opinion - the most suitable way to carry out workshops and training activities:
   - ☐ Activities carried out exclusively online
   - ☐ Activities carried out exclusively with physical presence (classic)
   - ☐ Activities carried out both online and with physical presence
   - ☐ I can't figure it out
9. Did your school initiate or participate in community-based projects and/or activities implemented in partnership with or other community actors?
   - ☐ No
   - ☐ Yes (briefly present examples/details below)
   - ☐ I don't know
   - [*space for comments*]
10. Please rate these projects/activities which you have attended:
    - ☐ I did not attend such activities
    - ☐ Not useful / no impact
    - ☐ Useful / limited impact on community / learning outcomes

☐ Very useful / significant impact on community / learning outcomes
[*space for comments*]

11. Since the start of the project (March 2022), does the **decision-making process in your school** involve students (schoolgirls and schoolboys), as stated in the methodological guidelines on democratic school governance?
    ☐ Not at all
    ☐ Partially / the process has been initiated
    ☐ Yes (How? Please give some examples below)
    ☐ I don't know
    [*text space*]
12. Please mention what are the most significant obstacles/difficulties you face in implementing activities related to the improvement of democratic school governance:
    ☐ There are no difficulties
    ☐ Insufficient supporting materials
    ☐ Lack of support at school level (colleagues / parents / students)
    ☐ Other (please mention): [*text space*]
13. Please rate the support provided by the Ministry of Education and Science in piloting the methodological guidelines on democratic school governance:
    ☐ Non-existent
    ☐ Insufficient
    ☐ Enough
    ☐ I don't know
14. What changes have you noticed among your students since the start of the project and the piloting of the methodological guidelines on democratic school governance?
    ☐ No change
    ☐ Negative changes:
    [*space for text*]
    ☐ Positive changes:
    [*space for text*]
15. In conclusion, please mention your expectations, recommendations and/or suggestions for improving further project activities:
    [*space for text*]

Thank you for participating in this survey!

Annex 5: Evaluation matrix

Evaluation Criteria	Evaluation Question	Sub-Question	Measure(s) / Indicator(s)	Data Collection Instrument(s)	Data Source(s)	Data Analysis[12]	Evaluator(s) Responsible
Relevance	To what extent do the intervention objectives address identified needs of the target group(s)?	How were the needs of the target group(s) identified and prioritized? Were there any specific challenges in aligning the intervention objectives with the identified needs? If so, how were they addressed? How is the project perceived by its stakeholders? Does it have relevance beyond target groups?	Relevance of the project in the country context. Relevance of project activities, outputs and outcomes. Relevance of project to the needs of beneficiaries. Alignment of project objectives with identified needs.	Desk research. Individual interviews. Focus groups. Online survey.	Document review. School principals. School teachers. Partner CSOs. CoE project staff (Strasbourg and Tbilisi). MES[13] representatives. Donor representatives.	Textual analysis. Qualitative data analysis: narrative and thematic / deductive. Analytical grids for interviews. Transcripts of focus group recordings, conceptualization & segmentation. Disaggregation and descriptive analysis of survey data.	Team leader. Senior evaluator.
	How far did the design of the intervention address the problems identified?	What were the specific design elements tailored to address	Initial impact and reach of the intervention.	Desk research. Individual interviews. Observations.	Document review. School principals.	Textual analysis. Qualitative data analysis: narrative and thematic / deductive.	Team leader. Senior evaluator.

[12] Data analysis is summarized on the last page of this document.
[13] Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia.

Evaluation Criteria	Evaluation Question	Sub-Question	Measure(s) / Indicator(s)	Data Collection Instrument(s)	Data Source(s)	Data Analysis[12]	Evaluator(s) Responsible
		identified problems? Were there design features that were modified or adjusted during implementation to better address the identified problems? Identify changes that affect relevance for the next programming period.			CoE project staff (Strasbourg and Tbilisi). MES representatives.	Analytical grids for interviews.	
Effectiveness	What has been the progress made towards achievement of the expected results?	Provision of specific examples of how project outputs and outcomes have been achieved. Were there deviations from the anticipated progress, either positive or negative? How were these	Assess progress in terms of major achievements, outputs and key challenges. Measure the success of the project in reaching final beneficiaries (especially where support is highly necessary).	Desk research. Individual interviews. Focus groups.	Document review. School principals. School teachers. Partner CSOs. CoE project staff (Strasbourg and Tbilisi). MES representatives.	Textual analysis. Qualitative data analysis: narrative and thematic / deductive. Analytical grids for interviews. Transcripts of focus group recordings, conceptualization & segmentation.	Team leader. Senior evaluator.

Evaluation Criteria	Evaluation Question	Sub-Question	Measure(s) / Indicator(s)	Data Collection Instrument(s)	Data Source(s)	Data Analysis[12]	Evaluator(s) Responsible
		deviations managed?					
	What are the reasons for the achievement or nonachievement?	Examine the strategic planning and the capacity to adapt to a changing environment. What external or internal factors influenced the achievement or non-achievement of specific outcomes?	Progress made and premises for achieving the outputs and stated objectives (against indicators set out), identifying risks. Coverage and outreach of project deliverables. Efficient use of project resources.	Desk research. Individual interviews. Focus groups. Online survey. Observations.	Document review. School principals. School teachers. Partner CSOs. CoE project staff (Strasbourg and Tbilisi). MES representatives.	Textual analysis. Qualitative data analysis: narrative and thematic / deductive. Analytical grids for interviews. Transcripts of focus group recordings, conceptualization & segmentation. Disaggregation and descriptive analysis of survey data.	Team leader. Senior evaluator.
	To which extent the management of the relationships among stakeholders was effective in establishing a real partnership aiming at the success of the intervention?	What is CoE's position (in Georgia) as a catalyst for change? How were stakeholder relationships managed to create	Perceptions of stakeholder collaboration and partnership effectiveness. Assess the quality of partnership(s) established and support provided.	Desk research. Individual interviews. Focus groups. Online survey.	Document review. Partner CSOs. CoE project staff (Strasbourg and Tbilisi). MES representatives.	Textual analysis. Qualitative data analysis: narrative and thematic / deductive. Analytical grids for interviews.	Team leader. Senior evaluator.

Evaluation Criteria	Evaluation Question	Sub-Question	Measure(s) / Indicator(s)	Data Collection Instrument(s)	Data Source(s)	Data Analysis[12]	Evaluator(s) Responsible
		a collaborative environment?				Transcripts of focus group recordings, conceptualization & segmentation. Disaggregation and descriptive analysis of survey data.	
	To what extent has the project been effective in helping the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia with the on-going education reforms?	What specific contributions did the project make to ongoing education reforms? Were there instances where the project's alignment with education reforms created synergies or tensions?	Contribution of project to education reforms and institutionalization of practices. Availability of monitoring mechanisms.	Desk research. Individual interviews.	Document review. CoE project staff (Strasbourg and Tbilisi). MES representatives. Donor representatives.	Textual analysis. Qualitative data analysis: narrative and thematic / deductive. Analytical grids for interviews.	Team leader. Senior evaluator.
	To what extent has the project been effective in helping to strengthen the capacity of schools, school directors and of other stakeholders in the area of	Assess whether the project is built on the appropriate know-how, and has supported the	Assessment of capacity building outcomes. Indication of key areas of national	Desk research. Individual interviews. Focus groups. Online survey.	Document review. School principals. School teachers. Partner CSOs.	Textual analysis. Qualitative data analysis: narrative and thematic / deductive.	Team leader. Senior evaluator.

Evaluation Criteria	Evaluation Question	Sub-Question	Measure(s) / Indicator(s)	Data Collection Instrument(s)	Data Source(s)	Data Analysis[12]	Evaluator(s) Responsible
	democratic school governance and student participation?	achievement of the desired impact. Have education professionals (supported by the project) developed their contribution in their respective key areas?	capacities developed. Availability and usefulness of monitoring reports on progress towards targets.		CoE project staff (Strasbourg and Tbilisi). MES representatives.	Analytical grids for interviews. Transcripts of focus group recordings, conceptualization & segmentation. Disaggregation and descriptive analysis of survey data.	
Sustainability and ownership	To which extent are the outcomes of the project likely to continue producing effects after the end of its funding?	How were project outcomes designed to be sustained beyond the project duration? Capacity to obtain and manage new funding from other sources for follow-up or new activities.	Sustainability and replication.	Desk research. Individual interviews.	Document review. School principals. Partner CSOs. CoE project staff (Strasbourg and Tbilisi). MES representatives.	Textual analysis. Analyze threats & opportunities facing future lack of donor support. Qualitative data analysis: narrative and thematic / deductive. Analytical grids for interviews.	Team leader. Senior evaluator.
	What are the factors that hampered the impact and sustainability of the assistance?	What external or internal factors (challenges) may hinder the	Perception of stakeholders on changes in areas targeted by the project.	Desk research. Individual interviews.	Document review. School principals.	Textual analysis. Qualitative data analysis: narrative	Team leader. Senior evaluator.

Evaluation Criteria	Evaluation Question	Sub-Question	Measure(s) / Indicator(s)	Data Collection Instrument(s)	Data Source(s)	Data Analysis[12]	Evaluator(s) Responsible
		sustainability of project outcomes? What efforts were made to address these challenges?			CoE project staff (Strasbourg and Tbilisi). MES representatives. Donor representatives.	and thematic / deductive. Analytical grids for interviews.	
CoE added value	How did the implementation of the project ensure complementarities and generate synergies with other programs at national level?	Compatibility of the intervention with other initiatives (similar / complementary). Did cross-program synergies lead to enhanced outcomes?	Identification of added value (from key results and best practices) of CoE contributions. Synergy and complementarity with state/other initiatives.	Desk research. Individual interviews.	Document review. CoE project staff (Strasbourg and Tbilisi). MES representatives. Donor representatives.	Textual analysis. Qualitative data analysis: narrative and thematic / deductive. Examine other donors' strategies for synergy and additional program support. Analytical grids for interviews.	Team leader. Senior evaluator.
	What are the strengths and weaknesses of having the Council of Europe implement the project?	What specific strengths (and/or weaknesses) has brought the Council of Europe to the project implementation?	Perception of key stakeholders on CoE's role to changes in the areas targeted by the project.	Desk research. Individual interviews.	Document review. CoE project staff (Strasbourg and Tbilisi).	Textual analysis. Qualitative data analysis: narrative and thematic / deductive.	Team leader. Senior evaluator.

Evaluation Criteria	Evaluation Question	Sub-Question	Measure(s) / Indicator(s)	Data Collection Instrument(s)	Data Source(s)	Data Analysis[12]	Evaluator(s) Responsible
			Effectiveness and sustainability of support provided by CoE.		MES representatives. Donor representatives.	Analytical grids for interviews.	