



# NOT DISPLACED, OUT-OF-PLACE EDUCATION OF IDP CHILDREN IN GEORGIA

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## Acronyms

AP	Action Plan
BoT	Board of Trustees
CC	Collective centre
EU	European Union
EU -19	All EU member countries (prior to the accession of the 10 candidate countries on 1 May 2004) plus the 4 European OECD member countries: Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Slovak Republic.
HE	Higher education
IDP	Internally displaced person
GDP	Gross domestic product
GoG	Government of Georgia
MES-AAR	Ministry of Education and Culture of the Autonomous Republic of Abkhazia
MoES	Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia
NAEC	National Assessment and Examinations Centre
NEE	National Entrance Examinations
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NRC	Norwegian Refugee Council
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
PIRLS	Progress in International Reading Literacy Study
PPS	Probability proportional to size
PT	Private Tutoring
SE	Sampling error
TIMSS	Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

## **Executive Summary**

### **Overview**

This research project aims to examine the academic performance of children in the so-called Abkhaz public ‘IDP’ schools in comparison with children in local schools in Georgia; it also seeks to investigate the extent of social integration of IDP children and how this might be related to academic performance. The study mainly focuses on the situation of the remaining 14 Abkhaz public schools for IDPs which were established in the early 1990s for the schooling of children displaced from Abkhazia by armed conflict in 1991-1992. There is much criticism in the literature about the standard of education in these schools being below that in local schools; and about the social segregation of these school children given their separation from the mainstream school system. But little concrete evidence is provided to substantiate these assertions. The purpose of this study is to conduct rigorous empirical research to comparatively examine the educational standards in the Abkhaz public schools for IDPs and aspects of social integration.

In addition, this study briefly examines the newly established Tserovani school for children displaced from South Ossetia during hostilities in August 2008. While this is not intended to be statistically representative of the situation of the ‘IDP school’ population from South Ossetia in Georgia proper, it provides some indicative impressions and allows for a limited degree of qualitative comparison between the two populations of displaced children; and between IDP children from South Ossetia and local children.

Commissioned by the Norwegian Refugee Council and funded by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, this study was conducted by an independent, multidisciplinary team of experienced social scientists, recruited by the NRC. This research project was planned, designed and implemented in consultation with a Steering Committee comprising representatives from the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia, the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Autonomous Republic of Abkhazia, UNICEF and the NRC. The research team commenced work on the project in mid-November 2009 and completed their activities mid-March 2010.

### **Approach**

In this study, academic performance is assessed in Georgia through a series of national and international examinations in various subjects, as well as by examining national entrance examinations for entry into higher education. By collating and comparing these statistics, this study has been able to compare the academic performance of children in Abkhaz public schools with those in local schools. Through qualitative research, the study also asked pupils (and their parents) about how well they felt they were performing in school.

This study has attempted to examine the social integration of IDPs by comparatively examining household economies (levels of income and ownership of ‘luxury goods’ such as TVs and computers), types of social relations and daily activity, and perceptions about future prospects.

A quantitative survey was conducted among 13 Abkhaz public schools and 1 school of children displaced from South Ossetia during the conflict in 2008, as well as with local schools for the purpose of comparison. The survey sought to assess attitudes to the comparative academic performance of IDP children in school, and their extent of social integration, both inside and outside of school. The survey was conducted in four regions of Georgia: Tbilisi, Imereti, Samegrelo and Shida Kartli, among approximately 2000 children and parents.

The qualitative component of this study mainly involved holding a series of focus group discussions with IDP and non-IDP children and parents, as well as with teachers. Focus groups were conducted in three regions: Tbilisi, Shida Kartli (Gori and Tserovani) and Imereti (Kutaisi). The research team also conducted a series of in-depth, semi-structured interviews with numerous key informants who provided expert opinions, policy analysis and the benefit of their professional experiences. These experts include representatives of government, local authorities, NGOs, the UN and other specialists and academics.

### **Conclusions**

IDP children are often disadvantaged in the education system in Georgia, but this appears to be more due to their economic status than their IDP status. Enrolment in Abkhaz public schools, as opposed to local schools, does not appear to have a significant bearing on academic performance. Overall, Georgian school pupils perform comparatively poorly in international assessments of academic achievement. But there are no significant differences between Abkhaz public schools and local schools in this respect. At a national level, Abkhaz students do comparatively well in some science subjects. A smaller proportion of students from Abkhaz public schools enter into higher education (HE) institutions and fewer receive merit-based grants, which are based on scores of students in national entrance examinations (NEE). There is a good deal of evidence from this study to indicate that this may be due to less favorable learning environments. Children in Abkhaz public schools tend to have fewer textbooks, receive less private tuition and live in homes less than ideal for study.

Private tutoring, rather than quality of schooling, is considered by all surveyed groups (teachers, parents and students) as a primary factor determining success of students in (NEE). Private tuition is widespread in Georgia among all surveyed regions and at all levels of schooling. For parents, school grades and completion certificates were not seen to be as important as NEE, and in being successful in the examinations schools were seen as having limited utility. The evidence seems to indicate that because IDP students are from poorer families, they are less able to afford private tuition. The implication is that proportionally fewer students from Abkhaz public schools will enter HE as result.

There are no apparent significant differences in teaching quality between local and Abkhaz public schools. But Abkhaz public schools are in a much worse state of disrepair, sometimes dangerously so. Conditions at home are generally worse in IDP households. The average income of IDP families is also significantly lower. The difference in economic conditions cause differences in access to those educational resources which are funded mainly through private sources, including school textbooks and private tuition.

In general, IDPs children tend to be discriminated against by other children in or out of school less today than a few years ago. This was particularly the case in Tbilisi, where IDP children seemed to be fairly well settled and integrated. However, in Kutaisi both children and parents were qualitatively found to have endured significant levels of discrimination from adults. For their children, this mainly came from teachers in local schools, and parents moved their children into Abkhaz public schools as a result. Most children thought that bullying and discrimination

was targeted mainly at Megrelians and others perceived as impoverished and badly dressed. Given that the majority of IDPs are Megrelian and are more likely to be impoverished, it seems likely that they are affected.

The vast majority of children in Abkhaz public schools and Tserovani school were happy in the school they attended and wished to remain there. Indeed, many had moved to these schools because they were ‘IDP schools’, having being discriminated against in local schools they had attended beforehand. For many parents and children the ‘IDP’ label was seen as something negative and they did not like being referred to in this way. Many children could not understand why they were ‘IDPs’ when they had not been displaced themselves. This begs the question: *When does displacement end?*

Though the results of the survey for Tserovani school are not statistically significant, from the data gathered on both Tserovani and Abkhaz public schools, one might reasonably conclude that the need for segregated schooling for IDPs is greatest at the time of displacement, and decreases with time. However, 17 years after the initial displacement of Georgians from Abkhazia, many parents and children still express a clear wish to maintain Abkhaz public schools, albeit often for negative reasons (discrimination and stigmatization). This raises wider questions about the possibility for full social integration in Georgia and presents a series of policy challenges.



## რეზიუმე

### ზოგადი მიმოხილვა

პროექტის მიზანია აფხაზეთის საჯარო, ე.წ. „დევნილთა<sup>1</sup> სკოლების“ მოსწავლეთა აკადემიური მოსწრების შესწავლა და მისი შედარება ადგილობრივი სკოლების მოსწავლეების აკადემიურ მოსწრებასთან. გარდა ამისა, ნაშრომში შესწავლილია იძულებით გადაადგილებულ ბავშვთა სოციალური ინტეგრაციის დონე და მისი შესაძლო გავლენა ამ ბავშვების აკადემიურ მოსწრებაზე. კვლევაში ყურადღება ძირითადად გამახვილებულია აფხაზეთის საჯარო სკოლებში არსებულ ვითარებაზე. ეს სკოლები 1991-92 წლებში აფხაზეთიდან დევნილი ბავშვებისათვის დაარსდა. შემდგომ მათი უმრავლესობა დაიხურა და მოსწავლეები გადაიყვანეს ადგილობრივ სკოლებში. თუმცა „დევნილთა“ თოთხმეტი სკოლა კვლავ ფუნქციონირებს და უმეტესად აფხაზეთიდან იძულებით გადაადგილებული ოჯახების ბავშვებით არის დაკომპლექტებული. შესაბამის ლიტერატურაში მკაცრად არის გაკრიტიკებული ამ სკოლებში მოქმედი სტანდარტები, მიიჩნევა, რომ ისინი უფრო დაბალია ადგილობრივ სკოლებთან შედარებით. ასევე, გამოთქმულია თვალსაზრისი, რომ განათლების საერთო სისტემიდან ამ სკოლების გამოყოფა მოსწავლეთა სოციალურ სეგრეგაციას უწყობს ხელს. თუმცა, მოყვანილი კონკრეტული ფაქტები საკმარისი არ არის ამ მოსაზრებების დასასაბუთებლად. მოცემული კვლევის მიზანი დეტალური ემპირიული გამოკვლევის ჩატარებაა, რათა ერთმანეთს შედარდეს აფხაზეთის საჯარო სკოლებში არსებული განათლების სტანდარტები და სოციალური ინტეგრაციის ასპექტები.

გამოკვლევაში გარკვეული ადგილი ეთმობა ახლად დაარსებულ წეროვანის სკოლას, რომელიც სამხრეთ ოსეთში განვითარებული შეიარაღებული კონფლიქტის (2008 წლის აგვისტო) შედეგად იძულებით გადაადგილებული ბავშვებისათვის გაიხსნა. მიუხედავად იმისა, რომ ეს სკოლა არ გამოდგება საქართველოში არსებული „სამხრეთ ოსეთის სკოლების“ სტატისტიკური რეპრეზენტაციისათვის, ის მაინც საშუალებას გვაძლევს თვისობრივად შევადაროთ ერთმანეთს დევნილი ბავშვების ორი პოპულაცია; ასევე, ადგილობრივი ბავშვები შევადაროთ სამხრეთ ოსეთიდან იძულებით გადაადგილებულ ბავშვებს.

მოცემული კვლევა ნორვეგიის ლტოლვილთა საბჭოს დაკვეთით და ნორვეგიის საგარეო საქმეთა სამინისტროს დაფინანსებით ჩაატარა სხვადასხვა სპეციალიზაციის მქონე სოციალურ მეცნიერთა დამოუკიდებელმა ჯგუფმა. პროექტი დაიგეგმა, მომზადდა და დაინერგა მმართველ კომიტეტთან კონსულტაციების გავლით. კომიტეტი დაკომპლექტებულია საქართველოს განათლებისა და მეცნიერების და აფხაზეთის ავტონომიური რესპუბლიკის განათლებისა და კულტურის სამინისტროების, გაეროს ბავშვთა ფონდისა და ნორვეგიის ლტოლვილთა საბჭოს წარმომადგენლებით. მკვლევართა ჯგუფმა პროექტზე მუშაობა დაიწყო 2009 წლის ნოემბრის შუა რიცხვებში და დაასრულა 2010 წლის მარტის შუა რიცხვებში.

1. ტერმინები „დევნილი“ და „იძულებით გადაადგილებული პირი“ მოცემულ ნაშრომში სინონიმებს წარმოადგენენ.

## კვლევისას გამოყენებული მეთოდი

მოცემულ გამოკვლევაში შესწავლილია საქართველოში აკადემიური მოსწრების მან-ვენებლებში მრავალრიცხოვანი ეროვნული და საერთაშორისო გამოცდებისა და სავალდებულო ერთიანი ეროვნული გამოცდების შედეგების ანალიზის საფუძველზე. ამგვარი სტატისტიკური მონაცემების შეგროვებისა და შედარების გზით, შესაძლებელი გახდა აფხაზეთის საჯარო სკოლების ბავშვთა აკადემიური მოსწრების შედარება ადგილობრივი სკოლის ბავშვების აკადემიურ მოსწრებასთან. ჩატარდა თვისობრივი გამოკვლევა, მოსწავლეებისა და მათი მშობლების გამოკითხვა, ბავშვების აკადემიური მოსწრების თაობაზე.

კვლევის საგანს შეადგენდა იძულებით გადაადგილებულ პირთა სოციალური ინტეგრაცია. გაკეთდა ოჯახის ეკონომიური მდგომარეობის (შემოსავლის დონე და საკუთრებაში არსებული ისეთი „ფუფუნების“ საგნები, როგორცაა ტელევიზორი და კომპიუტერი), სოციალური ურთიერთობების, ყოველდღიური საქმიანობისა და სამომავლო გეგმების შედარებითი ანალიზი.

რაოდენობრივი გამოკითხვა ჩატარდა აფხაზეთის ცამეტ საჯარო სკოლაში; ასევე, კიდევ ერთ სკოლაში, რომელიც სამხრეთ ოსეთიდან 2008 წლის კონფლიქტის შედეგად იძულებით გადაადგილებული ბავშვებისათვის გაიხსნა წეროვანში. შედარებისთვის გამოყენებულ იქნა ადგილობრივი სკოლები. გამოკითხვა მიზნად ისახავდა დევნილ ბავშვთა შედარებითი აკადემიური მოსწრებისადმი დამოკიდებულების გარკვევას და ინფორმაციის მოპოვებას მათი სოციალური ინტეგრაციის შესახებ, როგორც სკოლაში, ისე სკოლის გარეთ. გამოკითხვა ჩატარდა საქართველოს ოთხ რეგიონში: თბილისში, იმერეთში, სამეგრელოსა და შიდა ქართლში. გამოკითხულ იქნა დაახლოებით 2000 ბავშვი და მშობელი.

თვისობრივი კვლევა ძირითადად ჩატარდა ფოკუს-ჯგუფების მეშვეობით, მიმდინარე დისკუსიების სახით დევნილ და ადგილობრივ ბავშვებთან და, ასევე, მათ მშობლებთან და მასწავლებლებთან. ფოკუს-ჯგუფები ჩატარდა სამ რეგიონში: თბილისში, შიდა ქართლში (გორი და წეროვანი) და იმერეთში (ქუთაისი). მეტი ინფორმაციის მიღების მიზნით, მკვლევართა ჯგუფმა ჩატარა, აგრეთვე, სიღრმისეული და ნახევრად სტრუქტურირებული ინტერვიუები მრავალ ექსპერტთან, რომლებსაც გააჩნდათ შესაბამისი პროფესიული გამოცდილება და შეეძლოთ საგანმანათლებლო პოლიტიკის გაანალიზება. ამგვარ ექსპერტთა რიცხვს მიეკუთვნებიან მთავრობის, ადგილობრივი ხელისუფლების, არასამთავრობო ორგანიზაციების, გაეროსა და აკადემიური წრეების წარმომადგენლები, ასევე სხვადასხვა სპეციალისტები.

## დასკვნები

საქართველოს განათლების სისტემაში იძულებით გადაადგილებული ბავშვები უმეტესად არახელსაყრელ პირობებში იმყოფებიან, რაც უფრო მეტად მათი ეკონომიური მდგომარეობითაა განპირობებული, ვიდრე დევნილის სტატუსით. ის ფაქტი, აფხაზეთის საჯარო სკოლაში სწავლობს ბავშვი თუ ადგილობრივში, მის აკადემიურ მოსწრებაზე მნიშვნელოვან გავლენას არ ახდენს. ზოგადად, ქართული სკოლების მოსწავლეებმა აკადემიური მოსწრების საერთაშორისო შეფასებისას შედარებით ცუდი შედეგები აჩვენეს, მაგრამ, ამ მხრივ, დიდი განსხვავება არ იყო აფხაზეთის საჯარო სკოლებსა და ადგილობრივ სკოლებს შორის. ეროვნულ დონეზე აფხაზეთის საჯარო სკოლების მოსწავლეებმა შედარებით უკეთესი შედეგები აჩვენეს ზოგიერთ საგანში.

აფხაზეთის საჯარო სკოლების მოსწავლეთა მცირე პროცენტი აბარებს უმაღლეს სასწავლებლებში და მცირე მათგანი იღებს გრანტებს, რომლებიც გაიცემა ერთიან ეროვნულ გამოცდებზე მიღებული ქულების შესაბამისად. ამის მიზეზია ნაკლებად ხელშემწყობი სასწავლო გარემო, რაც კარგად აჩვენა კვლევის პროცესმა: აფხაზეთის საჯარო სკოლების მოსწავლეებს ნაკლები სახელმძღვანელოები აქვთ, ისინი ნაკლებად იღებენ კერძო გაკვეთილებს და სწავლისათვის შეუსაბამო პირობებში ცხოვრობენ.

ყველა გამოკითხული ჯგუფის (მასწავლებლები, მშობლები და მოსწავლეები) აზრით, ერთიან ეროვნულ გამოცდებში მოსწავლეთა წარმატებას ძირითადად განაპირობებს კერძო მასწავლებლებთან მომზადება და არასკოლაში მასწავლებლების ხარისხი. კერძო მასწავლებლებთან მომზადება, სწავლების ყველა ეტაპზე, ფართოდ არის გავრცელებული საქართველოს ყველა გამოკითხულ რეგიონში. მშობლებისთვის სასკოლო ნიშნები და ატესტატი ისეთი მნიშვნელოვანი არ არის, როგორც მისაღები გამოცდები. რესპონდენტები მიიჩნევენ, რომ სკოლებს შეზღუდული შესაძლებლობები აქვთ მოსწავლეების მოსამზადებლად, რათა მათ გამოცდებში წარმატებას მიაღწიონ. გამოკითხვის შედეგების მიხედვით, დევნილ მოსწავლეებს ნაკლებად აქვთ კერძო მასწავლებლებთან მომზადების საშუალება, რადგან ისინი უმეტესად სოციალურად დაუცველი ოჯახებიდან არიან. შესაბამისად, ვარაუდობენ, რომ აფხაზეთის საჯარო სკოლებიდან პროცენტულად ნაკლები მოსწავლე ჩააბარებს უმაღლეს სასწავლებლებში.

სწავლების ხარისხის მხრივ, ადგილობრივ და აფხაზეთის საჯარო სკოლებს შორის დიდი განსხვავება არ არის, თუმცა აფხაზეთის საჯარო სკოლების შენობები ბევრად უარეს მდგომარეობაშია და ხშირად ეს მდგომარეობა საგანგაშოა. დევნილთა საცხოვრებელი პირობები, ძირითადად, ბევრად უარესია. აგრეთვე, მნიშვნელოვნად დაბალია იძულებით გადაადგილებული ოჯახების საშუალო შემოსავალი, განსხვავებული ეკონომიური მდგომარეობის გამო, საგანმანათლებლო რესურსების (მათ შორის სკოლის სახელმძღვანელოები, კერძო გაკვეთილები) გამოყენების შესაძლებლობაც საგრძნობლად განსხვავებულია.

ზოგადად, სხვა ბავშვების მიერ დევნილი ბავშვების დისკრიმინაცია (როგორც სკოლაში, ისე სკოლის გარეთ) დღეს გაცილებით ნაკლებად ხდება, ვიდრე ეს წლების წინ ხდებოდა. ეს განსაკუთრებით იგრძნობა თბილისში, სადაც იძულებით გადაადგილებული ბავშვები შედარებით უკეთ დამკვიდრებულნი და ინტეგრირებულნი ჩანან. განსხვავებული სურათი გამოიკვეთა ქუთაისში, სადაც ბავშვებიც და მშობლებიც უფრო მეტ დისკრიმინაციას განიცდიან მოზრდილების მხრიდან. ბავშვების შემთხვევაში ეს უმეტესად ადგილობრივი სკოლების მასწავლებლებისგან იგრძნობოდა, რის გამოც მშობლებმა ისინი აფხაზეთის საჯარო სკოლებში გადაიყვანეს. ბავშვთა უმრავლესობა მიიჩნევდა, რომ ჩაგვრა და დისკრიმინაცია ძირითადად მიმართულია მეგრელებზე და სოციალურად დაუცველ მოსწავლეებზე.

აფხაზეთის საჯარო სკოლებისა და წეროვანის სკოლის მოსწავლეთა უმრავლესობა კმაყოფილია სკოლით და უნდა იქ დარჩენა. ბევრი მათგანი გადმოვიდა ამ სკოლებში სწორედ იმიტომ, რომ ეს „დევნილთა სკოლებია“. ამავე დროს, ბევრი მშობელი და ბავშვი სიტყვა „დევნილს“ უარყოფითად აღიქვამს და მათ არ მოსწონთ, თუ ასე მოიხსენიებენ. ბევრ ბავშვს არ ესმის, თუ რატომ ჰქვია „იძულებით გადაადგილებული“ ან „დევნილი“ მაშინ, როცა ის არსად გადაადგილებულა და იქ დაიბადა, სადაც ახლა ცხოვრობს. ეს კიდევ უფრო მეტ სიმძაფრეს მატებს შეკითხვას: როდის სრულდება დევნილობა?

მიუხედავად იმისა, რომ წეროვანის სკოლასთან დაკავშირებული გამოკითხვის შედეგები სტატისტიკურად მნიშვნელოვანი არ არის, ყველა ის მონაცემი, რომელიც ამ სკოლასა და აფხაზეთის საჯარო სკოლების შესახებ გავვაჩნია, გვაძლევს საშუალებას დავასკვნათ, რომ დევნილებში სეგრევირებული სწავლების საჭიროება განსაკუთრებით მაღალია გადაადგილების პირველ ეტაპზე, ხოლო შემდგომ, დროთა განმავლობაში ეს მოთხოვნილება თანდათან მცირდება. თუმცა, დევნილობაში გატარებული 17 წლის შემდეგაც, ბევრ დევნილ მშობელს (და ბავშვსაც) სურს აფხაზეთის საჯარო სკოლების შენარჩუნება, ხშირად ნეგატიური მიზეზების (დისკრიმინაციისა და სტიგმის) გამო. ეს ბადაებს უფრო ფართო სპექტრის შეკითხვებს სრული სოციალური ინტეგრაციის შესაძლებლობებზე საქართველოში და, ასევე, მიუთითებს მთელ რიგ გამოწვევებზე საგანმანათლებლო პოლიტიკის სფეროში.

## Introduction

This research project aims to examine the academic performance of children in the so-called Abkhaz public ‘IDP schools’ in comparison with children in local schools; it also seeks to investigate the extent of social integration of IDP children and how this might be related to academic performance.

Most of the children that are the subject of this research project have not themselves been displaced, but are rather the children of displaced people. Nonetheless, they have IDP status and many attend IDP schools. This study mainly focuses on the situation of the Abkhaz public schools for IDPs in Georgia which were established in the early 1990s for the schooling of children displaced from Abkhazia by armed conflict in 1991-1992. Most of these schools have been subsequently closed, and the pupils transferred into local schools in the mainstream education system in Georgia. However, 14 of the ‘IDP schools’ remain, largely comprising children from families displaced from Abkhazia (although most of the current school children were born after displacement) and are under the management of the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Autonomous Republic of Abkhazia (MES-AAR).<sup>2</sup> There is much criticism in the literature about the standard of education in these schools being below that in local schools; and about the social segregation of these school children given their separation from the mainstream school system. But little concrete evidence is provided to substantiate these assertions. The purpose of this study is to conduct rigorous empirical research to comparatively examine the educational standards in the Abkhaz public schools for IDPs and aspects of social integration. Out of the 14 Abkhaz public schools for IDPs, 13 are included in the fieldwork for this research, as well as mainstream schools in their vicinity for the purposes of comparison.

Although this project focuses on the situation of public schools for IDPs from Abkhazia, also included in the study is one newly established school for IDPs, Tserovani school, for children displaced from South Ossetia during hostilities in August 2008. While this is not intended to be statistically representative of the situation of schooling for IDPs from South Ossetia, it provides some indicative impressions and allows for a limited degree of qualitative comparison between the two groups of displaced children; and between IDP children from South Ossetia and local children. Given the limitations of the research conducted with the Tserovani school, the findings are presented in this report separately (and in less depth) from those of the Abkhaz public schools. However, some comparisons between the two groups have been made where there was sufficient data to do so.

There is some controversy in Georgia concerning the label ‘IDP school’, particularly among those attending and administering these schools. Indeed, the Abkhaz public schools for IDPs in Georgia have significant proportions of local children enrolled (up to 50 percent in one case). Given this and the sensitivity over the ‘IDP’ label in Georgia, the authors of this report refer to these schools as ‘Abkhaz public schools’, which is their official name. The use of the term IDP in this report is in recognition of their legal status within national law in Georgia (for those that are registered) and as recognized by international standards, such as the UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement. These principles outline a set of rights to which IDPs are entitled, and a set of responsibilities of States towards internally displaced populations within their jurisdiction. There is no legal definition for an IDP in international law, as there is for a refugee. However, the UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement uses the following definition:

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2. This Ministry is part of a structure known officially in Georgia as the Government of the Autonomous Republic of Abkhazia and frequently referred to as the Abkhaz Government in Exile. It was originally formed by ethnic Georgians who had been in official positions in Abkhazia before the war. It is based in Tbilisi and is largely concerned with IDP issues.

Internally displaced persons are persons or groups of persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized State border. (Deng 1998)

Commissioned by the Norwegian Refugee Council and funded by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, this study was conducted by an independent, multidisciplinary team of experienced social scientists, recruited by the NRC. This research project was planned, designed and implemented in consultation with a Steering Committee comprising representatives from the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia, the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Autonomous Republic of Abkhazia, UNICEF and the NRC. The research team commenced work on the project in mid-November 2009 and completed their activities mid-March 2010.

## **Purpose & Objectives**

This study aims to comparatively examine the extent of academic performance and social integration among IDP children. It seeks to identify the factors that influence academic performance and social interaction of IDP children. The study will explore best practices related to social integration both in Abkhaz public schools and local schools. The results of the project will be presented to the education authorities and other relevant stakeholders with a view to addressing possible gaps in the education of IDP children.

Academic performance is assessed in Georgia through a series of national and international examinations in various subjects, as well as national entrance examinations for entry into higher education (HE). By collating and comparing these statistics, this study has been able to compare the academic performance of children in Abkhaz public schools with those in local schools. Through qualitative research, the study also asked pupils (and their parents) about how well they felt they were performing in school.

However, assessing levels of social integration is more problematic. In the social sciences the term ‘social integration’ is used to examine the movement of minority groups, such as displaced persons and underprivileged sections of a society, into the mainstream of society. It involves members of these minority groups accessing the opportunities, rights and services available to the members of the mainstream. But it also encompasses how members of the minority group, in this case IDPs, feel they are treated by others and to what extent they feel settled and content where they are. This study has attempted to examine the social integration of IDPs by comparatively examining household economies (levels of income and ownership of ‘luxury goods’ such as TVs and computers), types of social relations and daily activity, and perceptions about future prospects.

## **Background**

### ***Conflict & Displacement***

Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, the region underwent significant political, social and economic upheaval. Since declaring independence from the USSR in 1991, Georgia has undergone a difficult transition from the centrally controlled Soviet system to a market economy. Serious economic difficulties have been fuelled by the collapse of the industrial sector, high inflation, budgetary deficits and widespread corruption (NRC 2009).

Subsequent reform processes have been hampered by structural challenges, a weak economy, and political instability. Internal politics have been dominated by inter-ethnic conflict since Georgia gained independence. Following a period of 'frozen conflicts', full-blown conflict returned with the short but devastating armed conflict in August 2008.<sup>3</sup> Since the Georgian-Russian war of August 2008, Georgia has lost control over the entire territories within the former administrative borders of the breakaway regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. There is no possibility of return for the vast majority of IDPs for the foreseeable future. The only durable solution for their plight is local integration where they currently reside, or resettlement to another part of the country.

Violent conflicts broke out after unilateral declarations of independence were made by South Ossetia in 1991 and Abkhazia in 1992, and was accompanied by significant levels of displacement of the population. The armed conflicts between Georgia and pro-independence forces in South Ossetia (1991-92) and Abkhazia (1992-93) displaced about 300,000 people, and it is estimated that 10,000 people were killed (Kalin 2005). Some 250,000 people – mainly from Abkhazia - remained displaced in Georgia proper, including an estimated 50,000 children. The Government of Georgia lost control over both regions. From the mid-1990s until the war with South Ossetia and Russia of August 2008, ceasefire agreements had been in place for both conflict zones and their implementation was monitored by international observers, including a Joint Peacekeeping Force in South Ossetia and UNOMIG in Abkhazia.

The Governments in Exile of Abkhazia and South Ossetia subsequently established in Georgia proper began to administer the education of the IDP children in displacement, through their Ministries of Education.<sup>4</sup> Most of the schools for IDPs from Abkhazia were established in old public buildings that were vacant, and some in collective centres (CCs) where the IDPs were accommodated. These buildings were not designed to be used as schools and many were in poor condition.

Displacement as a result of the war in August 2008 never reached the levels of the 1991-1993 conflict and the majority of 'new IDPs' were able to return to their homes soon after, mainly to Gori and the areas adjacent to South Ossetia. Most were from South Ossetia and the adjacent regions, and only about 2000 were from Abkhazia. The vast majority of those that remained displaced were resettled in government-built or rehabilitated accommodation within a few months. Currently, in Georgia proper there are some 13,000 'old IDPs' from South Ossetia and 209,000 from Abkhazia (representing about 6 percent of the country's overall population).

It is difficult to precisely locate many of the IDPs or to gather social statistics about them (NRC 2009: 6). Many have ended up living in urban areas which has been particularly difficult in terms of finding employment for those originally from rural areas, where they were mainly involved in agriculture.

The majority of the 'old IDPs' live in territories adjacent to the respective conflict zones (the regions of Samegrelo and Imereti, and Kvemo Kartli in the Gori district) as well as in the capital, Tbilisi, and its suburbs. Others are dispersed around the country. Between 45,000 to 60,000 affected people live in the Gali region, some permanently and others seasonally. Many have moved to Tbilisi in the expectation that there would be greater opportunities for improving their livelihoods.

3. In addition, some 30,000 to 40,000 people were displaced in May 1998 when fighting erupted in Gali district. Many of these were returnees and were being displaced for a second time in 1998. Among them were some 5,500 school children enrolled in various schools in and around Zugdidi. But some 13 schools, comprising 1512 pupils and 258 teachers, moved from the Gali district to Zugdidi in October 1998 (Matiashvili 2004: 15). Some 32 schools remain in the Gali district, but these are not under examination in this study.

4. The Ministry of Education of the South Ossetian Government in Exile no longer exists.

## **Legal Framework**

International human rights law establishes the right to free education and the principle of compulsory primary education for all children. Georgia is party to all major international instruments that govern the right to education.<sup>5</sup> Of particular significance is the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) to which Georgia has been a party since 1994. States that are parties to the CRC recognize their commitment to the protection of the ‘best interests of the child’ in all actions concerning children (Art. 3, Para. 1). The UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement of 1998 also specifically refer to the right to education (Principle 23).

According to these international human rights provisions, the right to education is interpreted in terms of its availability, accessibility, acceptability and adaptability. While IDPs should enjoy the same rights as others in the population, they also have special needs that the State in which they reside is obliged to address. In terms of accessibility, this includes economic accessibility whereby all education is affordable and primary education is free. In terms of adaptability, schools in Georgia are facing challenges in adapting to the special needs and complying with the special rights of vulnerable groups such as IDPs, disabled students and those belonging to ethnic minorities.

The Constitution of Georgia (1995) guarantees the protection of the fundamental rights of all persons to education. The Constitution of Georgia recognises basic education as a right for all children, including IDPs. It stipulates: “Everyone shall have the right to receive education and the right to free choice of a form of education” (Art. 35, Para. 1).

As a primary legal provision in the field of education, the Law of Georgia on General Education (adopted 2005) guarantees general education for all students (Chapter I, Art. 3, Para. 2a). It protects all students’ rights to complete general education (Chapter II, Article 9, paragraph 1); have a free choice of education opportunities (Chapter II, Art. 9, Para. 6); and to receive quality education in a safe environment (Chapter II, Art. 9, Paras. 8 & 9).

According to the Law of Georgia on Internally Displaced Persons, the Government of Georgia (GoG) ensures the constitutional right to education for IDPs in the general schools (see below) at the state’s expense (Art. 5, Para. 2 (E)). IDPs are legally entitled to education in Georgia and are exempt from paying fees for upper secondary education (‘Law of Georgia on Internally Displaced persons – The Persecuted’ Art. 5.2 (d)), provided they have the necessary documentation.

## **Education System in Georgia**

The education system in Georgia is comprised of preschool, general and higher education. The formal education system also includes two levels of vocational education: occupational and higher professional. This study only examines general education and only in public schools. General education is comprised of three tiers: primary education (grades 1 to 6: children aged 6 to 11 years); basic education (grades 7 to 9: aged 12 to 14+ years) and secondary education (grades 10 to 12: aged 15 to 17+). Once basic education is completed, which is compulsory, pupils can either continue into upper secondary education (for those wishing to go into higher education), enter into vocational training, or leave the education system altogether.

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5. International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (Art. 13); Convention on the Rights of the Child (Arts. 28-29); European Convention on the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, Protocol 1 (Art. 2); UNESCO Convention against discrimination in Education (1960), (Arts. 4 & 5), *inter alia*.

Historically, education has been a high priority in Georgia. During the Soviet period, education was provided free of charge at all levels. Indicators were high, with illiteracy almost negligible and good standards of entry and performance in HE. However, the conflicts of the early 1990s compounded a severe economic crisis. Among the post-socialist transitional economies, Georgia is second only to Moldova in the severity of recession that it experienced in the early 1990s.<sup>6</sup> Georgia's GDP reduced by 75 percent between 1990 and 1994. This led to a period of low investment in education: the education budget was reduced from 7 percent of GDP in 1991 to 1 percent by 1994 respectively. This had a significant, long-term impact upon access and the quality of education.

However, the proportion of Georgia's public expenditure used in education has increased significantly in recent years. Since 1996, public spending on education has stabilized at about 2 percent of GDP and 11-12 percent of the consolidated budget (Matiashvili 2004). Currently public expenditure in education as share of GDP remains at under 3 percent, lower than the average for OECD and EU-19 countries. But this figure is comparable with neighbouring Caucasus countries. Public expenditure on general education now accounts for over 70 percent of the total annual budget of the MoES (see Table 1).

**Table 1: Public expenditure on general education**

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Budget of Ministry of Education (Thousands GEL)	14,966.7	67,676.7	80,941.1	358,165.1	410,828.8	458,177.5	537,967.7
Expenditure on General Education (Thousands GEL)	958.4	14,157.4	21,827.6	281,319.4	314,533.0	340,580.1	397,635.1
In % of total	6.4%	20.9%	27.0%	78.5%	76.6%	74.3%	73.9%

Source: MoES, 2009

In 2004, a large-scale reform of the education system in Georgia began. The subsequent rapid pace with which education reforms have been undertaken owes much to the groundwork provided in 2001 by the Education System Realignment and Strengthening Programme, since renamed the Ilia Chavchavadze Project, which was financed by a World Bank loan of USD 26 million.

The following issues have been addressed in this process of reform of the general education system:

- Georgian schools have been converted from organizations financed by local government budgets to autonomous Legal Entities of Public Law (LEPLs) with their own bank accounts. Individual schools established Boards of Trustees (BoTs) to oversee the running of the school, and comprising representatives of parents, teachers, local government and pupils;
- The financing and governance of schools has been reformed by introducing the per capita financing principle. Individual school budgets are currently calculated on the basis of pupil numbers, the overall size of the school, and its geographical location. Small schools and schools in mountainous areas receive more per capita funding than their larger counterparts in urban or rural areas.
- During 2005 and 2006, unified entrance examinations for universities were introduced across a range of subjects, administered by the newly established National Assessment and Examinations Centre (NAEC).

6. IMF World Economic Outlook database



- A new national curriculum was introduced by a National Curriculum and Assessment Centre, which was established in April 2006.
- The standards of teaching are being improved and standardized through a process of teacher training and retraining accreditation; and a system of teacher certification is to be introduced through the Teacher Professional Development Centre.

Since 2004 Georgia has implemented several nationwide evaluations of school pupils' academic performance, and has participated in two large international studies: Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) and Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS). Both of these international studies are implemented by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA), and aim to comparatively analyze student achievement in school subjects so as to inform educational policies and practices around the world.

TIMSS is an international assessment of knowledge in mathematics and science for 4th and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students, which has been conducted every four years since 1995. Some 45 countries now participate in TIMSS, and Georgia has done so since 2006 (and so has conducted only one assessment thus far). PIRLS involves an assessment of students' reading ability in 4th grade. It was first introduced in 2001 and is conducted every five years. In 2006, PIRLS was implemented in 40 countries including Georgia.

### ***Institutional & Policy Framework***

Two important documents secure regulation of general education processes in a manner conducive to the introduction and establishment of inclusive education for all students, including vulnerable groups such as IDPs. Setting national goals of general education, the *National Objectives of General Education* reaffirm the state's commitment to creating a school system that will guarantee equal opportunities for students regardless of their social, racial, ethnic, religious or political belonging, and physical or mental abilities.

Regulating education processes in general education schools, the national curriculum promotes the creation of teaching and learning conditions conducive to inclusive education of all students, IDP students among them. The national curriculum requires that education processes should be delivered in the best interest of the students. To this end, the national curriculum requires the development of an individual school curriculum by each and every school.

Another important initiative in the field of inclusive education resulted in the development of the *Strategy and Action Plan of Special Needs Education, for the years 2009-2011* (known as the Strategy and Action Plan). This was developed as a result of multilateral consultations and cooperation between the MoES, USAID and Save the Children (MoES *et al* 2008). This Strategy and Action Plan has been developed based upon provisions in the Constitution of Georgia, the Law of Georgia on General Education, the Law of Georgia on Vocational Education, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the national curriculum of Georgia for the years 2008-2009 and the international UNESCO programme 'Education For All'.<sup>7</sup> The period indicated in the strategy has been defined as a transitional, preparatory stage towards the achievement of inclusive education's long-term goals.

7. UNESCO leads the global Education for All movement, aiming to meet the learning needs of all children, youth and adults by 2015: <http://www.unesco.org/en/efa/>.

The Strategy has been built upon the following principles and values:

- child-centered education processes;
- access to quality education for all children;
- equity of access to education opportunities for all children; and
- access to mainstream instruction for all children.

This Strategy and Action Plan particularly focuses on children with disabilities, but also includes other vulnerable groups such as street children, ethnic minorities and IDP children. For some of these groups, such as street children and ethnic minorities, studies and follow up of needs have been/are being carried out. However, with respect to IDP children, the central educational authorities acknowledge (in the Strategy and Action Plan) a lack of documentation and information regarding their educational situation. For special needs education (SEN), programmes and initiatives have been developed and implemented in the field of inclusive education, including the project ‘Introduction of Inclusive Education in 10 schools of Tbilisi’, and its follow up project ‘Developing Inclusive Education in Public Schools in 9 Regions of Georgia’. Both projects involve collaboration between the MoES and the Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research. The results of the project will be applied for the development of special education programmes for students with SEN. Furthermore, the project results will contribute to the development of a modern electronic system of registration for students with SEN, and identification of their specific needs.

In 2009, the GoG approved a revised ‘Action Plan for the implementation of the State Strategy on IDPs, 2009-2012’ (AP). One of the AP’s main goals is the socioeconomic integration of IDPs, stating that elements of socioeconomic integration include but are not limited to: infrastructure rehabilitation; access to health services; targeted social assistance; and education’ (AP 2009: 3.2). In activity 2.2.1.3, under Goal 2 in the Strategy and Action Plan, the following is stated:

*When needed schools are supported with provision of school furniture, education materials, laboratories, libraries, computer rooms etc. The concept of “IDP Schools” is abandoned and IDP children fully mainstreamed into the public education system. IDP children are supported with provision of textbooks and clothes to facilitate their school attendance. IDP youth has access to loans for tertiary education.*

## **Key Issues & Challenges**

While the purpose of this research project is to conduct primary research in order to collect comprehensive, empirically-based and up-to-date data on the situation of IDP children in Georgia, a review of earlier literature is also important to review earlier research and attempt to build upon it, update it, and/or challenge it, as and where appropriate. However, while there is some literature related to this topic, it is patchy in coverage and much of it is several years old. Nonetheless, in designing this research project, and determining the key issues and challenges related to the educational and social needs of IDP children (and how to measure them), a review of existing research and literature - as well as interviews with key informants – all played a crucial role.

## **Needs & Vulnerabilities of IDP Children**

IDP children may have specific health, nutritional, educational, psychological and material needs which can hinder their educational process. These obstacles stem from problems within the education sector, as well as social, psychological and economic conditions influencing the educational process of IDP children. The social and economic conditions in which IDPs live also impact upon education. The state of health and nutrition of *all* children, and the psychological state of both children and their parents, their economic status and living conditions, and the

level of participation that parents have in the education process of their children, will all impact upon the quality of education children receive.

The main problems with the education system in Georgia, it has been argued, are related to poor management and financing, dilapidated facilities, insufficient teaching and learning materials, lack of training opportunities for teachers and low teacher salaries, among others. Furthermore, a lack of information concerning changes within the education sector among IDP education stakeholders results in ‘their isolation from the education reform and negatively impacts their social integration’ (Matiashvili 2004:7).

Affordability of school related supplies - such as textbooks, clothes and shoes - is often cited by IDP parents as a particular problem that impacts upon their children’s attendance at school. Textbooks need changing each year and are of poor quality. Some parents make photocopies of textbooks, but these are also costly and often poor quality substitutes. Parents often, and increasingly, pay for additional private tuition for children in public schools.<sup>8</sup>

The MoES provides textbooks and stationery for first graders only, after which parents are expected to purchase these and any other materials required. Poverty among families often makes such education-related materials unaffordable. In Georgia, the cost of schooling in terms of required textbooks and uniforms is unreasonably high for some families whose incomes and resources are very limited. Although schools that do require pupils to wear a uniform may allow IDP children to wear any clothes, parents and children tend to prefer the use of uniforms so that children do not look out-of-place.

There is a lack of transparency in the distribution of finances and responsibilities between the two education ministries with respect to the Abkhaz public schools. Schools have to rely on additional private financing, including from parents, in order to cover even essential costs. This may be a particular burden for IDPs, who often have lower incomes. IDP families also tend more often to be headed by a single parent, and such families are likely to be even more impoverished (Matiashvili 2004: 24).

### ***Abkhaz Public Schools***

The process of establishing schools specifically for the education of IDP children began in 1995. Between 1995 and 2005, there were 45 Abkhaz public schools in Georgia proper. By 2008 - before the August 2008 war – this number was reduced to 24 schools. Currently, 14 such Abkhaz public schools remain, comprising some 2,704 children and 381 teachers (MES-AAR 2009). Three of these schools are in Tbilisi, one is in Borjomi and the others are in western Georgia. Most of these schools are in urban areas, three are rural and none are in mountainous areas. There is a lot of sensitivity concerning the use of the label ‘IDP schools’ in describing them as many of them comprise substantial, and proportionally increasing, numbers of non-IDP pupils. It might also be argued that such labelling further fuels the stigmatization that IDPs endure.

The reduction in the number of Abkhaz public schools resulted in affected pupils enrolling in local schools. The resulting over-subscription in some of these schools led to the introduction, in some cases, of a two-shift system. In some schools, the IDP pupils were taught in a separate shift from other pupils and taught by the IDP teachers transferred from their previous school. Such a system has continued to limit the extent of interaction between IDP and their non-IDP fellow pupils, as well as among the teachers. Two Abkhaz public schools also use this system of teaching in shifts.

8. These points are widely claimed in the literature, and were also stated to the research team by numerous people who were interviewed for this study, including the NGO Lampari and UNICEF.

The GoG has argued that there are no more ‘IDP schools’ and they have all incorporated into the mainstream, with no distinction between them and other schools. However, in reality this amounted to little more than renaming the schools within the mainstream numbering system. These 14 Abkhaz public schools are formally under the jurisdiction of the MES-AAR<sup>9</sup> and they continue to be staffed by IDP teachers and administrators. The MES-AAR continues to play a significant role in managing the schools, providing pedagogical support, training for teachers, and monitoring school progress. However, they follow the same curriculum as local schools and teachers’ salaries are paid directly by the GoG.

The separate management of the education of IDP children was originally conceived as a practical solution to providing education in, or near, CCs where the children lived. It was also seen as a temporary solution, given the expectation that they would return to their regions of origin in the not-so-distant future. In addition, there was also a desire to keep the IDPs together as a group and maintain administrative (including government) structures in order to consolidate culture, identity and a communal link to their place of origin. Finally, this set-up enabled IDP teachers to maintain their jobs.

Some IDP parents claim that IDP teachers understand their children better and are more sensitive to their needs and problems, and that this allows for the preservation of cultural values and traditions. However, the need to retain employment for the IDP teachers has been the main motivation according to Matiashvili (2004:7), who criticises this segregation for leading to the increased isolation and exclusion of IDP youth. According to this argument, it hinders the integration of IDP youth in local communities and encourages further labelling and marginalization, and segregated education presents a threat to the future of IDP youth. Arguably, therefore, separate education of IDP children risks isolation and segregation and may, in some cases, result in lower educational standards (NRC 2009: 16).

It has been argued that the limited interaction with the rest of the population has hindered the integration of the IDPs into the local population. As the years have passed without any possibility for return to their places of origin, many have found themselves in a state of limbo, torn between the unrealized dream of return and the need to survive and make a life for themselves and their families in displacement.

Approximately 45 percent of IDPs live in overcrowded CCs, which were previously used as public buildings. Others have found temporary shelter in multi-member family living arrangements with relatives or friends (Gegeshidze & Choakhidze 2008:8). The remainder live in alternative private accommodation. Living conditions in most unrenovated CCs, and some of the accommodation in the private sector, is reportedly dire (NRC 2009:5). However, a few hundred of the CCs have been renovated in recent years: the GoG intends to privatize many of these into IDP ownership as permanent accommodation. Many of the remaining CCs are scheduled for closure, and the IDPs living there will be relocated to private accommodation or newly constructed housing. According to some observers, closing down schools in CCs and merging them with public schools is necessary as their continued segregation (and overcrowding) is unacceptable (Gegeshidze & Choakhidze 2008:28).

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9. The MES-AAR in its current form was established in December 1992. The MES-AAR is responsible for those educational institutions that are specifically for IDPs, including those providing pre-school and general education, vocational training, and some specialized schools. Most of the staff in these institutions are also IDPs.

## **Methodology**

This research project comprises quantitative and qualitative components. A private company, Analysis and Consulting Team (ACT), was recruited to assist in the data collection process. A quantitative survey was conducted among 13 Abkhaz public schools and 1 school of children displaced from South Ossetia during the conflict in 2008, as well as with 20 local schools for the purpose of comparison. The survey sought to assess attitudes to the comparative academic performance of IDP children in school, and their extent of social integration, both inside and outside of school. The survey was conducted in four regions of Georgia: Tbilisi, Imereti, Samegrelo and Shida Kartli.

The qualitative component of this study mainly involved holding a series of focus group discussions and some in-depth interviews. Focus groups were conducted in three regions: Tbilisi, Shida Kartli (Gori and Tserovani) and Imereti (Kutaisi). As well as with teachers, the research team conducted a series of in-depth, semi-structured interviews with numerous key informants who should be able to provide expert opinions, policy analysis and the benefit of their professional experiences. These experts include representatives of government, local authorities, NGOs, the UN and other specialists and academics.

### ***Quantitative Component***

#### **Survey design**

The quantitative component of the study primarily involved conducting a survey among IDP and non-IDP school children, and their parents, through structured face-to-face interviews. The population from which participants were sampled for the study was defined as school pupils at grades 6, 8 and 12 (and their parents) in four selected regions of Georgia: Tbilisi, Shida Kartli (Gori and Tserovani), Samegrelo (Zugdidi, Poti and local villages), and Imereti (Kutaisi) - comprising 66,576 pupils in total. The three school grades represented in the survey reflect the various stages of the general education system – primary, basic and secondary. These four locations in particular were selected as these are where the Abkhaz public schools in Georgia are situated.

Out of 14 Abkhaz public schools currently operating in Georgia, 13 of them were included in the survey.<sup>10</sup> In addition, the survey included the Tserovani school for IDPs, which was constructed in the aftermath of the war in August 2008 for the new wave of IDPs from South Ossetia. In order to allow for a comparative perspective, a representative sample of pupils in local schools in the same districts as the IDP schools were also surveyed. While the survey is statistically representative of the Abkhaz public schools, this is not intended to be the case for IDP children displaced from South Ossetia.

#### **Sampling**

The first stage of the two-stage sampling design was the selection of local schools, which served as primary sampling units. A list of public schools in Georgia - provided by the MoES - was used for the initial sampling frame. The list included school addresses, as well as enrollment information by schools and grades within schools. For the purposes of comparison with the Abkhaz public schools, 20 local schools in the same districts were selected: 5 in each target district. The probability proportional to size (PPS) method was used for sampling the schools within districts.

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10. One school was not included because of its remote location. Given the project's time limitations, it became impractical to include this particular school in the study.

For the second stage, a random sample of addresses of pupils from the same three grades (6, 8 and 12) was selected using information provided by the sampled schools. An estimated response rate of 70 percent was allowed for. In the Imereti region, each home address was visited in order to interview both a parent and a child. In the other regions, where the research team was unable to obtain the address lists, a random walk method was applied to select households within each target districts, using sampled schools as the starting points.

In total, 978 interviews were conducted with parents and 992 interviews with students. Only 10 students and 22 parents refused to participate.<sup>11</sup> This fieldwork took place during February 2010. The proportions for planned and achieved samples, together with respective sampling errors, are shown in Table 2.

**Table 2** *Achieved sample, population and sampling errors (SE)*

Students

	6th grade			8th grade			12th grade			6,8,12th grade		
	Sample	Population	SE	Sample	Population	SE	Sample	Population	SE	Sample	Population	SE
Tbilisi	42	12,553	> 10	49	13,162	> 10	46	14,190	> 10	137	39,905	6.93
Kutaisi	46	2,130	> 10	50	2,394	> 10	54	2,742	> 10	150	7,266	7
Samegrelo	52	4,267	> 10	50	4,614	> 10	44	4,898	> 10	146	13,779	11.77
Gori	27	1,721	> 10	34	1,850	> 10	39	2,055	> 10	100	5,626	9.71
<b>Total</b>	<b>167</b>	<b>20,671</b>	<b>7.72</b>	<b>183</b>	<b>22,020</b>	<b>6.8</b>	<b>183</b>	<b>23,885</b>	<b>6.75</b>	<b>884</b>	<b>6,6576</b>	<b>3.27</b>

Parents

	6th grade			8th grade			12th grade			6,8,12th grade		
	Sample	Population	SE	Sample	Population	SE	Sample	Population	SE	Sample	Population	SE
Tbilisi	111	12,553	>10	125	13,162	>10	124	14,190	>10	360	39,905	7.06
Kutaisi	21	2,130	>10	23	2,394	>10	33	2,742	>10	77	7,266	6.93
Samegrelo	25	4,267	>10	23	4,614	>10	18	4,898	>10	66	13,779	12.03
Gori	20	1,721	>10	23	1,850	>10	32	2,055	>10	75	5,626	9.71
	177	20,671	7.64	194	22,020	7.14	207	23,885	6.82	884	66,576	3.27

## Instruments

Structured questionnaires were elaborated separately for parents and children (see Annex 3). But the same questionnaire was used for IDP and non-IDP children, and also for the parents. Questionnaires were concise, with short questions phrased in a manner which was easy to understand. Given the potential vulnerability of the target population (war-affected IDPs and children), sensitive issues such as the conflict, their experiences of displacement and tense relations with local population, were addressed delicately.

The questionnaire for children comprised 62 questions, grouped under 8 themes: school attendance; academic performance; everyday activities; household economy; conditions at home; relations with parents; friends and social activity; and future plans. The questionnaire for parents was made up of 58 questions, grouped under 5 themes: general information about the student; school-related issues; parental school visits; conditions at home; and demographic information. The parents and students questionnaires included some cross-cutting questions in order to provide complementary information and to allow for verification of responses.

11. The main reason was apparently that at the earlier stage of the project the principals of several schools warned parents and students not to take part in the study, because the school did not have the official approval from the MoES to participate.

## Piloting

The research instruments were tested and finalized by conducting a pilot. As a result of this process and based upon the reactions of respondents, questions were rephrased, streamlined and modified for relevance. In all, 20 interviews (10 with children and 10 with parents) were conducted for the piloting, and minor changes were made to the instruments before full-blown fieldwork commenced.

## Fieldwork

The quantitative fieldwork was conducted by 40 interviewers, working across the four regions of Georgia included in the study. The interviewers were trained in advance about the research project, how to implement the instrument, and in reporting back to their supervisors. Interviews were conducted at the homes of respondents and, on average, lasted about 35 minutes. The child and his/her primary caregiver were interviewed in each household. The majority of households agreed to be interviewed and actively participated in the process.

## Data entry, cleaning & analysis

The data was checked for both random and systematic errors, and weighted using proportions of students of selected grades from the respective districts. For the data analysis, SPSS software for Windows was employed.

## Qualitative Component

The qualitative component of the study was implemented in two phases. Altogether, some 200 individuals participated in the qualitative component. The first phase, conducted between 25 December 2009 and 20 January 2010, preceded the quantitative component and comprised 14 focus groups in four locations: Tbilisi, Kutaisi, Gori and Tserovani. The target groups for the first cycle of focus groups were:

- IDP pupils (8<sup>th</sup> grade)
- IDP pupils (12<sup>th</sup> grade)
- Non-IDP pupils (8<sup>th</sup> grade)
- IDP parents
- Non-IDP parents

The aim of the first cycle of focus groups was to reveal attitudes of target groups towards school-related issues, academic achievement, friendship and social activities; and future plans. On average, 9.6 participants attended each of these 14 focus groups, and all were attended by between 8 and 10 participants. Out of 75 participants in the 8 focus groups with children, 32 were boys. In some groups boys were in the majority, although usually not. Both sexes were represented in each focus group with children. In the case of the focus groups with parents, the vast majority were female, and sometimes entirely so. Table 3 shows the composition of groups according to location.

*Table 3. Composition of focus groups with children and parents, by region*

	Tbilisi	Kutaisi	Gori	Tserovani
IDP students (8 <sup>th</sup> grade)				
IDP students (12 <sup>th</sup> grade)				
Non-IDP students (8 <sup>th</sup> grade)				
IDP parents				
Non-IDP parents				

In addition, the following criteria were used for recruiting participants for the focus groups:

- Only IDPs from Abkhazia participated in the focus groups held in Tbilisi and Kutaisi.
- The focus groups conducted in Tbilisi and Kutaisi were held separately with pupils from Abkhaz public schools and pupils from local schools. Similarly, separate focus groups were held in these locations with IDP parents and non-IDP parents.
- Only IDPs (one for children and one for parents) from South Ossetia participated in the focus groups held in Tserovani. Only pupils from the Tserovani school participated in the focus group with children.
- The two focus groups held in Gori were conducted with non-IDP children and non-IDP parents only, for the purposes of comparing these findings with the IDPs in nearby Tserovani.
- For the focus group with non-IDP pupils and parents, only those with IDP neighbours were selected.
- For all parents' focus groups, only parents of children in grades 4, 8, or 12 were selected.

In conducting the focus groups with parents and teachers, participants were selected from the following numbers of schools:

- Tbilisi: 34 local schools; 3 Abkhaz schools
- Kutaisi: 22 local schools; 2 Abkhaz schools
- Gori: 11 local schools
- Tserovani: 1 IDP school

The second phase of the qualitative fieldwork component involved focus groups and in-depth interviews with teachers in schools for IDPs (who were IDPs themselves) and (non-IDP) teachers in local schools. Conducted between 25 February and 5 March 2010, 2 focus groups and 12 in-depth interviews were held in five locations: Tbilisi, Kutaisi, Gori, Tserovani and Zugdidi. There were five participants at each of the focus groups. Table 4 indicates which tools were used with which target groups, by location.

**Table 4. Composition of focus groups and in-depth interviews with teachers, by region**

	Tbilisi	Kutaisi	Gori	Tserovani	Zugdidi
Focus groups with teachers of Abkhaz public schools					
Focus groups with teachers of local schools					
In-depth interviews with teachers in Abkhaz public schools					
In-depth interviews with IDP teachers in Abkhaz public/Tserovani schools					
In-depth interviews with non-IDP teachers in local schools					
In-depth interviews with teachers in local schools					

In addition, the following criteria were used for recruiting participants for the focus groups and in-depth interviews:

- Minimum of 15 hours per week working at school.
- Teachers from a range of subjects.
- Teachers working at various stages of the education system.
- Non-IDP teachers from local schools who also teach, or had taught, IDP children.
- Some teachers with experience in private tutoring.



## ***Limitations of Study***

There was a lot of sensitivity about discussing Abkhaz public schools from within MoES and the MES-AAR. Of particular concern to many was the future security of teachers' jobs in Abkhaz public schools, and even the continued existence of the MES-AAR.

There were considerable time constraints on the implementation of this research project, which were exacerbated by delays in the project timetable. These delays were to a large extent a result of staff changes and organizational restructuring at the MoES during the last days of 2008. This meant that the working relationships, agreed mechanisms to implement the project, and institutional knowledge at the MoES about the project had to be established anew and agreed upon. The two members of the project Steering Committee from the MoES both ceased to work for the Ministry after this restructuring process.

There is a scarcity of empirical (quantitative and qualitative) research and statistics available in relation to the education of IDP children in Georgia. While some data exists about children in Abkhaz public schools, even many basic indicators concerning IDP children in local schools are not available. While individual local schools may be aware of the numbers of IDPs enrolled in their schools, these figures are not correlated nationally and publicly available. Neither is data available with regard to enrolment of IDPs by age and gender, grade progress or teacher student ratios in local schools. Figures for school drop-out rates – segregated by IDP/non-IDP - are also unavailable.

There is no gender analysis in this study: it makes no attempt to differentiate between females and males in terms of academic performance or social integration. This was simply due to the limitations of time and resources, and is regrettable. There are clearly differences between the two groups, as was sometimes apparent during the research process. This is an issue worthy of further investigation.

# Main Research Findings

## Abkhaz public schools

### Academic Performance

While the research team conducted primary research to evaluate perceptions among children, and their parents, about their academic performance – this data is highly subjective. In order to be able to objectively and independently assess academic performance comparatively, we presenting data provided by the NAEC. The following two sections outline the comparative academic performance of pupils in Abkhaz public schools using data collected in international surveys (collected by PIRLS and TIMSS) and national entrance examinations (collected by the NAEC).

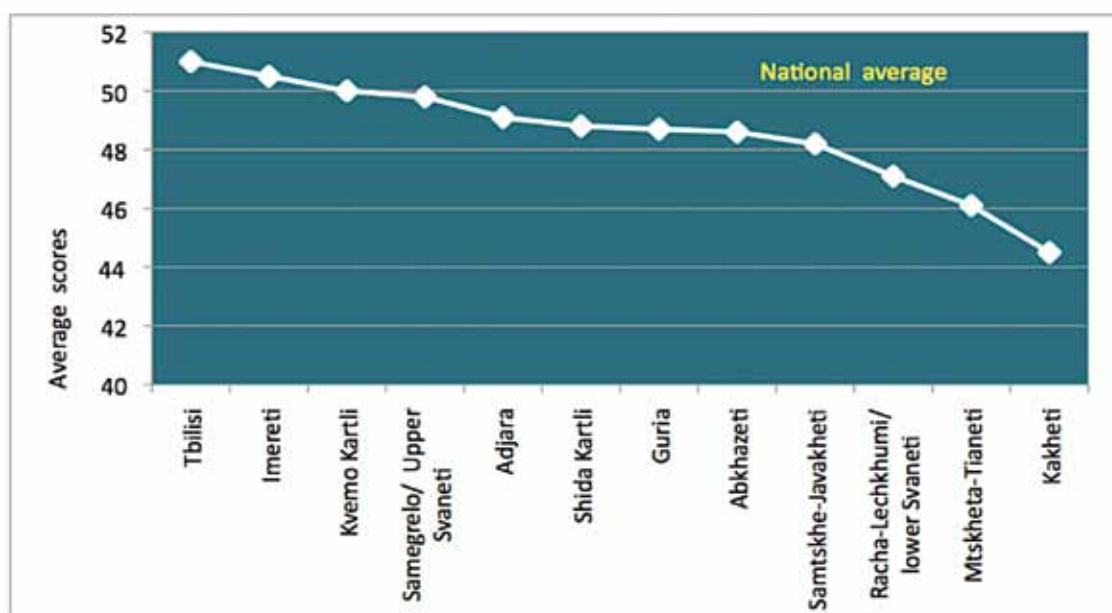
### International Surveys

#### Performance of Abkhaz public schools in PIRLS

The PIRLS achievement scale summarizes fourth-grade students’ performance in reading a variety of literary and informational texts. A student’s achievement is based upon their responses to test questions designed to assess a range of comprehension processes (such as retrieval, inference, integration and evaluation). PIRLS uses four points on a scale as international benchmarks of achievement: advanced (625), high (550), intermediate (475) and low (400).

In 2006, Georgian students achieved a score of 471 in PIRLS, which was lower than the international average of 500. In terms of the scale of PIRLS international benchmarks in 2006, only 1 percent of students in Georgia achieved the advanced level and 15 percent achieved the high benchmark. Half of Georgian 4<sup>th</sup> grade students passed the intermediate benchmark, and 82 percent reached at least the low benchmark. Some 18 percent of students did not score at all on international achievement scale. Compared to the national average, Abkhaz public schools in Georgia performed even less well. Students from Abkhaz public school did not feature in the advanced or high benchmarks at all, none of them achieving above the international scale average. The table below shows distribution of students by regions on PIRLS international scale.

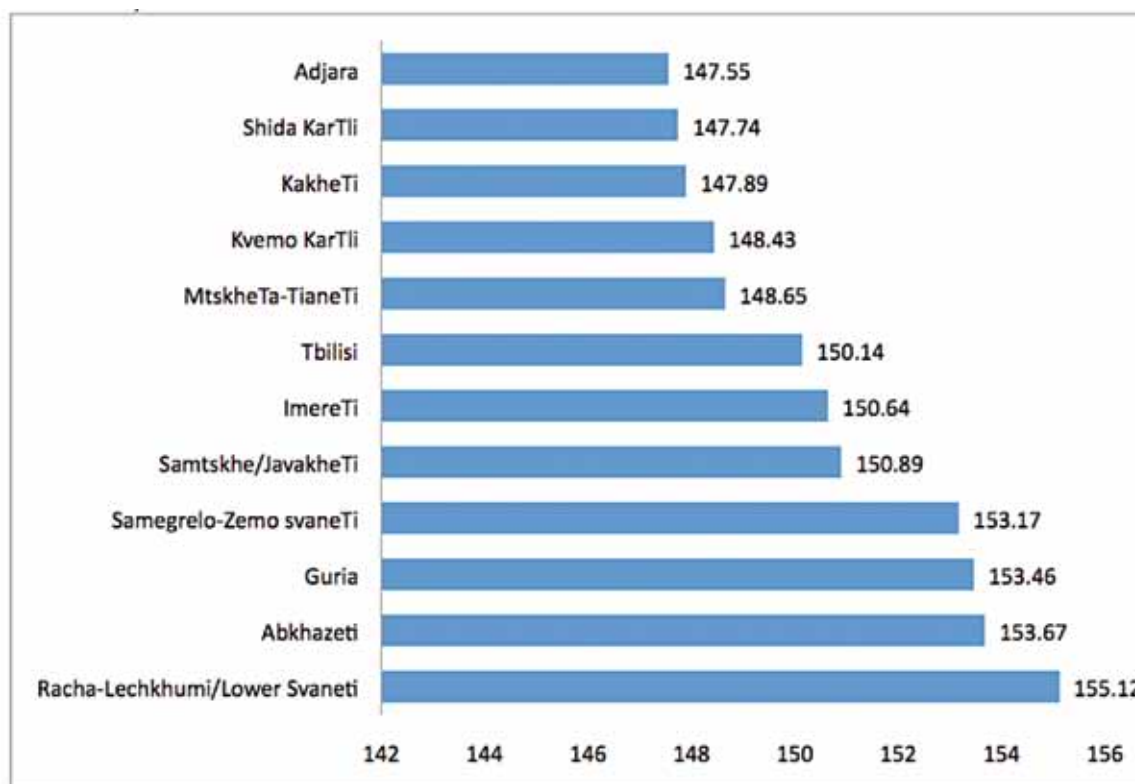
Table 5. Results of Georgian students in PIRLS (by regions)



### Performance of Abkhaz public schools in TIMSS

TIMSS uses a similar achievement scale as PIRLS, but to assess trends in mathematics and science. Compared with other participating countries, Georgia fared less well in TIMSS than in PIRLS. The average score for Georgia was 410, which was significantly lower than the international average of 500. Only 1 percent of 4<sup>th</sup> grade students in Georgia achieved the advanced benchmark, and 10 percent achieved the high benchmark. Some 44 percent of students did not feature on the benchmark scale at all. However, compared with the national average, students from the Abkhaz public schools in Georgia scored better in the TIMSS/Mathematics component than they did in PIRLS. The standardized score for Abkhaz public school students in this component was higher than the national average in Georgia, and better than the scores of all other regions in the country, except Racha (see Table 6).

*Table 6. Standardized average scores of students in TIMSS (2007) by regions of Georgia (average score: 150; standard deviation: 50)*



Source: NAEC, Georgia

No students in the 4<sup>th</sup> grade in Abkhaz public schools achieved results in the advanced benchmark group. However, Abkhaz public schools performed well in the high benchmark group: 11 percent of students from Abkhaz public schools achieved this level, thereby performing better than 7 out of the 12 regions of Georgia (see Table 7). The Abkhaz public schools also had the lowest percentage of students (11 percent) with results below the scale, compared with the other regions of Georgia (for some regions of the country this was as high as almost 44 percent).

**Table 7. Cumulative percent of Georgian students (Grade 4) performance in TIMSS (2007), by region**

Regions/ 4 <sup>th</sup> grade	Advanced benchmark (625)	High benchmark (550)	Average Benchmark (475)	Low Benchmark (400)	Below the scale
Kvemo Kartli	1.1%	6.1%	27.2%	59.8%	40.2%
Adjara	0%	3.6%	26.3%	56.2%	43.8%
Abkhazia	0%	11.1%	44.4%	88.8%	11.2%
Guria	1.0%	24.8%	52.5%	75.3%	24.7%
Imereti	1.4%	10.9%	36.8%	66.5%	33.5%
Kakheti	1.0%	7.2%	29.5%	62.1%	37.9%
Mtskheta- Tianeti	0%	1.4%	28.2%	64.8%	35.2%
Racha-Lechkhumi/Lower Svaneti	0%	18.2%	72.7%	81.8%	18.2%
Samtskhe/Javakheti	3.4%	18.3%	37.8%	71.1%	28.9%
Shida Kartli	0.4%	4.3%	24.8%	60.2%	39.2%
Tbilisi	0.3%	8.3%	35.6%	72.3%	27.7%
Samegrelo/Upper Svaneti	2.0%	17.5%	44.8%	79.1%	20.9%

Source: NAEC, Georgia

Georgian students from the 8<sup>th</sup> grade showed a greater variation in their TIMSS results scores than those in the 4<sup>th</sup> grade (see Table 8). Among these students, Abkhaz public schools were represented in the advanced benchmark group together with two other regions of Georgia. Abkhaz public schools were also among the best achievers in the high benchmark group, along with four other regions of Georgia: 10 percent of students from Abkhaz public schools achieved this level. However, the percentage of 8<sup>th</sup> grade students with results below the scale was among the highest in Abkhaz public schools (53 percent).

**Table 8. Cumulative percent of Georgian students (Grade 8) performance in TIMSS (2007), by region**

Regions/8 <sup>th</sup> grade	Advanced benchmark	High benchmark	Average Benchmark	Low Benchmark	Below the scale
Kvemo Kartli	1.7%	5.8%	16.5%	42.9%	57.1%
Adjara	0%	1.4%	11.5%	41.1%	58.9%
Abkhazia	3.3%	10.0%	30.0%	46.7%	53.3%
Guria	1.1%	9.9%	26.4%	56.1%	43.9%
Imereti	0.3%	4.8%	25.9%	53.3%	46.7%
Kakheti	0.3%	5.0%	26.3%	59.5%	40.5%
Mtskheta-Tianeti	0%	1.3%	18.4%	55.2%	44.8%
Racha-Lechkhumi/Lower Svaneti	0%	25.0%	100.0%	100.0%	0%
Samtskhe-Javakheti	0%	3.4%	22.0%	66.1%	33.9%
Shida Kartli	0.4%	4.9%	24.3%	59.7%	40.3%
Tbilisi	0.6%	7.6%	30.5%	63.0%	37.0%
Samegrelo – Upper Svaneti	0.3%	14.5%	37.1%	66.2%	33.8%

Source: NAEC, Georgia

## National HE Entrance Examinations

In 2005, a system of national entrance examinations (NEE) for entry into HE institutions was introduced in Georgia. Standardized tests are now used across a range of subjects. In order to be admitted into HE, students must pass a threshold level in their test scores. The process is administered by the National Assessment and Examination Centre (NAEC), which was established in 2004, under the governance of MoES. State grants to HE students are awarded according to their scores in the generic skills test. The number of students receiving state grants doubled in 2006 compared with the previous year, due to the adoption of a sliding scale system rather than a fully-funded state grant system. In addition, social grants are awarded to students from mountainous areas, conflict regions, ethnic minority groups, families of people killed in wars, and internally displaced families.

Tables 9 and 10 show the overall results of students in Georgia, as well as results of students from Abkhaz public schools, in the NEE for the years 2006 to 2009. The tables indicate the number and percentage of students achieving the required threshold level, as well as how many were awarded state grants (figures on social grant awards are not included).

As the tables show, the students from Abkhaz public schools were less successful than the national average. The difference in admission rates between the Abkhaz public schools and the rest of the country was most evident in 2006 and 2007. The percentage of students from Abkhaz public schools that were awarded state grants was low compared with national trends, dropping sharply in 2008. This was due to their poorer performance in NEE.

**Table 9. National Entrance Examinations results, 2006-2009 (Georgia)**

Year	Registered students	Admitted	Students with grants	Admitted %	Grants %
2006	32,789	19,479	8,273	59.4%	42.5%
2007	39,295	19,092	8,029	48.6%	42.1%
2008	24,150	18,357	8,200	76.0%	44.7%
2009	29,026	23,285	8,427	80.2%	36.2%

Source: NAEC, Georgia

**Table 10. National Entrance Examinations results, 2006-2009 (Abkhaz public schools)**

Year	Registered students	Admitted	Students with grants	Admitted %	Grants %
2006	365	137	41	37.5%	29.9%
2007	397	117	33	29.5%	28.2%
2008	308	226	30	73.4%	13.3%
2009	380	267	57	70.3%	21.3%

Source: NAEC, Georgia

## Quantitative & Qualitative Fieldwork Findings

### School attendance & academic performance

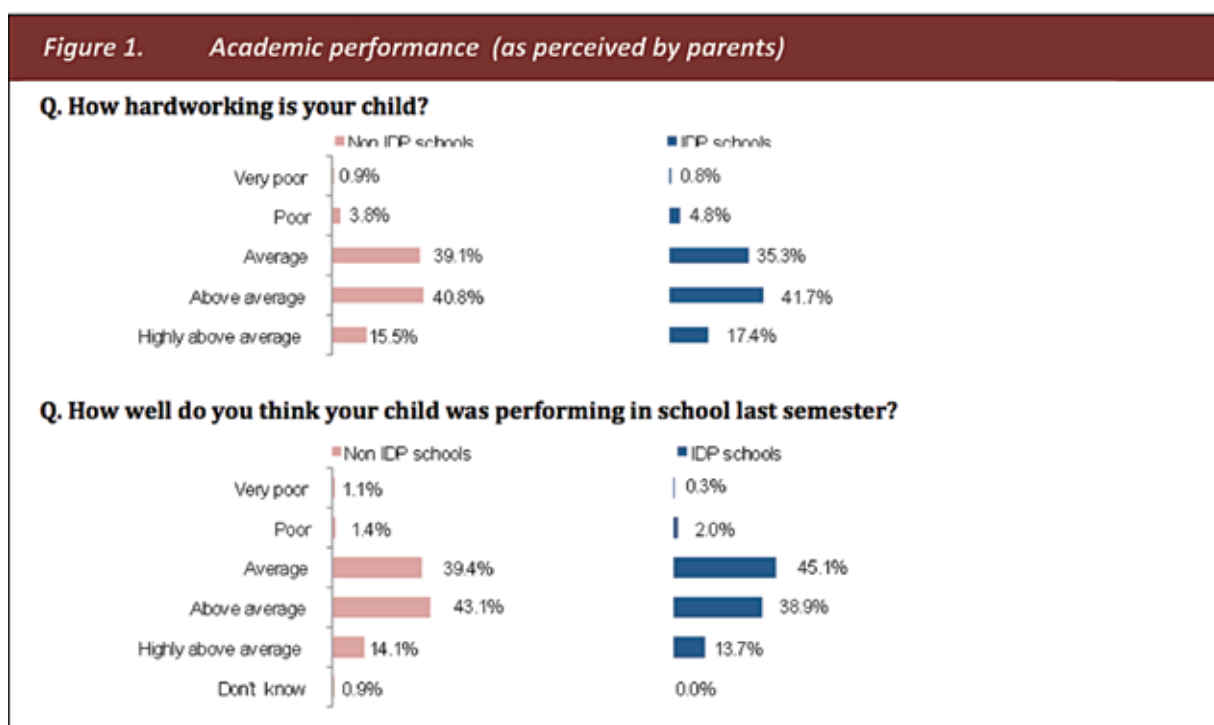
Up to 60 percent of students of Abkhaz public schools and around 70 percent of students in local schools say they missed classes in the last semester. In general, students in Abkhaz public schools miss classes less frequently, and the difference is more marked in 12th grade (see Annex 1, Fig. 8). Up to 80 percent of the students in both local and Abkhaz public schools who have missed classes during the last semester say they missed one week or less, 17 percent missed 2-3 weeks and only 3 percent missed a month.

According to the focus groups, non-attendance at school was reported to be significant among 8<sup>th</sup> graders, although non-IDP children claimed to miss class without good cause more than their IDP counterparts. Pupils in 12<sup>th</sup> grade, both IDPs and non-IDPs, said that they regularly miss school so that they can study with private tutors, or by themselves at home, in preparation for their final examinations. Some parents and children said that attendance at school was not helpful to pass important examinations, particularly for entry into HE. In some schools, teachers actively encouraged pupils preparing for examinations to study with private tutors instead of attending school – but this was by no means always the case. But non-attendance for the purpose of studying was more prevalent among non-IDPs, apparently because they could more often afford private tuition (PT). In addition, a few 12<sup>th</sup> grade children did not attend school

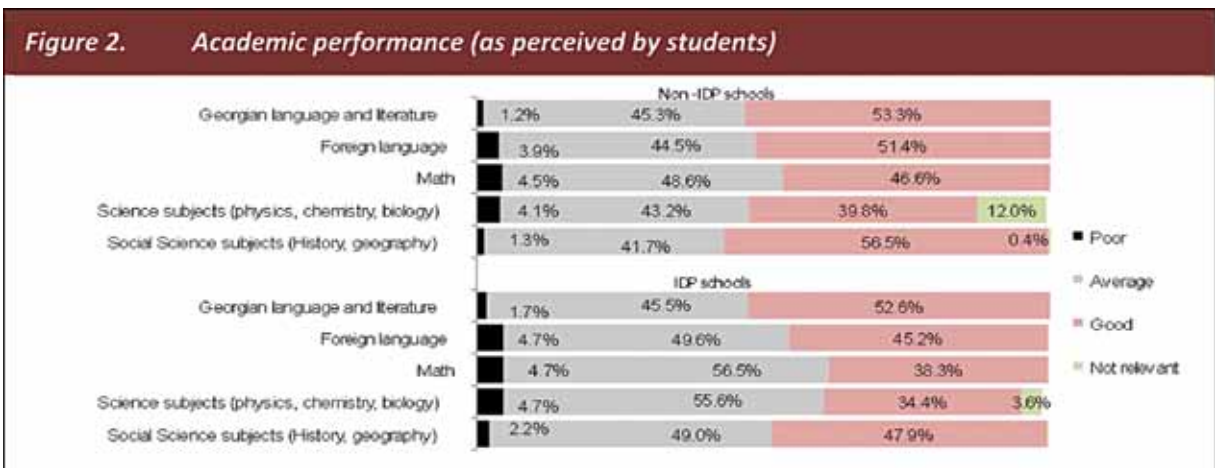
often because they were working. This was more common among children from Abkhaz public schools because of their lower household incomes. This undoubtedly affects their capacity to study. It seems clear that the higher attendance rates of children in Abkhaz public schools are due to their need to study there because they can less afford PT (particularly for older pupils). They also less often miss school to socialize (particularly in the case of younger pupils).

*IDP students come to school regularly. Most of them can't afford taking private lessons and they do their best to gain knowledge. The motivation to gain knowledge is very important. The student is the biggest expert for a teacher; if they see that they will learn something from the teacher they will attend the lessons even if they are in the 12th grade. If the student sees that you can gain something from the teacher maybe in Georgian, even in Math, when they see that the teacher stresses the details which will be included in national entrance exams tests, both IDP and non-IDP students will attend the lesson of such a teacher. (Non-IDP teacher in Tbilisi)*

According to the survey, there is no significant difference in perceptions of academic achievement of children between parents of children in local and those in Abkhaz public schools. In the opinion of the majority of parents, the academic performance of their children during the last semester was average or higher. Approximately 14 percent of students in both local and Abkhaz public schools reportedly perform well above the average. Parents of children attending local and Abkhaz public schools also do not differ in their assessment of attitudes of children towards the learning process. In the opinion of the vast majority of parents, their children are hardworking.



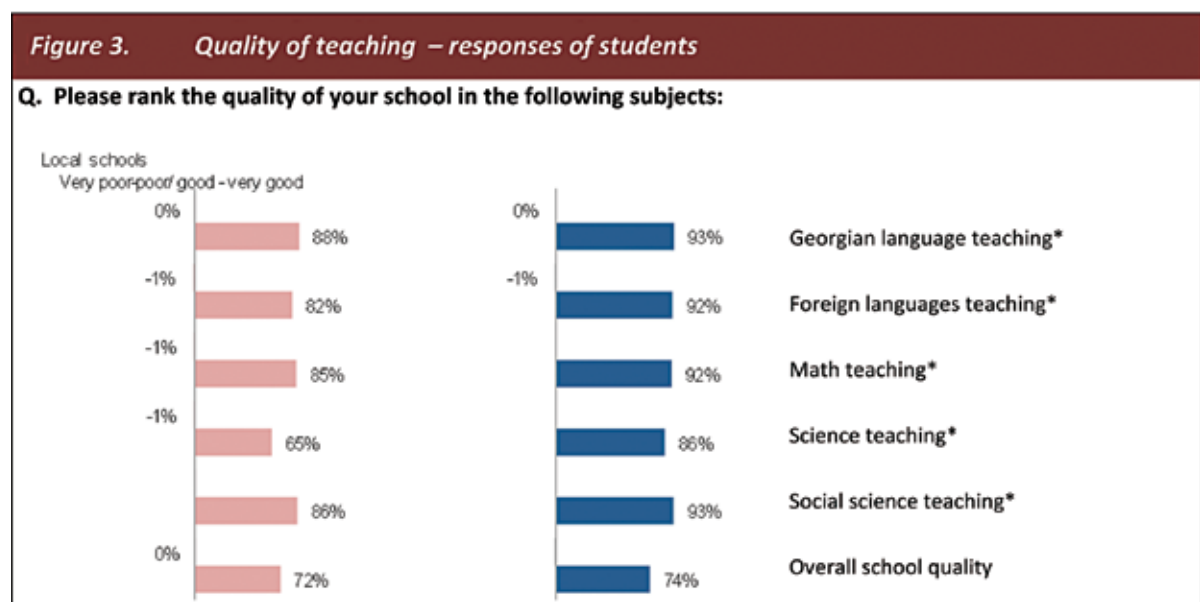
Every second student in both local and Abkhaz public schools thinks that their performance is good in Georgian language, and self-evaluations are generally high in other subjects as well. But the perceived performance of students in both local and Abkhaz public schools is slightly lower in math and science subjects. There is no significant difference between self-evaluation of achievement of students in local compared with Abkhaz public schools.



According to the focus group discussions, most pupils said that they enjoy school to some degree, although for many it was because it enabled them to be with their friends. Most seemed to find schoolwork was manageable on the whole. Many struggled with science subjects, as well as foreign languages and mathematics. Many schools were poorly equipped to teach science. Some pupils admitted to a lack of motivation generally and being lazy about schoolwork. Parents’ opinions tended to concur with these findings. Overall, the research found that majority of children in all schools were fairly positive about school and their own performance in the education process.

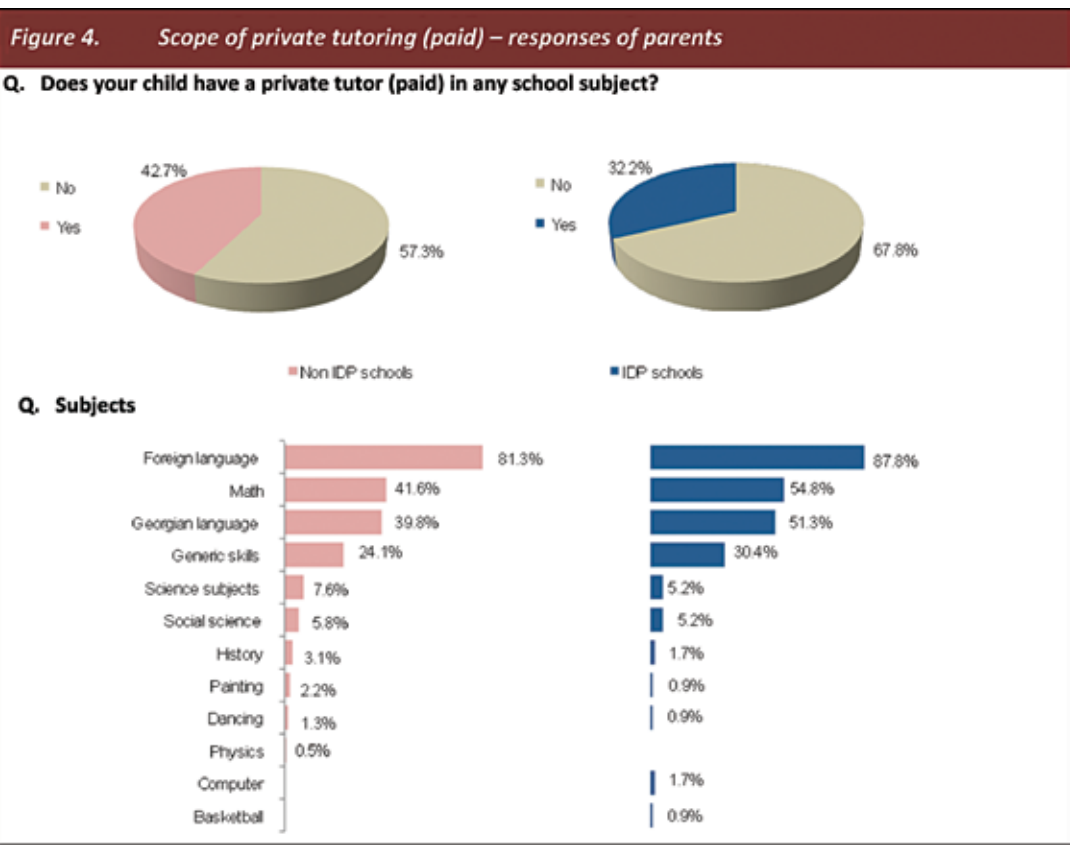
### School & private tuition

More than 70 percent of students in both local and Abkhaz public schools expressed satisfaction with the overall quality of schooling. A comparatively greater number of students in Abkhaz public schools think that the quality of teaching, in various subjects, is high at their school. The majority of children in the focus groups seemed to like some or most of their teachers, although this varied greatly from school to school. However, most parents and children felt that the tuition they received at school was inadequate to satisfy examination requirements.

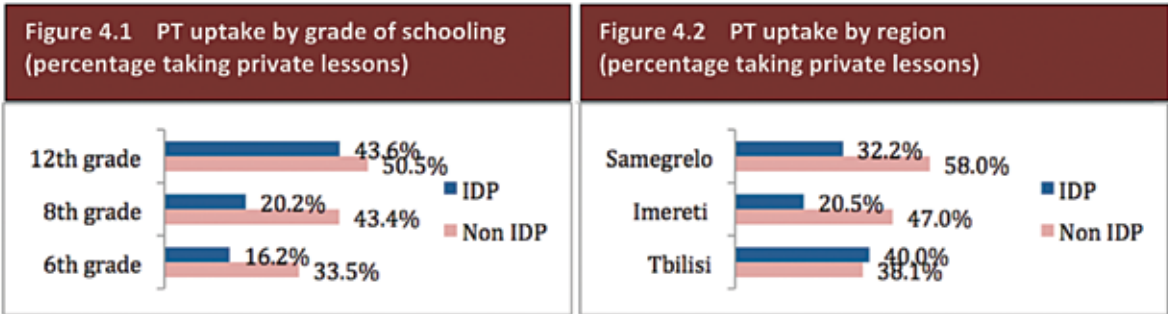


Note: An asterisk (\*) indicates statistically significant difference between local and Abkhaz public schools (on the right).

In general, PT is widespread in Georgia, both in local and Abkhaz public schools and at all levels of schooling. However, more non-IDP students have paid for private tuition (43 percent) than IDP students (32 percent). Students mostly take private lessons in foreign languages, mathematics, Georgian language and generic skills.



The PT phenomenon is most widespread at secondary level, where approximately every second student takes private lessons, both in local and Abkhaz public schools. At lower grades, the difference in scale of PT becomes more evident between local and Abkhaz public schools, especially outside Tbilisi. PT is less widespread among IDP students of primary and basic levels of schooling than among their peers in local schools. In the regions outside of Tbilisi, the difference in scale of PT in local compared with Abkhaz public school is wider than in the capital.



As for unpaid private lessons, this is more frequent in Abkhaz public schools than in local schools, and the difference is evident in Tbilisi and the Imereti region. Much of this unpaid tutoring is provided by NGOs, such the NRC through its Catch Up programme. The vast majority of children (and parents) in both types of schools felt that private tuition was necessary in order to pass examinations and to be able to progress to university, according to the focus group sessions. In the focus groups, both children and parents (IDPs and non-IDPs) said that private tutors were especially used for foreign languages and mathematics, which many felt were taught poorly in school. Some also blamed the textbooks and the curriculum, claiming that it bore little resemblance to what was required for the NEE.



*Why do they need these tutors? They should give this money to the teacher and the teacher will be their class mentor. This is what they should do: give this salary to the teacher. (Non-IDP teacher in Tbilisi)*

To conclude, the high prevalence and perceived necessity of PT was found to be virtually universal among all parents and children that participated in this study. Around half of those in local schools surveyed (and most of those participating in the focus groups) had private tutors, especially those in the higher grades at school. Both parents and children felt that success in the NEE, and therefore entry into HE, was contingent upon having PT, and often in more than one subject. Those that did not use PT services said that they would if they could afford it; others said they would like to be able to afford more. However, fewer Abkhaz parents could afford PT and the uptake among them was lower. This clearly has implications for their children's academic performance and educational success, including entry into HE.

Many parents, and some children, complained in the focus groups about the high cost of textbooks and their poor quality in terms of both content and how badly made they were. Many parents were critical of the fact that textbooks had to be changed each year. These complaints came from IDPs and non-IDPs alike. Most of the children in the Abkhaz public schools did not receive any substantial assistance in purchasing textbooks or other learning materials, with the exception of some of the children in an Abkhaz public school in Kutaisi who received some limited assistance. The quality and affordability of textbooks was a big concern to all children and parents.

Levels of discipline seemed to vary dramatically from school to school, and to some extent from teacher to teacher within a given school. In the focus groups, most parents, and a striking number of pupils, thought that there were inadequate levels of discipline in schools and that this affected education standards and pupils' ability to study properly. This seemed to be more of an issue in local schools than in the Abkhaz public schools, which tended to be more stringent about rules and behaviour. Interviews and focus groups with teachers revealed that they also believed that poor discipline was a problem and getting worse.

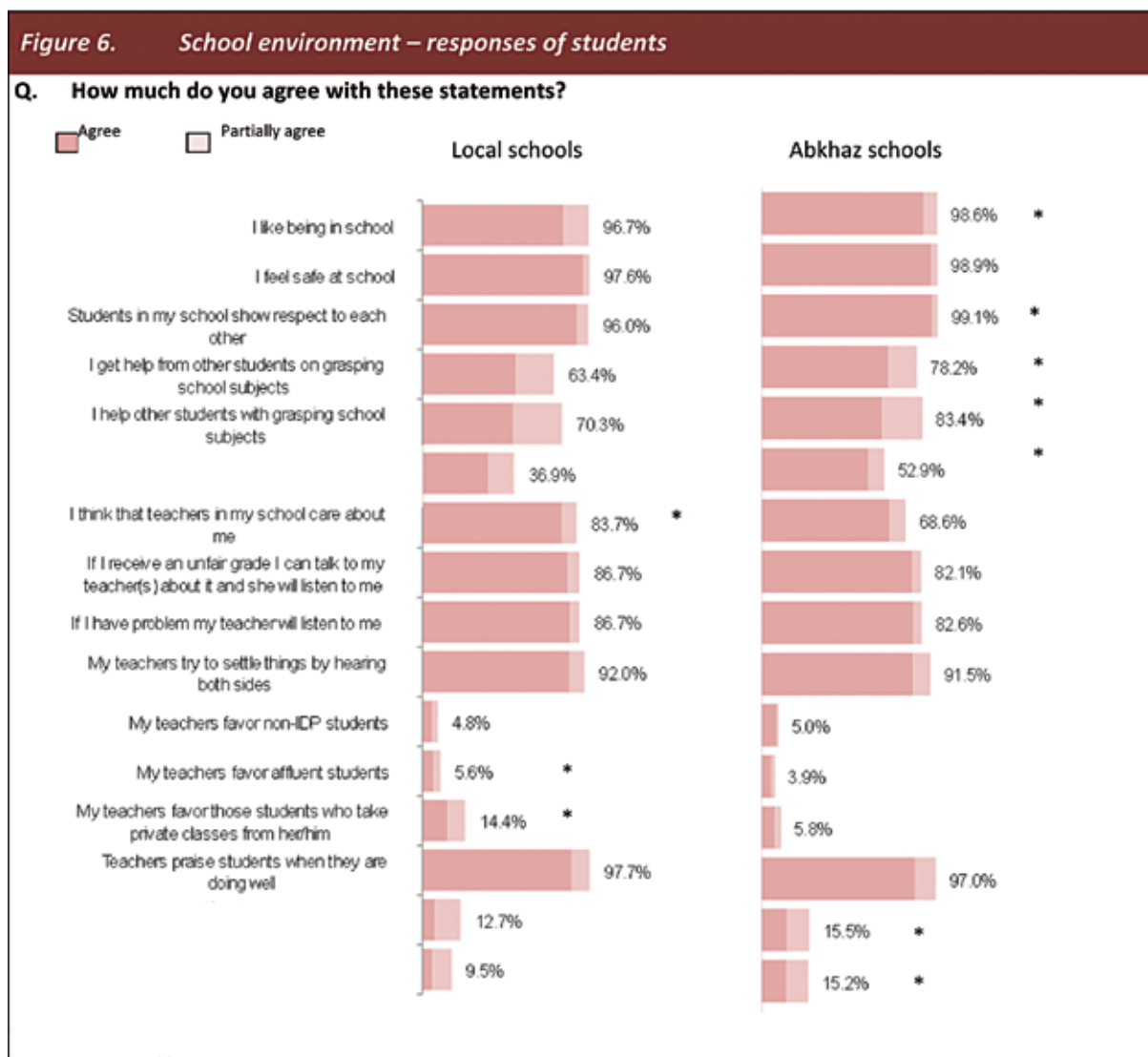
### **School environment**

Students in Abkhaz public schools were less satisfied with conditions at school (such as toilet facilities, school cafeteria, furniture and safety at school) than students in local schools, according to the survey (see Annex 1, Fig. 5) and the focus group discussions. Many pupils in Abkhaz public schools said that their school had no heating and some reported problems with the electricity and sanitation. This apparently had a negative impact upon attendance in the winter months. Some of the Abkhaz public schools were very cramped and crowded. Class sizes in some schools were very high, and had increased significantly in recent years. This worried many children and parents who felt that this had a negative impact on educational standards. But none of the children or parents said that they wanted to change schools because of this.

*The disadvantage of our school is that the space is too small. Ninety children study at our school, but used to be 200 and because of the lack of space children went to other schools. Nobody likes it when a school is on the fifth floor and IDPs live downstairs. (Levan, pupil in Abkhaz school in Kutaisi)*

The survey showed that the majority of students in both local and Abkhaz public schools like being at school and feel safe there. Students in Abkhaz public schools like being at school more than students of local schools. The results of the survey illustrate that students of Abkhaz public schools show more support to one another, provide more help to classmates in grasping school subjects, and also get more additional help from teachers than students of local schools.

Nonetheless, more students in Abkhaz public schools agree that teachers use verbal abuse and corporal punishment and do not care about students. More students of local schools argue that teachers are biased – they favor affluent students and those who take private lessons from them.



Note: An asterisk (\*) indicates statistically significant difference between local and Abkhaz schools.

Overall, children in the focus groups in Kutaisi were more positive about their teachers than those in Tbilisi, but with no discernible difference between Abkhaz and local schools. While some IDP pupils said that they had been treated badly by teachers (especially in local schools in Kutaisi), others had experienced positive discrimination (especially in Tbilisi): teachers had made a special effort to help them and make them feel welcome *because* they were IDPs. Overall, it was evident that IDP children in Tbilisi feel more integrated and accepted in their school than those in Kutaisi.

Some pupils, across all schools, felt that their teachers were too old and out-of-touch. There was reportedly sometimes conflict between pupils and teachers, but this was not usually violent. All focus groups agreed that on occasions when teachers show favouritism to certain pupils, it is usually because he/she is a relative or a family friend or because he/she privately tutors that particular pupil. While some schools did not permit teachers to provide private tuition to their own pupils, most schools apparently did not enforce such a policy. This was the cause of some resentment among children, and occasionally parents.

According to the survey, instances of theft, violence (by other pupils) and intimidation were generally at very low levels and with no discernible difference between IDPs and non-IDPs or between grades. However, pupils in Abkhaz public schools - in 6<sup>th</sup> grade specifically - experienced significantly higher levels of corporal punishment from teachers than those in local schools: the reason for this is not evident from the data collected. Among non-IDPs, less than 9 percent experienced corporal punishment by a teacher at least once during the previous semester, compared with almost 25 percent among IDP pupils. The corporal punishment usually took the form of hair/ear pulling or a slap, though it was occasionally more severe (such as punching). Clearly, children in Abkhaz schools are being physically punished more often than those in local schools. The reasons are not clear from this data, but this is an issue that may warrant further investigation.

All focus groups reported conflict between children, involving those of the same sex as well as (less often, but not infrequently) between the sexes. But this was mainly verbal abuse rather than physical violence. The use of violence was more prevalent among boys in conflict with other boys (as perhaps might be expected), and sometimes this involved the use of weapons. The causes of conflict, according to both children and parents, were not related usually to IDP status. The causes most frequently cited were competition about a girl/boy of the opposite sex, older pupils bullying younger ones, or due to particular appearance or behaviour. While most of these conflicts were nothing out of the ordinary between school children of this age, there was clearly some which were based on discrimination because the children were poor and/or Megrelian, though it was claimed not usually because they were IDPs. Undoubtedly IDPs were affected though.

While most IDP children in focus group discussions in Tbilisi thought that they were mainly treated as equals and not treated badly because of their status, this was not the case in Kutaisi. Moreover, the source of this discrimination and maltreatment in Kutaisi was not predominantly from other children but rather from schoolteachers when they were in local schools. While the confrontation with other children because of their status was not serious, many thought that other IDPs understood them much better and they felt more comfortable in their company. Most children in Abkhaz public schools in Kutaisi said that they would much rather be in these schools than in local schools, and indeed some had changed schools because of the harassment they were experiencing. Clearly, children were being stigmatized to some degree because of their IDP status.

*Kutaisians do not like IDPs. They say that these IDPs have come and made a big mess here. (Levan, pupil in Abkhaz school in Kutaisi)*

The parents' responses were strikingly similar to what the children had said, with parents in Kutaisi expressing much worse experiences - for themselves and their children - than those in Tbilisi. Parents thought that Kutaisi residents did not like IDPs and some of them had experienced aggressive discrimination from other adults in public. Some had been accused of stealing and others heard local people say 'IDPs will eat you'. Several parents said that they had moved their children out of local schools and into Abkhaz public schools because the teachers in local schools had systematically humiliated their children because they were IDPs. Nonetheless, many IDP children said that for them 'Kutaisi is home' and parents did not overtly express any desire to return to Abkhazia. Some said that the situation had improved a little since the conflict in August 2008, as people had come to realize the suffering endured by IDPs.

*I used to go to a local school, I was treated very badly, I was often bullied. Children didn't want to make friends with me. They used to call me a Refugee. My current school is different, many of my peers are IDPs. (Zako, pupil in Abkhaz public school in Tbilisi)*

The focus group discussions revealed that both IDP children and parents in Tbilisi felt that they were ‘Tbilisi children’ and that the discrimination against IDPs was diminishing as time passed and was mainly a problem of the previous generation. Most IDP children, and some non-IDPs, said that they were ‘all Georgians together’ and ‘part of one country’. Nonetheless, many IDP children said that they had been treated badly because of their IDP status at least sometimes, including those residing in Tbilisi. According to IDPs and non-IDPs alike, discrimination or victimization from other children tended to be more often directed at those that are poor, wear scruffy/unfashionable clothes or lack self-confidence. It seemed that most children thought that to look ‘cool’ was the most important way of avoiding being harassed. However, there was also anti-Megrelian discrimination, notably in Tbilisi. Children said that those perceived to be Megrelian were regarded as impoverished, badly dressed and dishonest. Although a few non-IDP children in Tbilisi local schools admitted to IDP children being ridiculed behind their backs, this was mainly because of the way they dressed (without a school uniform or in old clothes), or because they did not have a computer or a mobile phone: in other words more because of their economic status rather than their IDP status per se.

*Our parents are internally displaced people, but we were born here. People look at us as to a low social class. (Nini, pupil in Abkhaz public school in Tbilisi)*  
*People do not like us, they call us homeless, living in hotels. (Mariko, pupil in Abkhaz public school in Tbilisi)*

Although most participants in the focus groups claimed there was now less discrimination or maltreatment against children from other children because of their IDP status, some non-IDPs said that Megrelians, poor and badly dressed children, and those from rural areas were targeted. Given that a significant proportion of IDPs fall into one or more of these categories, it seems likely that many would, in fact, be subject to discrimination. As far as discrimination from adults is concerned, this was less of a problem now than before in Tbilisi, but was still a significant one in Kutaisi for children and parents alike: perhaps most worryingly, when perpetrated by schoolteachers towards pupils.

Most parents and children (connected to all schools) regarded the term ‘IDP’ in similar ways, associating the term with: suffering, sadness, oppression, loneliness, neediness, poverty, homelessness, frustration and humiliation. But parents in Tbilisi thought this was much less of a problem for their children than it had been for them. Some children resented the ‘IDP’ label, claiming that it was not fair that they were labelled IDP when they were born in Georgia proper. Both IDP children and parents claimed that they were sometimes disparagingly called ‘refugees’, which they disliked intensely and regarded as more of an insult than being called an IDP, although in some cases parents (and occasionally children) used the terms ‘IDP’ and ‘refugee’ interchangeably. In Kutaisi, some parents claimed that local residents resented the IDPs because they perceived them as being economically better off. This was not usually the case, they claimed, and after further discussion it appears that these IDP parents felt that this was a manifestation of the discrimination felt towards IDPs just because not all of them were desperately poor or some had managed to better themselves.

*I don't like when they're referred to as refugees, it's like a mark on them while they may be quite wealthy. (Eka, IDP parent in Tbilisi)*

Although many non-IDPs said that they did not feel any animosity towards those who were displaced, many IDPs themselves felt very negatively about the label. It seemed to represent nothing positive to them in their lives: neither as a legal status, as a recipient of assistance, as a way of reaffirming their identity, or in any way that brought sympathy or understanding. The widespread dissatisfaction felt by parents and children about still being referred to as an IDP

after so many years living - and in the case of most children being born - outside Abkhazia, begs the question: *when does displacement end?* Several second generation children asked: ‘Why am I an IDP? I was born here’.

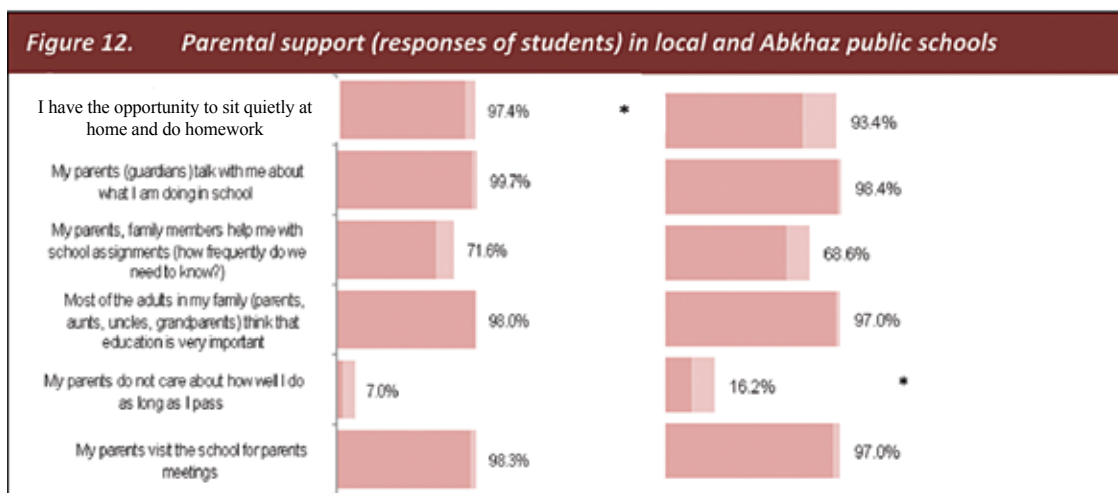
## Role of parents

The vast majority of parents from local and Abkhaz public schools (more than 95 percent) have visited the school at least once recently (see Annex 1, Fig. 9). There is no difference between local and Abkhaz public schools in this respect. Parents mostly visit schools once a month to monitor their child’s performance and/or attend parents’ meetings. Parents of IDP children mentioned parental meetings as a reason less frequently. Most of the parents of local and Abkhaz public schools have heard of school Boards of Trustees (BoTs). However, there is a difference between local and Abkhaz public schools in this respect (see Annex 1, Fig. 10). Parents of children in Abkhaz public schools are less informed about the existence of BoTs. This difference is evident in Samegrelo region and among parents of 12th graders rather than on earlier stages of schooling.

Up to 90 percent of parents of local and Abkhaz public schools state that they have not made any payments (either formal or informal) to school during the last semester (see Annex 1, Fig. 11). Those who made such payments mostly paid for repair and cleaning, heating and gifts (for teachers). Equal proportions of parents from Abkhaz/local schools paid for school uniforms, although fewer Abkhaz public school parents pay for excursions, concerts, drama and other recreational activities.

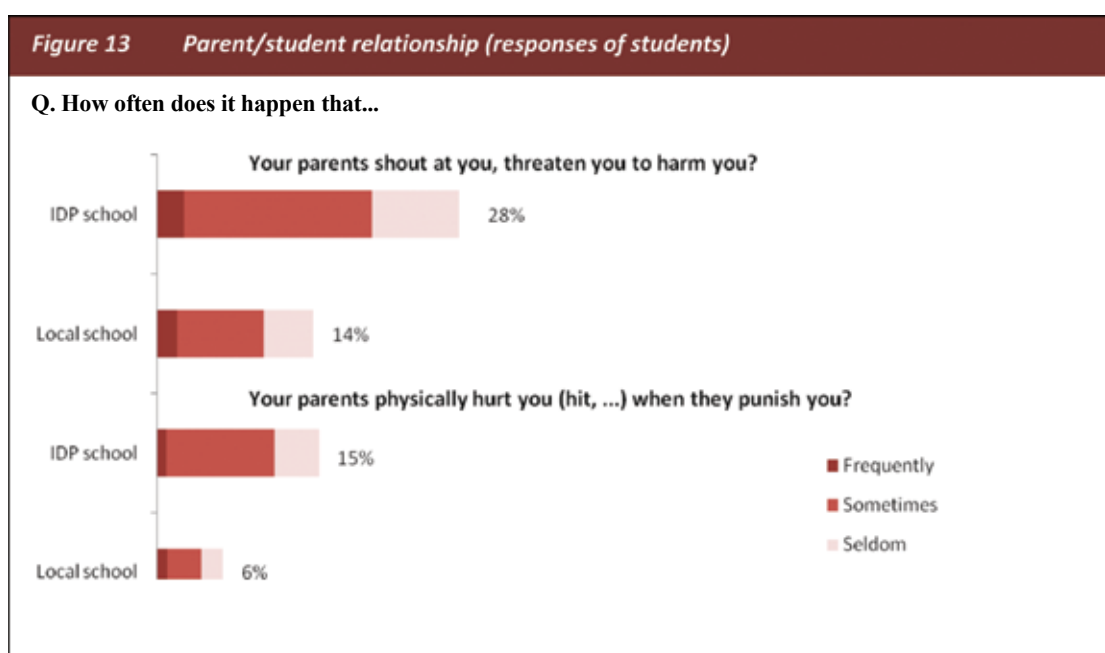
Parents of 70 percent of students provide help in school assignments. However, more IDP students think that their parents do not care about how well they do as long as they pass. Teachers often felt that parents were not interested in how well their children did in school and that many parents regarded school education as unimportant for achieving NEE success. Focus group discussions and in-depth interviews indicated that teacher morale was generally quite low.

*The tendency of the last 5 years is that the school-leaving certificate is not important any more. No matter how you graduate from school, no matter what marks you get, you will still be able to enter the university and get higher education. That’s why a student thought: why do I need to study let’s say chemistry, I don’t need it and I’m going to spend more time on English. They studied the subjects they needed for this reason. Even more, not only the students, but the parents also felt this way. I’ve heard a parent say: I don’t need my child to learn geography. What does it mean; doesn’t your child need to know geography? They are used to studying only the subjects they need and this has decreased the level of studying. (Lela, non-IDP teacher in Tbilisi)*



The majority of parents (though fewer in Abkhaz public schools) think that their children do not need help in learning school subjects. If help is needed, it is mostly provided by mothers and when a child is stuck. More IDP parents provide direct ongoing help to their children than non-IDP parents. Many parents complained of their inability to understand their children’s school work. They complained that it is complicated and that they are overloaded with work in too many subjects. It is likely that many parents struggle to assist their children; in focus group discussions many stated this, and added that they wished they had stayed in education longer and got better jobs.

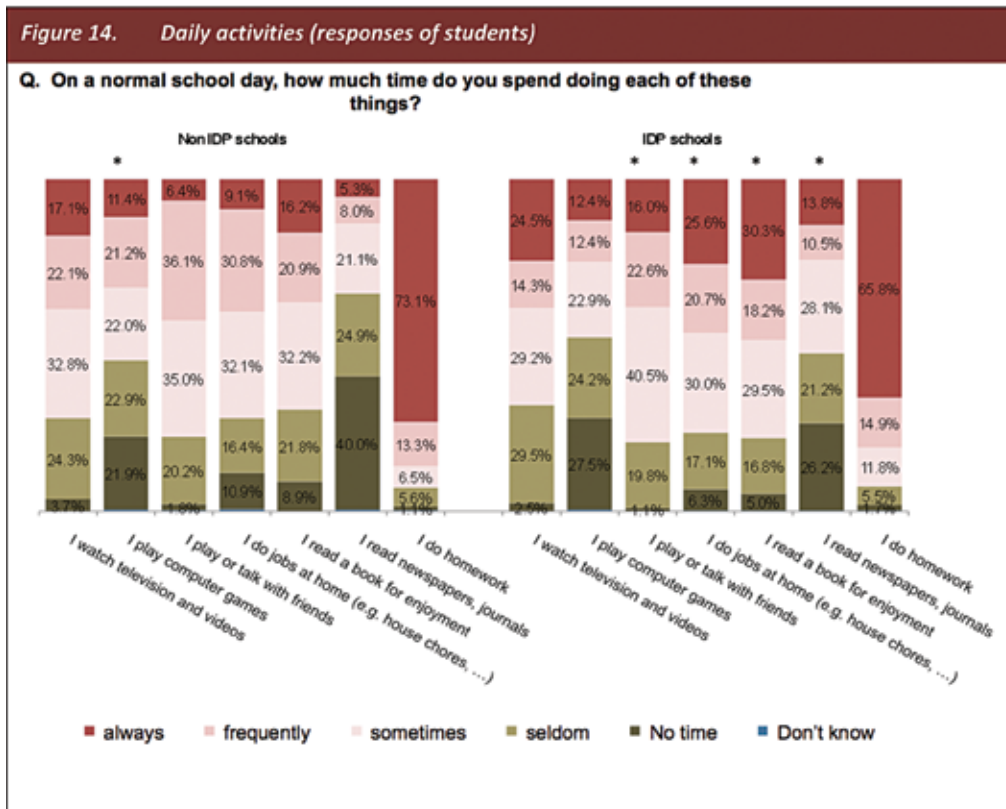
Table 13 illustrates that more IDP students claim that their parents physically hurt them or shout at them. The reasons for this are not clear from the data collected. This may be an area worthy of further research.



## Socioeconomic Conditions & Integration

### Daily & extracurricular activities

There are differences in daily activities of students of local and Abkhaz public schools. Students of Abkhaz public schools spend more time playing or talking with friends and helping parents at home. They also read more frequently. Students in local schools spend more time playing computer games than students of Abkhaz public schools. Many pupils – both IDPs and non-IDPs, but especially younger children - enjoyed extra-curricular activities such as sports, music and dance: although many pupils said they preferred spending time on the computer or watching TV. However, some children admitted that computers often distracted from their studies. Many of the 12<sup>th</sup> grade students in all schools said that they were too busy for social activities as they were preparing for examinations.



Note: An asterisk (\*) indicates statistically significant difference between local and Abkhaz public schools.

The survey indicated that about 10 percent of students were engaged in sports activities, and this figure was higher among younger students. There was only a significant difference between IDPs and non-IDPs in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade, where IDPs were more active. However, there were no significant regional discrepancies. In general across both groups, boys were substantially more involved in sport than girls. Girls were much more engaged than boys in non-sport extra-curricular activities, and IDPs were more participative than non-IDPs.

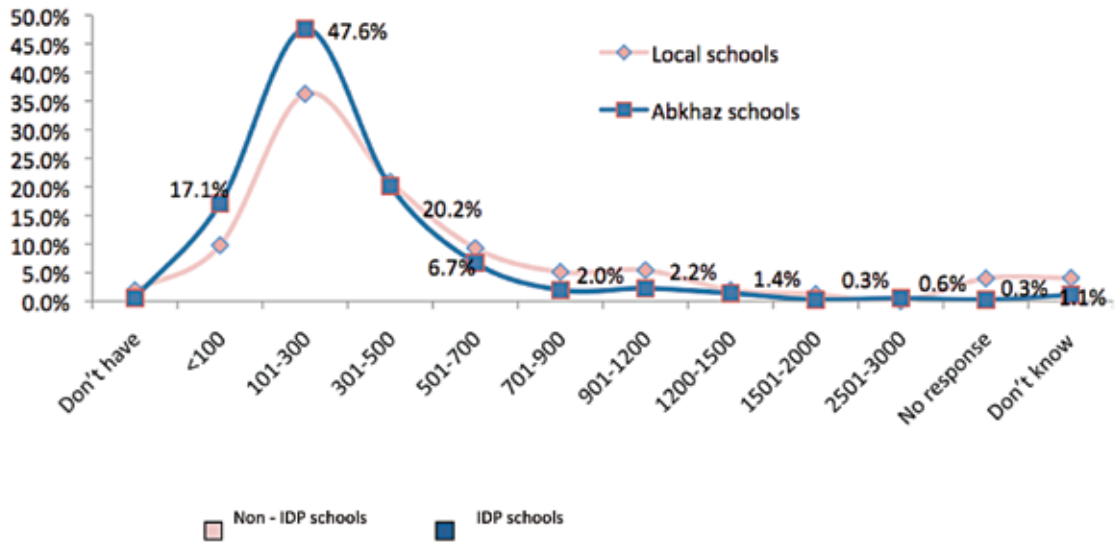
Equal numbers of students in Abkhaz and local schools (80 percent) have used computers during the past school year, but students in Abkhaz public schools use computers less frequently (see Annex 1, Fig. 7). Almost all students (95 percent) of both local and Abkhaz public schools say they have a computer at school, but the survey shows that computers are less available for IDP students at home than for local students. Fewer Abkhaz public school students have used the Internet this year. There is a difference in frequency of use of the Internet between local and Abkhaz public school students. Fewer IDP students say they have access to computers and the Internet at both school and home.

### Household economy

The average combined income of surveyed IDP households is 375 GEL, which is lower than the income of non-IDP households (474 GEL). Figure 16 illustrates monthly income of IDP/non-IDP households by income categories. Parents in the focus groups were worried about the conditions at home for their children to work and play, but said that they did their best. However, many parents from both groups admitted that they had very limited purchasing power and could not afford to finance social activities for their children as much as they would like to.

Figure 16. Household average monthly income

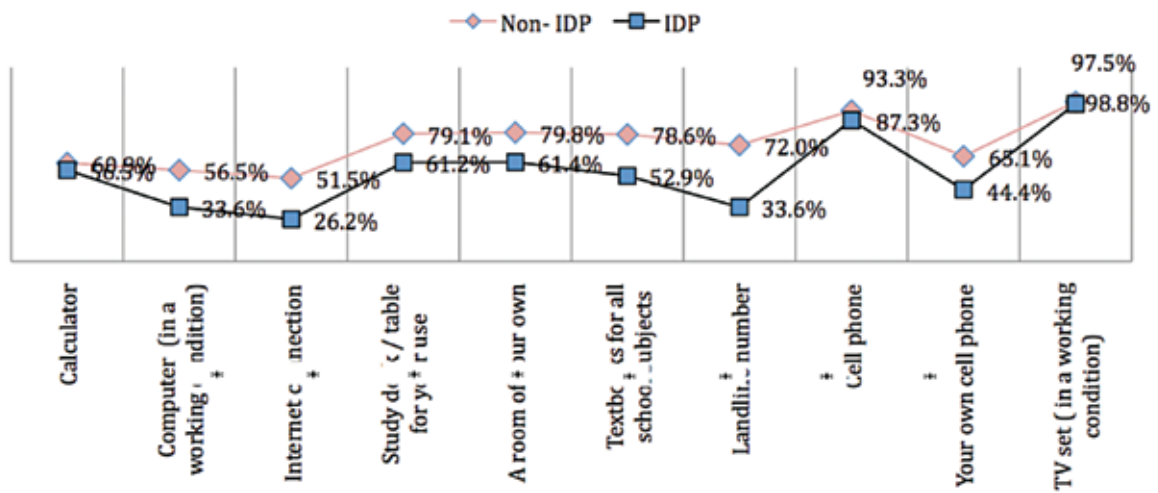
Q. How much is your household members combined average monthly income? (% of responses)



There is a difference in responses from IDP compared with non-IDP students in questions related to the ownership of personal items and luxury goods. A smaller share of students of Abkhaz public schools possess a computer, a study desk, their own room, and/or own a cell phone. There is also a significant difference in the proportion of IDP/non IDP students having access to the Internet; and fewer students from Abkhaz public schools have textbooks for all school subjects

Figure 17. Property (responses of students)

Q. Do you have any of these things at home?

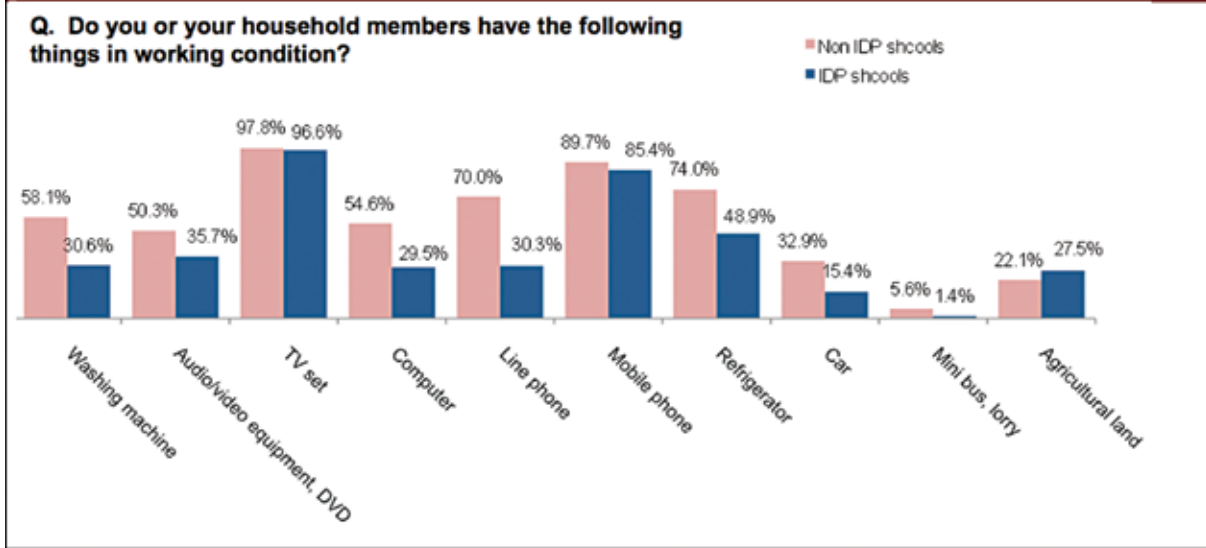


Note: An asterisk (\*) indicates statistically significant difference between local and Abkhaz public schools.

There is also a significant difference between IDP/non-IDP household in terms of ownership of land, vehicles and household appliances. In particular, fewer IDP households have washing machines, audio/video equipment, computers, landline telephones, refrigerators and cars.

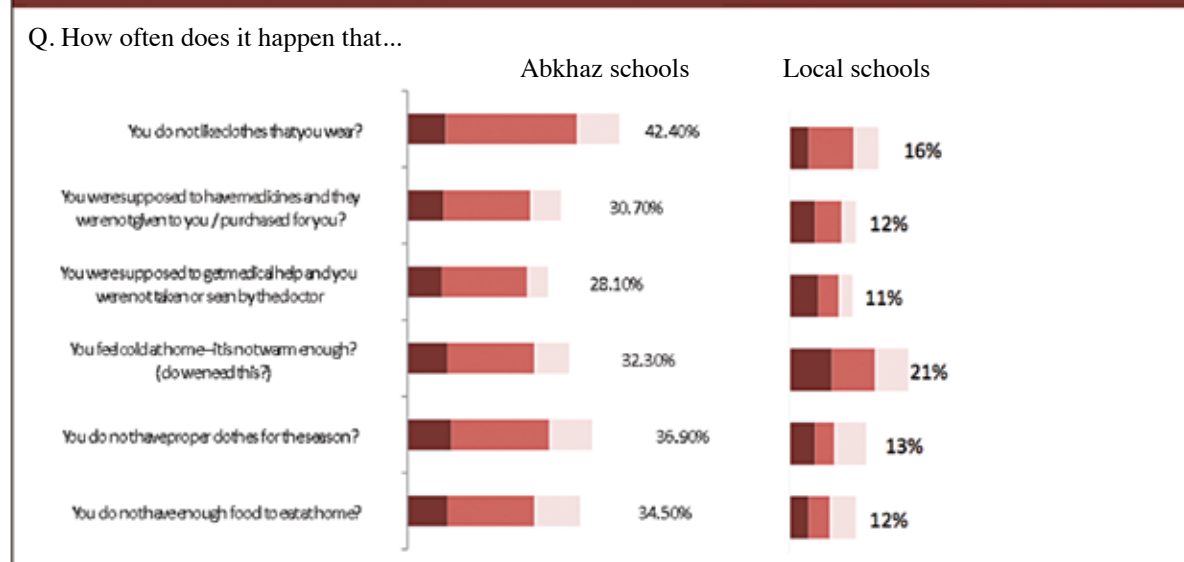


**Figure 18. Property of households (responses of parents)**



There is statistically a significant difference between the answers of students in local and Abkhaz public schools in relation to conditions at home. IDP students say more frequently that: they feel cold at home; they do not like their clothes; they do not have suitable clothing for the season; they do not have enough food at home; and are unable to get adequate relevant medical care. This was supported by the teachers. While parents expressed great concerns about this and were anxious to do their best, this was evidently an issue that frustrated them. Children did not complain about this issue so much, but teachers indicated that many IDP children could not study properly when they were living in cramped CCs. This was evidently yet another factor which potentially hindered the educational performance of children in many Abkhaz public schools.

**Figure 19. Conditions at home (responses of students)**

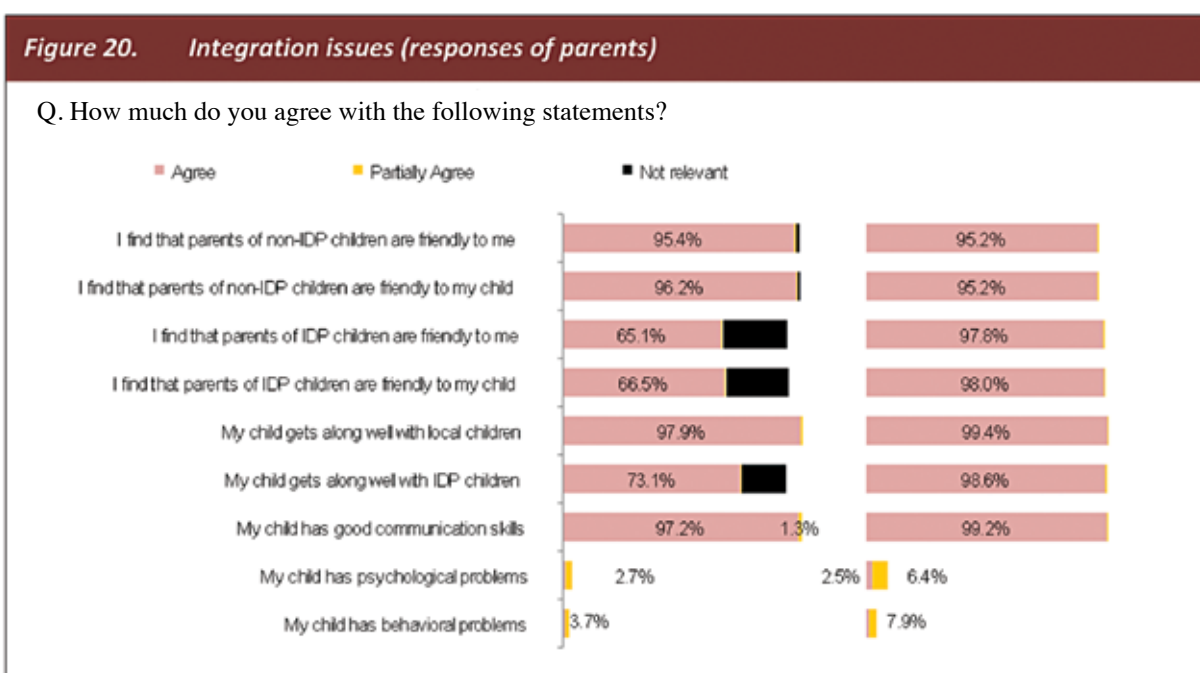


### Integration Issues

Parents in both local and Abkhaz public schools say they have good relations with both IDP and non-IDP parents. In the opinion of all parents, both groups of children get along well with each other. Children in all focus group sessions claimed to have lots of friends and were extensively engaged socially. Parents confirmed this and indicated that their children were happier and more confident than the previous generation.

*Teachers usually ask the class: Which of you are IDPs? (Marika, pupil in Abkhaz public school in Tbilisi)*

The vast majority of IDP parents think that their children have good communication skills. Slightly higher numbers of IDP parents consider that their children have psychological and/or behavioral problems. However, the total number of such respondents does not exceed 8 percent of the total number of interviewed parents from Abkhaz public schools. While this was an issue that was addressed only superficially in this study, there was some inconsistency between the survey and the focus group discussions in terms of opinions about the psychological problems of children. In one focus group, with IDP parents in Tbilisi, almost all the parents thought that there should be a full-time psychologist on school staff to help children. Some of the difficulties in getting reliable and consistent data on this issue might be related to taboos concerning discussing mental health issues.



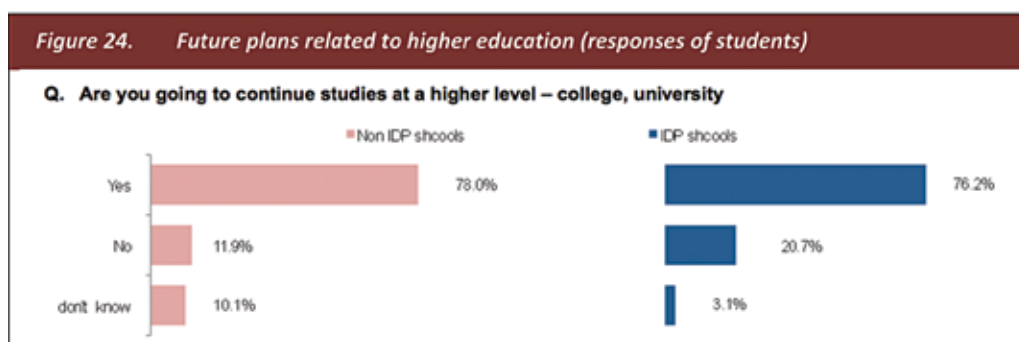
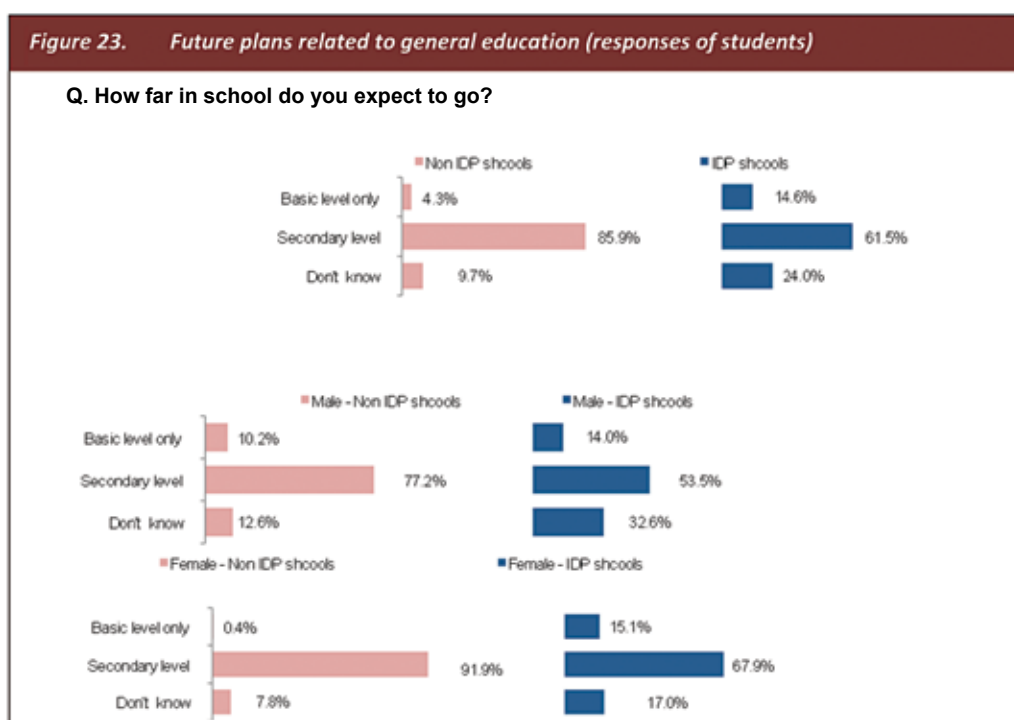
All interviewed children (with one exception in an Abkhaz public school) have close friends, and the average number of close friends was ten. There is not a significant difference in this respect among students in local and Abkhaz public schools. About 98 percent of students in local schools have IDP friends, and the proportion of IDP/non-IDP friends in the case of students in local schools is 20 percent/80 percent, whereas IDP students have equal number of IDP/non-IDP close friends (see Annex 1, Fig. 21). According to the responses of students, IDP and local students get along with each other well. Only 3 percent of local students say that they know IDP students but do not get along with them (see Annex 1, Fig. 22).

*There are equal relations and warmth. This new school is really different. My three children go to that school and it is better after we received such a humiliation. Teachers are helping children. (Maia, IDP parent in Kutaisi with child in Abkhaz public school)*

Most IDP children in the focus groups in Tbilisi and Kutaisi claimed that their friends were a mixture of IDPs and non-IDPs. This was also the case for non-IDPs, although they had proportionally fewer IDP friends. But this is to be expected, as most non-IDPs are less likely to encounter IDPs than other non-IDPs. The parents of both groups said the same. Non-IDP children in both Tbilisi and Kutaisi claimed not to discriminate against IDPs and regarded them as equals.

## Future plans

Up to 15 percent of students do not plan to continue studying into the secondary level of general education. Male students are more likely to exit school after completing basic level education. Comparatively fewer IDP students plan to continue education into upper secondary level with a view to entering HE.



During focus group discussions, most children reported ambitions to go to university and had ideas about what kind of profession they wanted to follow; or, alternatively, they saw their future career in professional sports. However, many were worried about passing the necessary examinations and raising sufficient funds to go into HE, and then about getting a job afterwards. Some IDP children said that they had tried to supplement the household income by working in their spare time, but many of them struggled to find jobs. This was particularly a problem among IDPs, who were more likely to be looking for work or in part-time employment while studying.

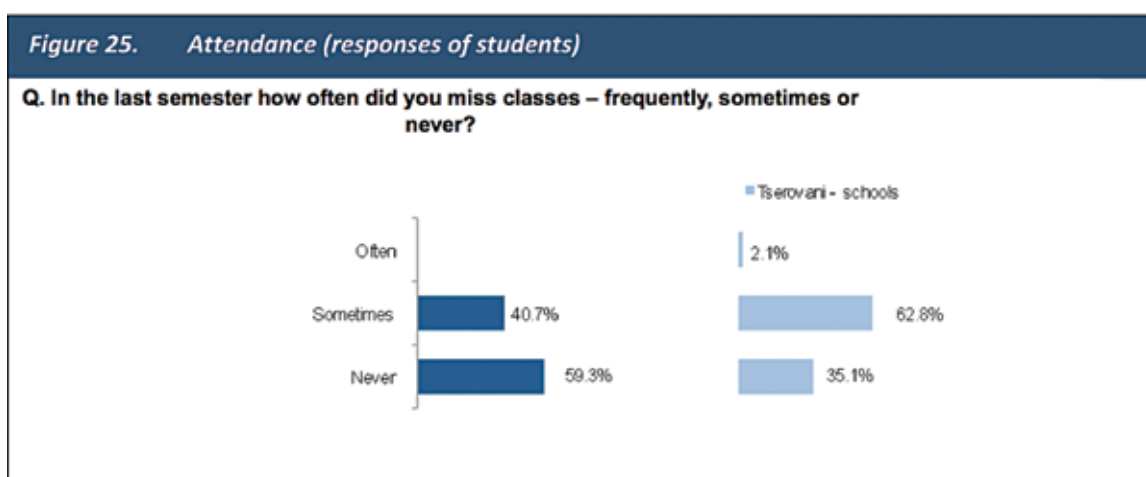
Virtually all parents expressed worries about finances and found these to be economically difficult times. Quite a few children and parents (in all school types) had ambitions to study and/or work abroad. Some thought that only a diploma from overseas would ensure success in their careers. Among the IDP children, a few hoped to visit Abkhazia in the future. Although a small number of children said that their lives would be better were they in Abkhazia, most seemed to prefer staying where they were and regarded this as home. Overall, most children from all schools, and in all age groups, were positive about the future.

## Tserovani School

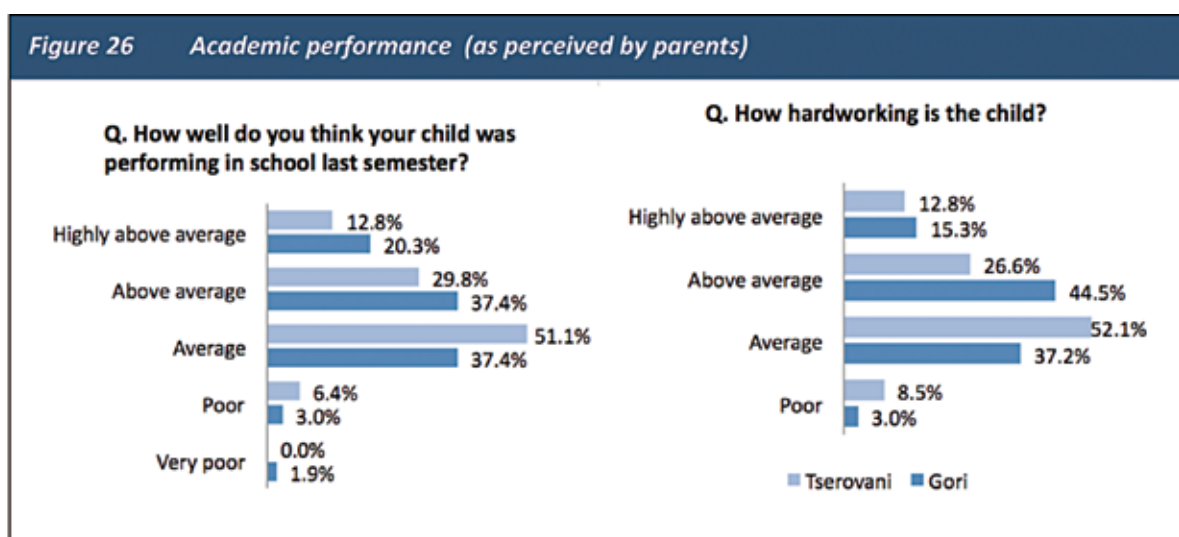
### School attendance & academic performance

Attendance is significantly higher in the Tserovani than in Gori schools. Up to 70 percent of students say they have not missed school during the last semester, while the share of students who have not missed school in Gori is 40 percent. In the focus groups, children from the Tserovani school indicated that their school was much more strict and disciplined, and this included attendance requirements. Parents agreed with this, and some even complained that some of the rules were excessive: notably, children not being allowed outside during breaks and parents being prevented to enter the school by security personnel until classes were over.

*In comparison to schools in Tbilisi, there is more strictness and serious study in Tserovani school. In Tbilisi pupils were missing lessons nearly every day. Nobody was interested where you were. There is more strictness in Tserovani and studying is better there. The teachers are more professional and demand more. (Teona, pupil in Tserovani school)*



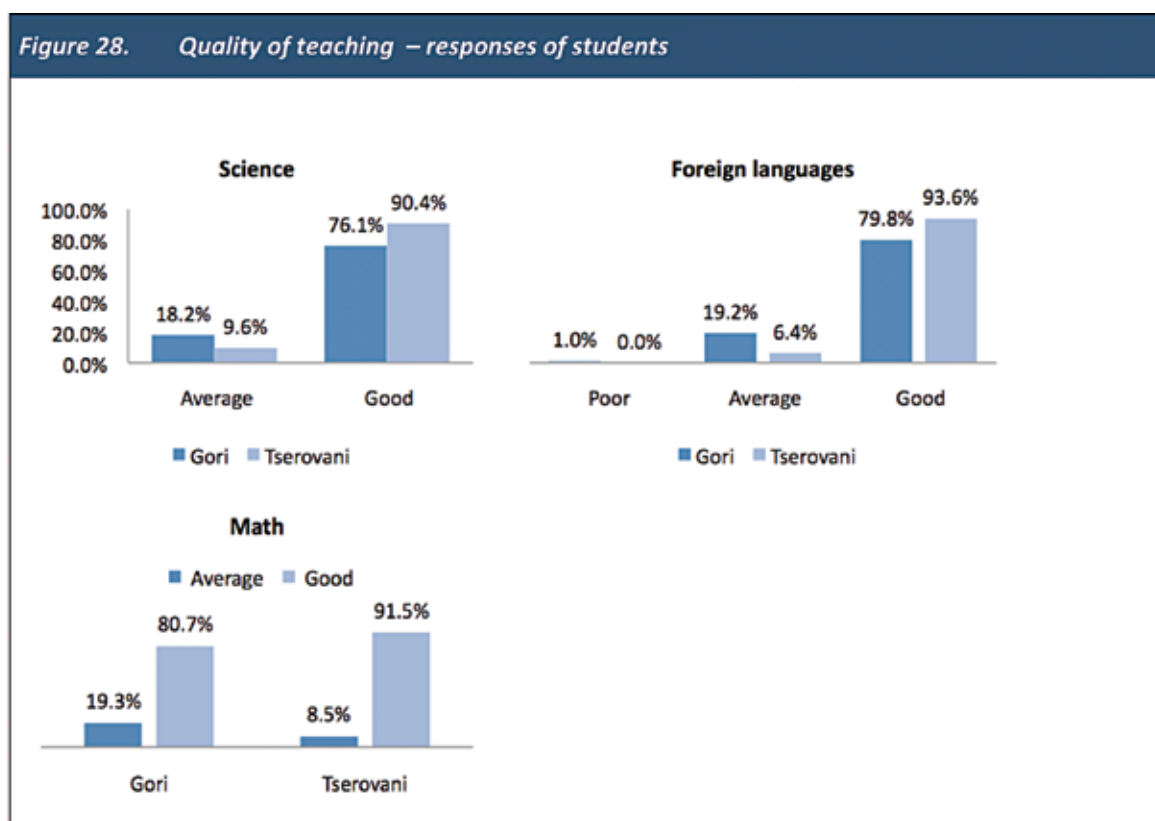
Significantly greater numbers of parents of children in the Tserovani school rated their children's performance and application to study as average or poor, whereas more parents in Gori rated their children as above average or high. Among both groups, approximately 90 percent of parents think that their children are hardworking enough (average or above). It is not possible to cross-reference these perceptions with performance in examinations, as these are not available for the Tserovani school. It is feasible that expectations of Tserovani parents are higher than those in Gori, which might well provide the same indicators. But it is not possible to say with any certainty one way or the other.



Half of the pupils in both Gori and Tserovani schools think that their performance is good in Georgian language and social sciences. But there are statistically significant differences in self-evaluation of achievement of Gori and Tserovani schools in two subjects – foreign languages and science subjects. Students in the Tserovani school assess their performance in these subjects as lower than those in the Gori schools (see Annex 1, Fig. 27).

### School & private tuition

Overall, Tserovani students ranked their teachers highly in terms of teaching ability, and many thought that they were better than those in their previous school (such as in Mtskheta or Tbilisi). The ranking of quality of teaching in Gori and Tserovani schools differs in three subjects: science, mathematics and foreign languages. Students in Tserovani schools rank their teachers higher in these subjects. More Gori school students think that teachers favor affluent students as well as those who take private lessons from them. Tserovani students agree less often with the statement that ‘teachers care about them and listen to their concerns’; whereas Tserovani students assess teachers as more helpful in grasping content than Gori students. The teachers in the Tserovani school are IDPs themselves, which seemed to help in the view of children.



Note: An asterisk (\*) indicates statistically significant difference between local and Abkhaz public schools.

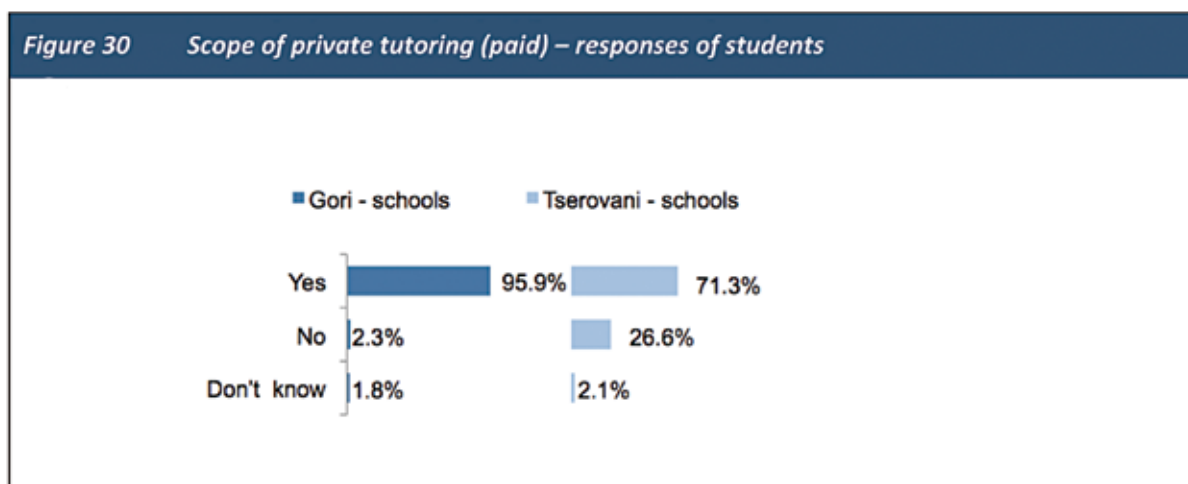
Most students in the Tserovani school claimed that they had been bullied, verbally abused or got into fights in their previous school because of their IDP status. All said that they preferred to be where they were, albeit there were things that they would like to be improved. Even though they did not like that their school was poorly equipped, the library was short of books and they had few recreational facilities, they preferred being among other IDPs because they were treated as equals.

*I chose a the school for IDPs, because in the mixed one maybe you will be oppressed by someone because you are an IDP and they consider that they are on a higher level than you are. (Levan, pupil in Tserovani school)*

*I like the level of study. When I studied in Tbilisi, there was no such kind of demand. It is very different here, because they know who we are, they are in the same situation. They are IDPs and it is simpler to communicate with them. (Maka, pupil in Tserovani school)*

School conditions (such as the cafeteria, furniture, toilets and safety) are regarded as better by students and parents of the Tserovani school than those in Gori schools (see Annex 1, Fig. 29). Given that the Tserovani school was built relatively recently, this might be expected.

The Shida Kartli region is no exception in Georgia in its widespread use of PT. However, there is a statistically significant difference between Gori and Tserovani schools in terms of the scale of usage of PT services. Most of the students of Gori schools have private tutors, while one third of Tserovani school students do not take private lessons.



### Daily & extracurricular activities

There are differences in daily activities of students in Gori and Tserovani schools. Students in Tserovani school spend more time playing or talking with friends, and they spend more time reading. They also use the Internet more frequently for socializing (using MySpace, Facebook, etc.). There is no significant difference in the use of computers in Tserovani and Gori schools. More than 50 percent of students have used the Internet this year. However, Gori school students use it more frequently as more of them have computers at home. Half of the Gori students who use the Internet use it every day, whereas half of Tserovani students who use Internet use it only once a week (see Annex 1, Fig. 31).

*The biggest problem for my children is that there is no literature to read. I have no finances to buy books for them. My children are intelligent and they love reading. (Ia, IDP parent in Tserovani)*

Greater numbers of Tserovani students are involved in extracurricular activities, although sport activities of Gori school students are more diversified. All of the Tserovani students interviewed that attend sport classes, are enrolled in wrestling groups (see Annex 1, Figs. 33 & 34). But this might be an indication of the lack of choice available to these students. School-sponsored activities take place less frequently in Tserovani school than in Gori schools. In the focus groups, Tserovani children and parents complained about the lack of recreational activities and spaces available for young people. As a result, many spend much of their time at home.

*In their free time, they generally watch TV. They are not keen to go out; there is nothing to do. (Tamriko, IDP parent in Tserovani)*

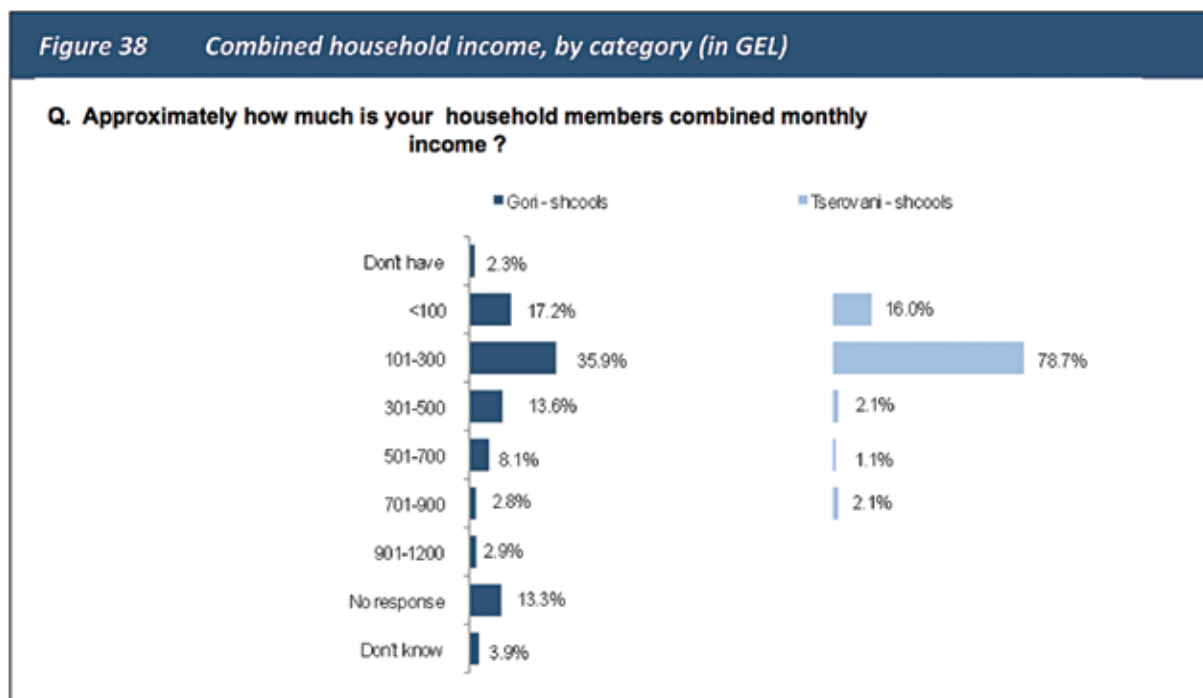
Results of the survey do not show significant differences between Gori/Tserovani parents in providing help to their children in grasping school subjects. However, more parents in Gori provide ongoing support to children, while parents in Tserovani mostly help their children when they are having difficulties. There is no significant difference between parents (in both Gori

and Tserovani) in terms of involvement in school life: equal numbers of parents attend school meetings. However, fewer parents from Tserovani have heard about school Boards of Trustees (see Annex 1, Figs. 35, 36 & 37)

### Socioeconomic & Integration Issues

There are no significant differences between children (or parents) in Gori and Tserovani in their assessment of relations between IDPs and the local population, which the vast majority of them regard as as good. Up to 30 percent Tserovani school students say they do not know non-IDP children.

Income levels of parents in Tserovani are significantly lower than the income of parents in Gori. Approximately 95 percent of Tserovani households have a monthly income below 300 GEL, compared with about 50 percent of Gori households. (Although a slightly higher proportion of households in Gori are forced to manage on under 100 GEL per month). While parents in both Gori and Tserovani complained about finances, the latter clearly fared worse. Many could not afford books and clothes, let alone recreational activities.



Many more IDP parents (than non-IDP parents) think their children have psychological problems and this was a strong theme in the focus groups. Many parents spoke about how their children suffered from nervousness, withdrawal and depression. Memories of the conflict and displacement are still vivid in their minds and both parents and children spoke about how difficult the transition continued to be. A strong emotion that was apparent among the children was a degree of anger, about their plight and in regard to subsequent discrimination. This is being potentially exacerbated by the shortage of educational and recreational resources available to them in Tserovani.

*Mainly he is at home and cannot be entertained with anything. Where should he go for entertainment? There is one stadium. How many children can play in one stadium? It is a big settlement. (Tsisana, IDP parent in Tserovani)*

## ***Abkhaz public schools & Tserovani school: Some comparisons***

Given the very limited research that was conducted in this study with children displaced from South Ossetia in 2008 – only in the Tserovani school – there is very little scope for comparing these pupils with those in Abkhaz public schools in any statistically significant way. However, a few observations can be made, particularly from the qualitative fieldwork.

Tserovani children stayed at home more than those in other regions. They spoke of their isolation and complained that there was nothing to do in the settlement. Parents felt that they stayed at home more than they should have to, whereas parents in other regions made no such observation. This shortage of recreational activities showed the same trend as in Abkhaz public schools, but was more marked.

While their school building was in better condition than most of the others in this study, it was comparatively quite poorly equipped. There is a significant shortage of books for children to read – not only textbooks – and several parents in particular complained about this. The level of discipline in the Tserovani school is apparently much higher than in local schools in all regions and even higher than in Abkhaz public schools. But children did not seem to think that this was a bad thing. Children in Tserovani are even less likely to attend private tuition than their peers in Abkhaz public schools, which may well have implications for their success in NEE and entry into HE.

The Tserovani children felt even more strongly than those in Abkhaz public schools that they preferred to be in schools with other IDPs. Many spoke of their bad experiences in a previous local school, immediately following displacement. A few children from Kutaisi had changed schools for the same reason, but more of those in the Tserovani school had encountered this. They also spoke in stronger terms about the discrimination they had been subjected to and were quite angry about this. It is not surprising that negative experiences of displacement were more apparent among Tserovani children: all of them had been displaced recently. Whereas in the Abkhaz public schools, none of the children we spoke to had apparently been subject to displacement themselves. IDPs from all regions had been subject to discrimination, but among the Tserovani children it was more severe, and they responded more aggressively to it.

Tserovani children were also subject to discrimination outside of school more than those attending Abkhaz public schools. Some spoke of confrontations and fights with local youth, where their IDP status had been an issue. Psychological trauma was more evident with these children (and their parents) than it was among those from other regions: in some cases it was an ongoing problem. Given the hostility they feel towards local people (or that they think local people feel towards them) and the fact that they socialize only with other IDPs in a relatively isolated community, their ability to fully integrate seems questionable. While there are practical reasons for them attending the school that they do, there are also reasons for it that are more problematic and perhaps need addressing.



## Conclusions and Recommendations

IDP children are often disadvantaged in the education system in Georgia, but this appears to be more due to their economic status than their IDP status. Enrolment in Abkhaz public schools, as opposed to local schools, does not appear to have a significant bearing on academic performance. Overall, Georgian school pupils perform comparatively poorly in international assessments of academic achievement. But there are no sizable differences between Abkhaz public schools and local schools in this respect. In international tests on science subjects and mathematics, Abkhaz public school students did better than almost all regions of Georgia. In mother tongue language, the results of Abkhaz public schools are lower, but still better than in four other regions of Georgia.

There is a significant difference between Abkhaz and local school students in terms of higher education (HE) admission rates: a smaller proportion of students from Abkhaz public schools enter into HE institutions and fewer receive merit-based grants, which are based on scores of students in national entrance examinations (NEE). This seems to point to a comparatively lower learning performance among pupils in Abkhaz local schools in 12<sup>th</sup> grade. There is a good deal of evidence from this study to indicate that this may be due to less favorable learning environments. The average income of IDP families is significantly lower. The difference in economic conditions causes differences in access to those educational resources which are funded mainly through private sources, including school textbooks and access to private tuition. Children in Abkhaz public schools also tend more often to live in homes unsuitable for study. The schools they attend are in much worse states of disrepair than local schools and tend to be less well resourced. This study revealed significant differences in its assessment of technical conditions in IDP and local schools. Infrastructure in Abkhaz public schools is significantly worse (toilet facilities, cafeteria, furniture) and there are often problems with heating and lighting, all of which are considered by respondents as important factors affecting the quality of education. (In Tserovani, there is satisfaction regarding the school building, but not about the lack of teaching and learning resources it contains.) All of these factors stem from a shortage of financial resources in households and long-term under-investment by the authorities.

Private tutoring, rather than quality of schooling, is considered by all surveyed groups (teachers, parents and students) as a primary factor determining success of students in NEE. Private tuition is widespread in Georgia among all surveyed regions and at all levels of schooling. Approximately every second student takes private lessons when in the secondary level in order to prepare for entrance exams to HE. It is also prominent at basic and primary levels. This study revealed significant differences between IDP and non-IDP students in their access to private tuition. The evidence seems to indicate that because IDP students are more often from poorer families, they are less able to afford private tuition. The implication is that proportionally fewer students from Abkhaz public schools will enter HE as result. Furthermore, among those passing NEE, fewer receive grants (which they are more likely to require in order to be able to afford to attend university).

Attendance rates are low in upper grades across all regions and in both local and Abkhaz public schools. (Drop-out rates segregated by IDP status are not available.) However, IDP students miss school less frequently than non-IDP students. This is at least partly because they cannot afford private tuition.

There are no apparent significant differences in teaching quality between local and Abkhaz public schools. Smaller student/teacher ratios and lower workloads of teachers are viewed as advantages of Abkhaz public schools. Students in these schools also tend to be more supportive

of each other than students in local schools. However, teachers in Abkhaz public schools use physical and verbal punishment methods more frequently. These schools have higher standards of discipline: many children in local schools (and their parents) thought that the low level of discipline was a problem in their school. Teachers in local schools allegedly show more favouritism to certain groups of students, such as relatives, more affluent pupils and their own tutees.

An apparent important general problem that emerged in the study was the significant levels of detachment shown by parents in relation to school performance. For parents, school grades and completion certificates were not seen to be as important as NEE; and to achieve success in these, schools were seen as having limited utility. In some schools, staff actually encouraged older students preparing for NEE to study with private tutors or at home rather than waste time at school. IDP parents attend parental meetings less frequently than non-IDP parents; they are also less aware of the existence of school Boards of Trustees.

IDP children (from Abkhaz public schools) seem to be more engaged in extracurricular activities than non-IDPs. But this may be because they have more access to such facilities (such as through NGOs) and because they lack alternatives more available to non-IDPs (such as access to computers). It should be noted though that children in Abkhaz public schools had a narrower range of extra-curricular activities available to them. Parents and children in Tserovani are frustrated by the lack of recreational activities and amenities available to them. The importance of the role computers play is far from clear. They may indicate a more affluent household and may play role as an educational tool. On the other hand, they can be a distraction from schoolwork.

As far as integration and social marginalization of IDP children is concerned, there were some significant regional differences. In general, IDP children tend to be discriminated against by other children in or out of school less today than a few years ago. This was particularly the case in Tbilisi, where IDP children seemed to be fairly well settled and integrated. Many IDP children in Abkhaz public schools said that they had non-IDP friends, and to a lesser extent non-IDP children have IDPs among their friends. However, in Kutaisi both children and parents were qualitatively found to have endured significant levels of discrimination from adults. For children, this mainly came from teachers in local schools. Parents' responses supported this finding, and many children were moved from local schools to Abkhaz public schools in order to avoid this discrimination.

Both children in Abkhaz public schools and their parents say that discrimination and intimidation from other children occurs (and most had experienced it to some extent), but not usually because of IDP status per se. More often, children are targeted by other children because of the way they dress, or due to their ethnicity. The focus group discussions revealed that most children thought that bullying and discrimination was targeted mainly at Megrelians (who were seen as poor and dishonest) and others perceived as impoverished and badly dressed. Given that the vast majority of IDPs are Megrelian and are more likely to be impoverished, it seems likely that they are affected by such discrimination.

Among pupils at the Tserovani school, there were higher levels of psychological problems and evidence of trauma. Many had experienced discrimination because of their IDP status and had experienced verbal (and sometimes physical) abuse from other children at local schools they had previously attended, as well as in the local community.

The vast majority of children in Abkhaz public schools (and the Tserovani school) are happy in the school they attend and wish to remain there. Indeed, some had moved to these schools from local schools so that they could be with other IDPs. This was usually to avoid discrimination, and so that they could have people around them that would understand them better. They wanted to be treated as equals. This was the case, to a greater or less extent, in all schools and in all regions. They were clearly indicating that they were subject to stigmatization, albeit perhaps indirect.

Though the results of the survey for Tserovani school are not statistically significant, from the data gathered on both Tserovani and Abkhaz public schools, one might reasonably conclude that the need for segregated schooling for IDPs is greatest at the time of displacement, and decreases with time. However, 17 years after the initial displacement of Georgians from Abkhazia, many parents and children still express a clear wish to maintain Abkhaz public schools, albeit often for negative reasons (discrimination and stigmatization). This raises wider questions about the possibility for full social integration in Georgia and presents a series of policy challenges.

Based upon the findings of this research, the authors would like to make the following recommendations to policy makers and other stakeholders:

- The closure of Abkhaz public schools would not be the best way to address the educational needs of IDP children. Their existence offers many parents - and children - a choice about where to educate their children while social integration is still incomplete. The priority should be to resource these schools better and gradually encourage local children to enrol in them, in parallel with wider policies aimed at social integration. In this way, the concept of segregated schools should eventually fall away.
- There is an urgent need for the renovation of most Abkhaz public schools. Unless they are to be closed down for some reason imminently, the dire conditions (frequently unhealthy and sometimes dangerous) in which these children are supposed to study on a daily basis are unacceptable.
- Schoolteachers in all regions, but especially Kutaisi, should be provided with awareness training concerning IDP issues. Discrimination levelled at children by their teachers needs to be addressed.
- Schoolteachers should be trained in disciplining techniques in order to improve standards in local schools and reduce the recourse to corporal punishment in Abkhaz public schools.
- Wider awareness raising about displaced people among the population of Georgia, through publicity and education programmes, might well help in addressing some of the stigmatization they endure. This might include specific programmes in schools.
- Many IDP parents are keen to see the continuation, and expansion, of NGO- funded private tuition for their children. Given the huge, long-term challenges involved in reforming the education system such that private tuition is no longer required by most students in order to pass national entrance examinations, this seems like an important initiative – especially given the comparative disadvantage faced by many IDP children.
- Steps need to be taken to align the national school curriculum more closely with the national entrance examinations, such that poorer families will not be disadvantaged by their lack of access to private tuition.
- The Government of Georgia should consider how to provide financial assistance to IDP families, and poorer families in general, in order for them to be able to buy textbooks, suitable clothing and other necessary materials.
- More broadly, the Government of Georgia and civil society should focus on improving the livelihoods of IDPs. Overall poverty reduction is key to improving educational standards and academic performance.

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Georgian Union of Educators “Lampari” [http://www.lampari.org.ge/?cat=about\\_us&lang=eng](http://www.lampari.org.ge/?cat=about_us&lang=eng)

Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) (Georgia)

<http://www.internal-displacement.org/countries/georgia>

Ministry of Education and Culture, Autonomous Republic of Abkhazia (Government in Exile)<http://www.meca.gov.ge>

Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia<http://www.mes.gov.ge/index.php?lang=eng>

Ministry for Refugees and Accommodation <http://www.mra.gov.ge/>

National Assessment and Examinations Centre <http://www.naec.ge/index.php?lang=eng>

Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs <http://www.regjeringen.no/en/dep/ud.html?id=833>

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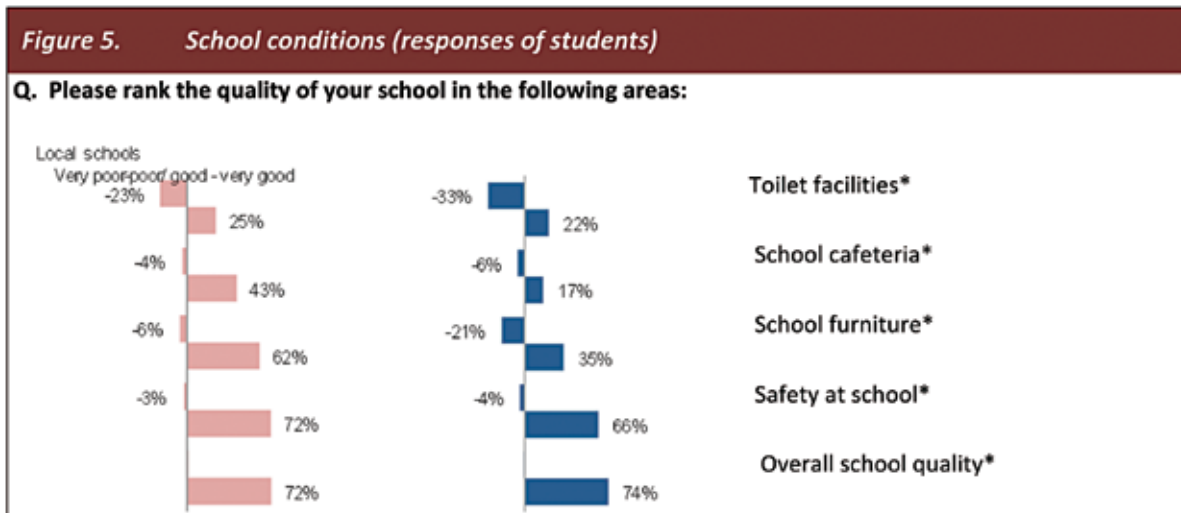
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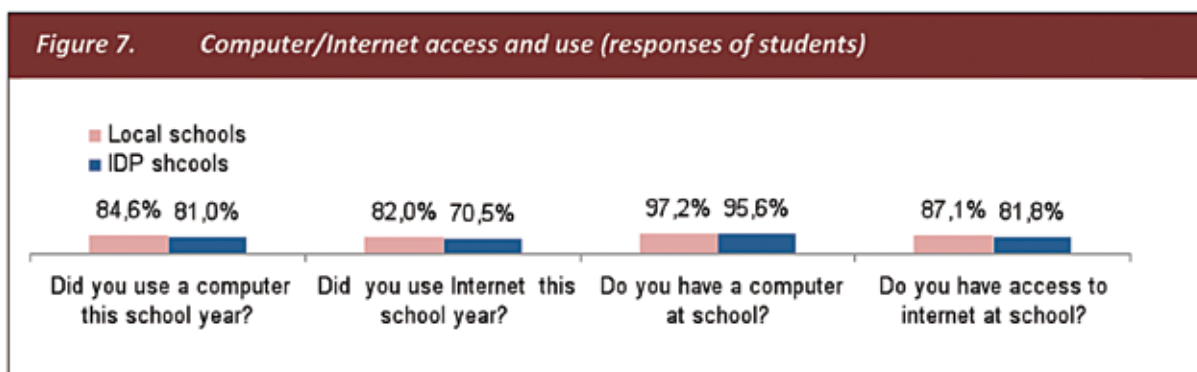
# Annexes

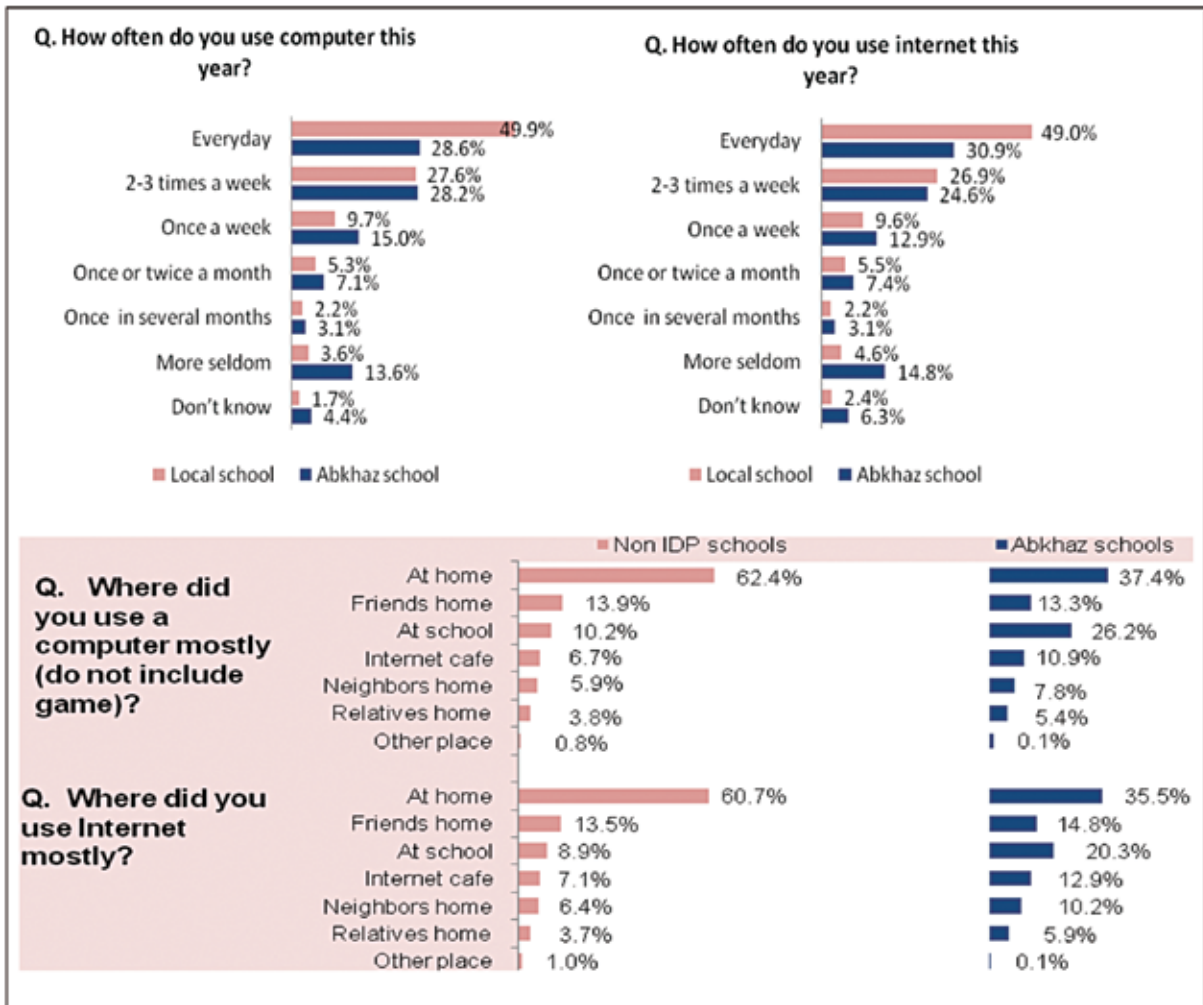
## Annex 1: Supplementary tables and charts

### Abkhaz public schools

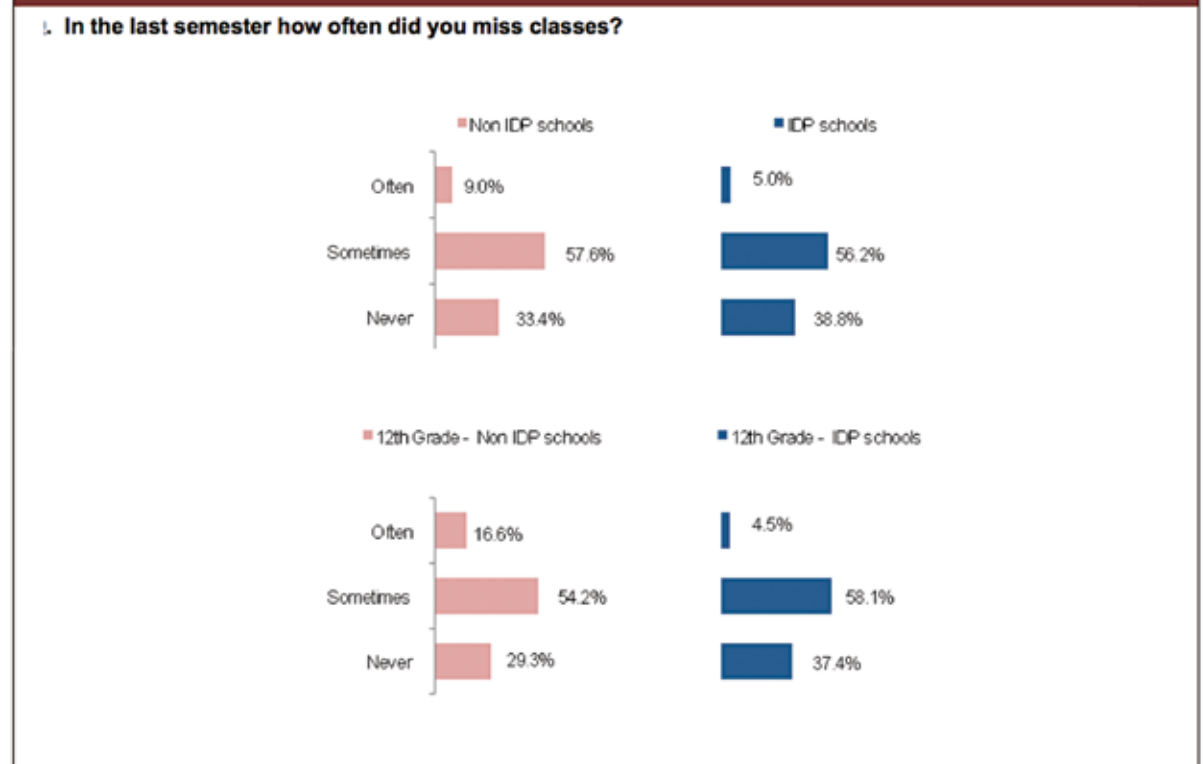


Note: An asterisk (\*) indicates statistically significant difference between local and Abkhaz public schools.

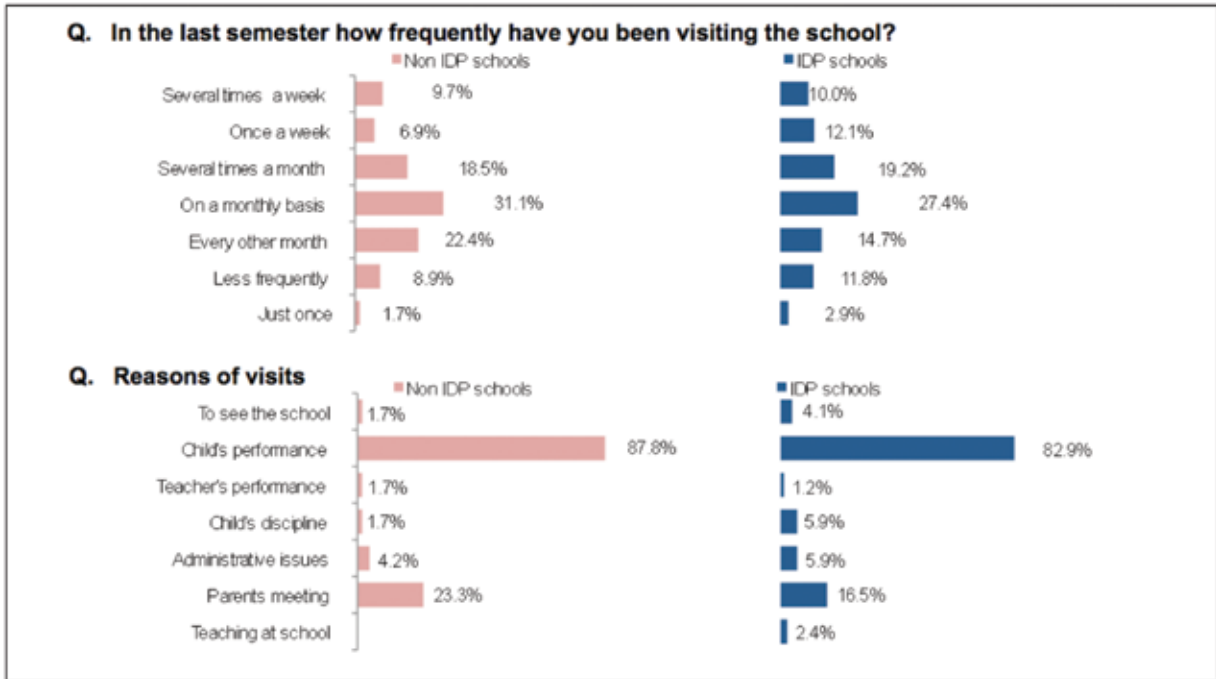




**Figure 8. Attendance (responses of students)**



**Figure 9. Parental visits to school (responses of parents)**



**Figure 10. Boards of Trustees at schools**

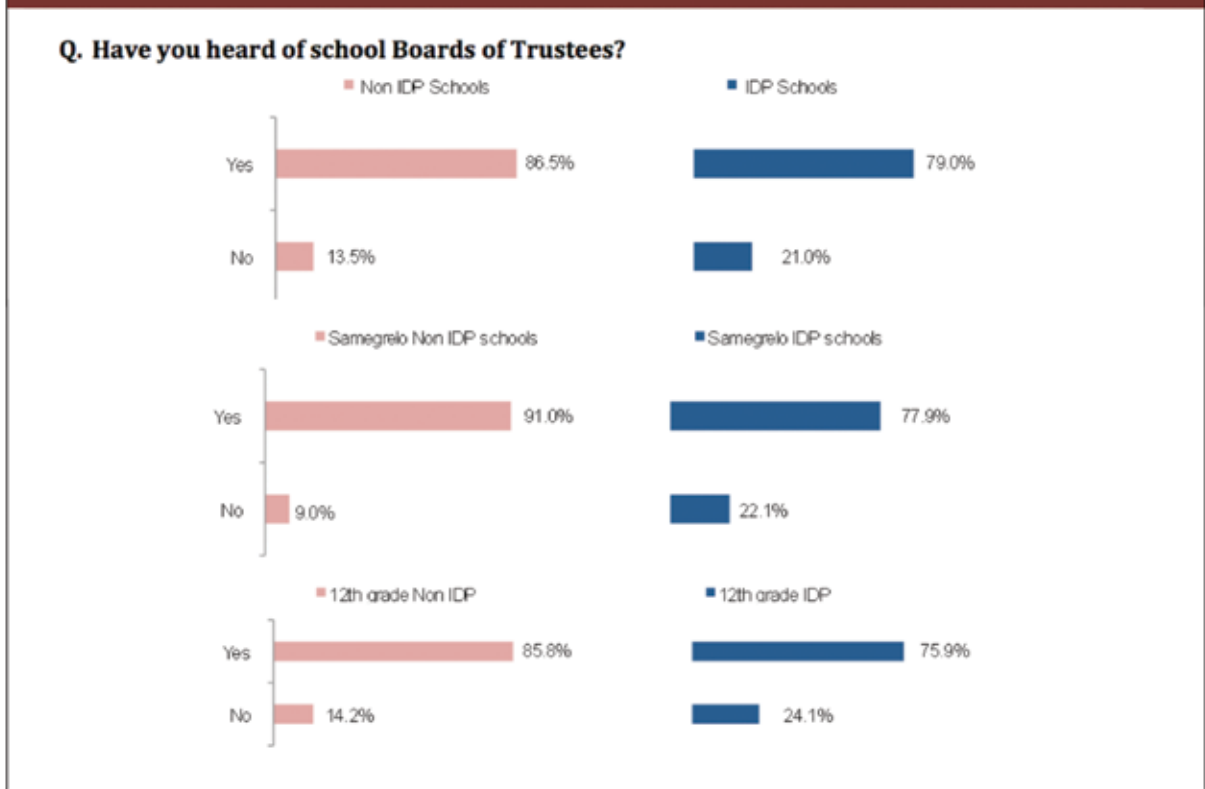
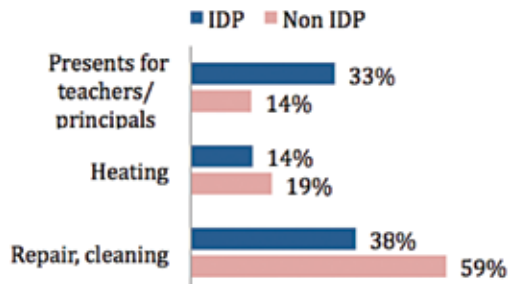




Figure 11. Parental contributions to school-related activities and informal payments

Q. during the last semester have you made informal payments to school?



Q. During the last semester did you have any expenses on the following activities ?

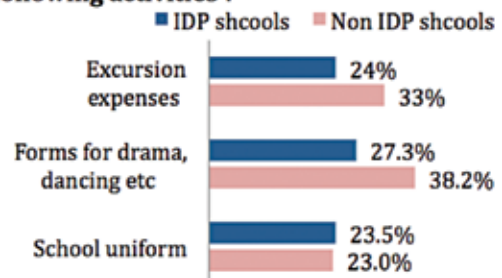
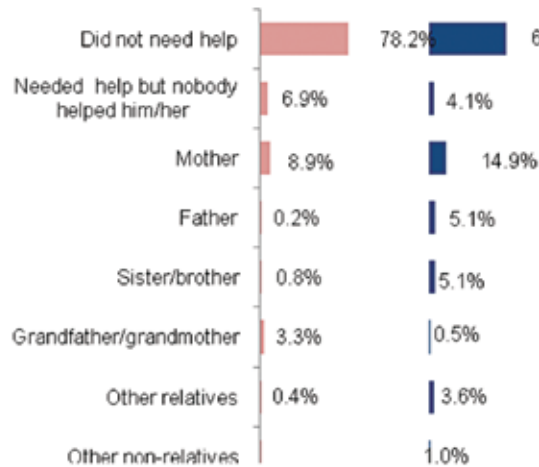
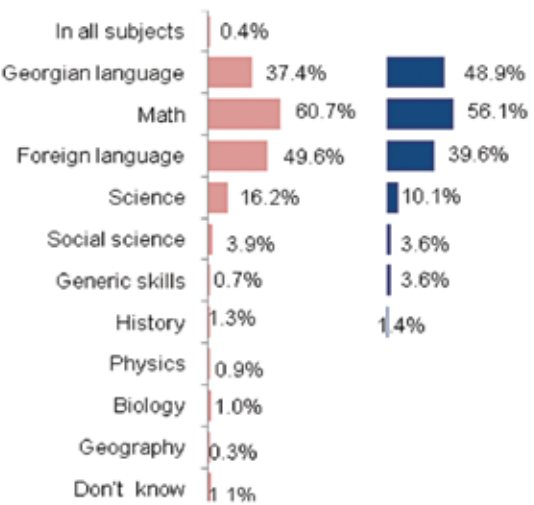


Figure 15 Parent/student relationship (responses of students)

Q In the last semester was anyone helping a child with his/her education?



Q. In which subjects was help provided?



Q. In what way was the help provided?

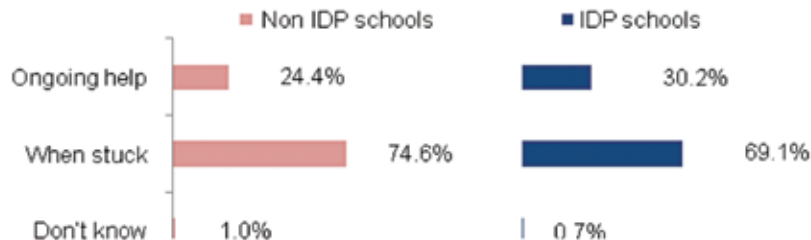


Figure 21. Friendship patterns (responses of students)

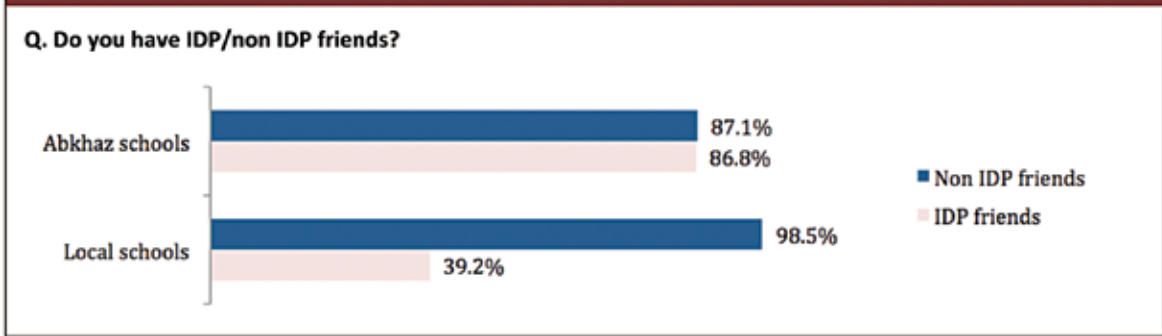
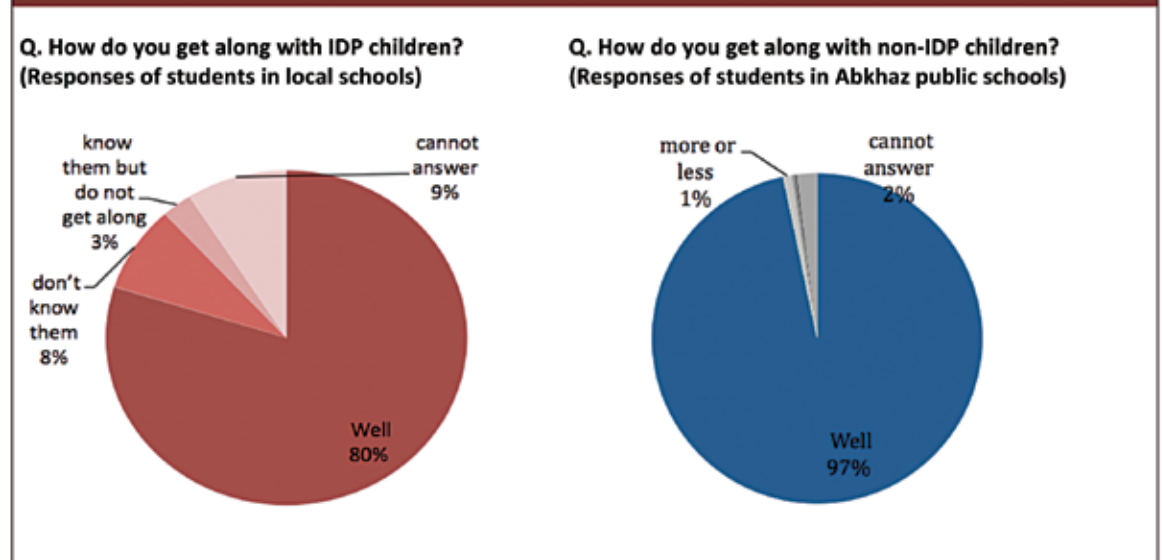


Figure 22 Friendship between IDP/non-IDP children (responses of students)



### Tserovani school

Figure 27. Academic performance (as perceived by students of Gori and Tserovani school)

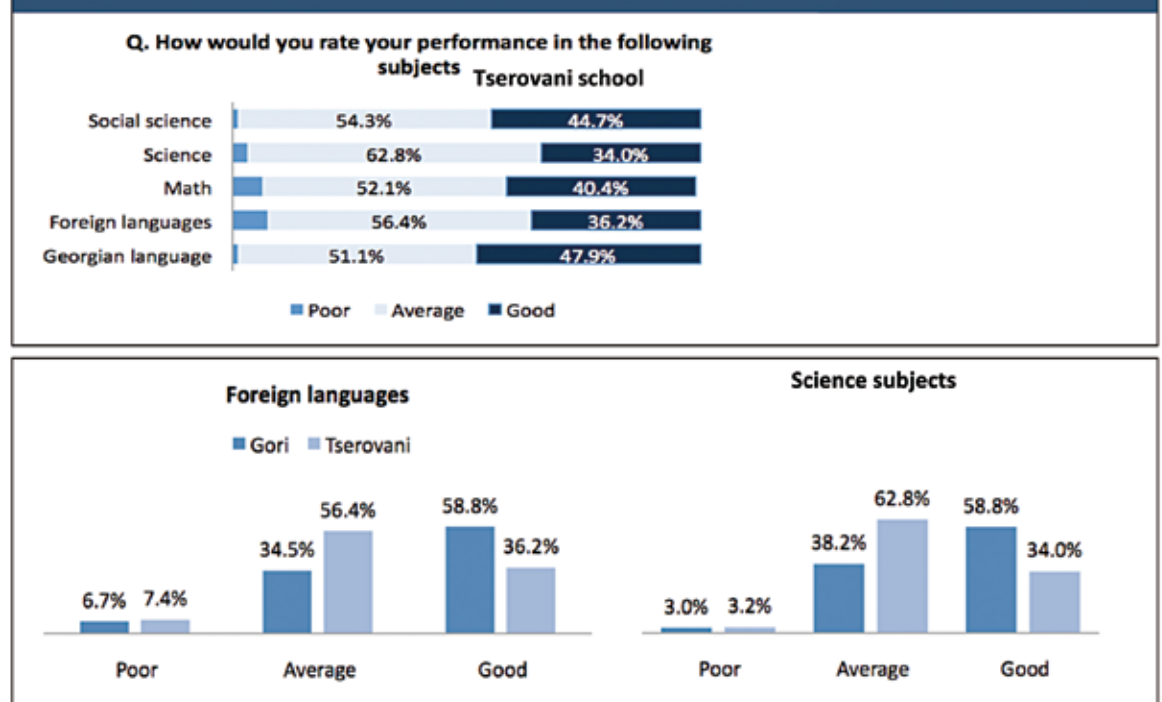
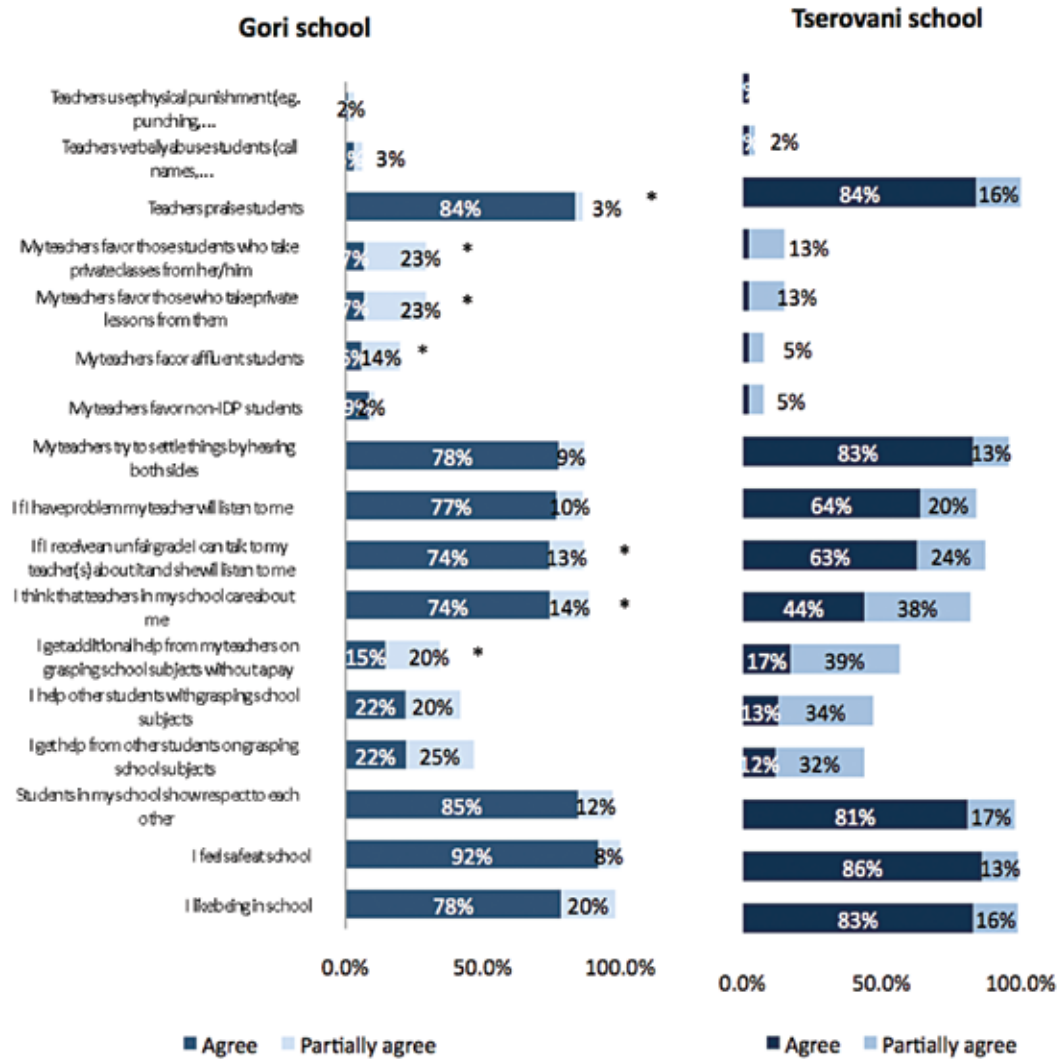


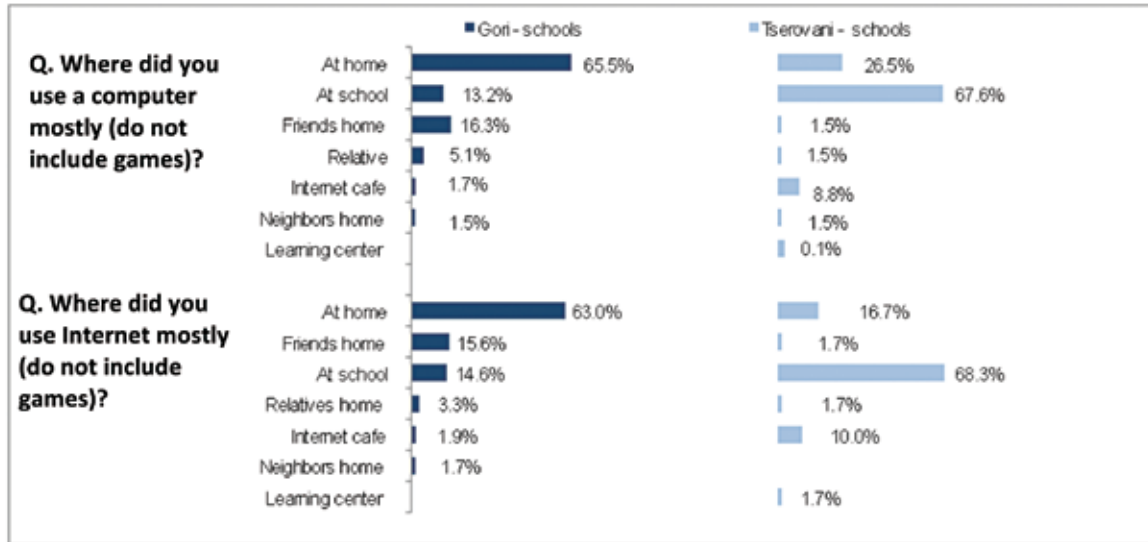
Figure 29 School environment (responses of students)

Q. How much do you agree with these statements?



Note: An asterisk (\*) indicates statistically significant difference between local and Abkhaz public schools.

**Figure 31. Computer/Internet access and use (responses of students)**



**Figure 33. Student involvement in sport activities (responses of students)**

**Q. Are you enrolled in sports classes?**

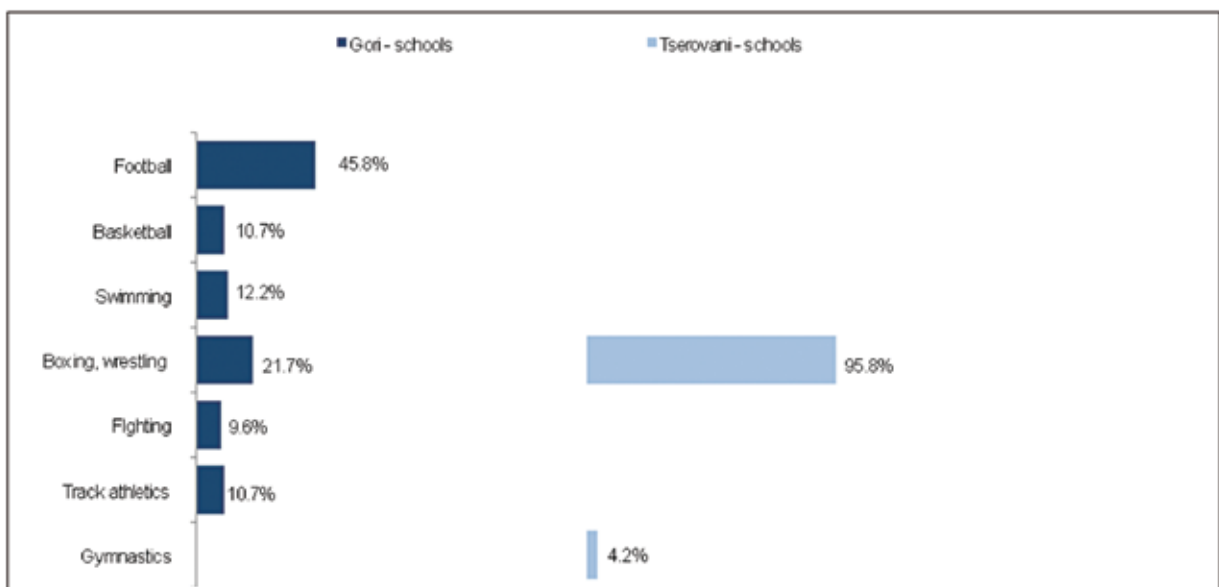
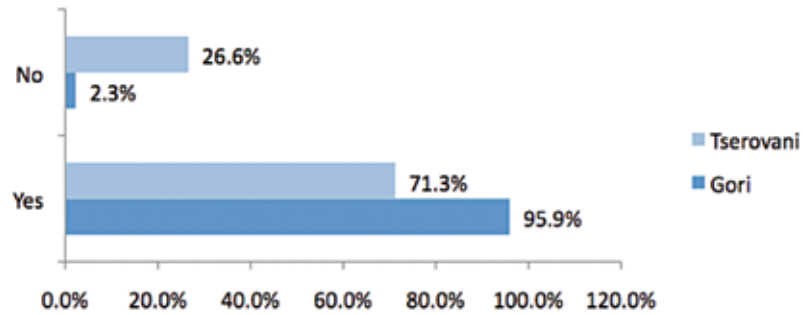
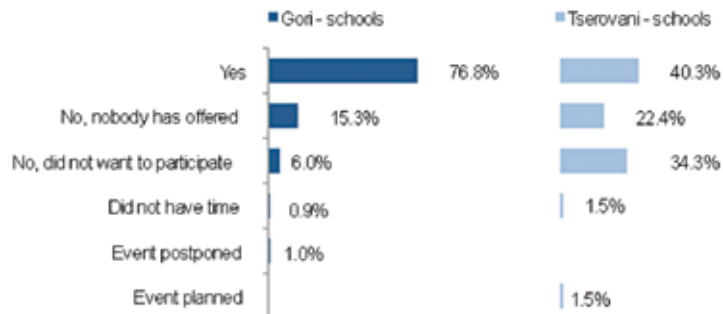


Figure 34. Extra-curricular activities (responses of students)

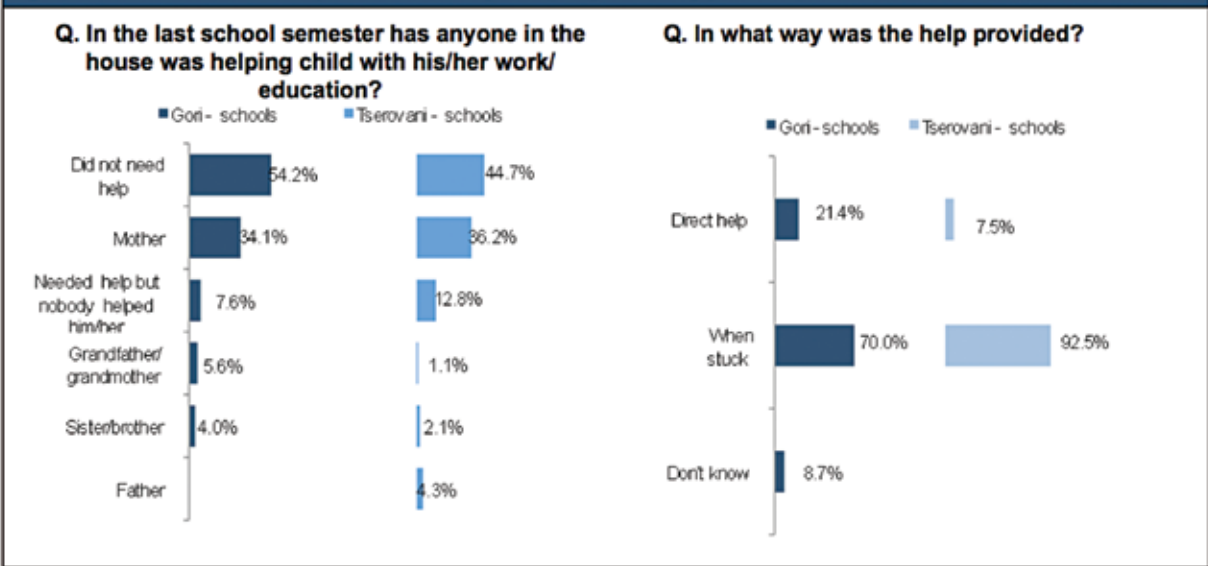
Q. Did any school-sponsored activities take place in your school (such as sports competitions, drama, etc.) in which you could have participated?



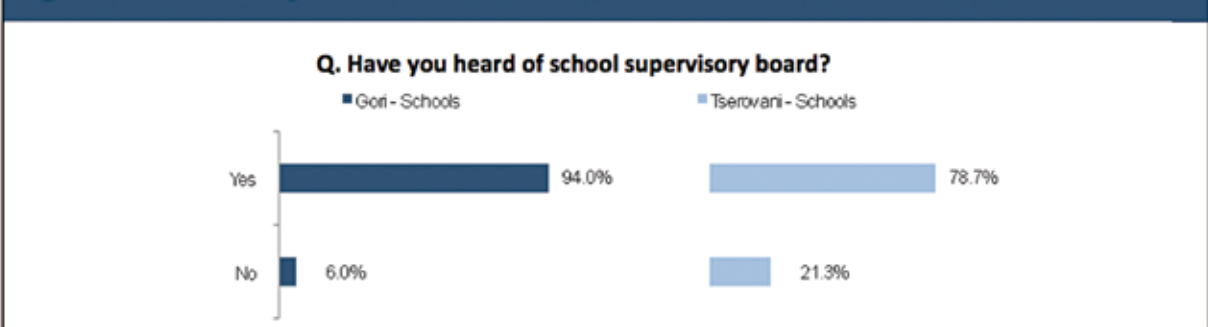
Q. Did you participate? If not, why?



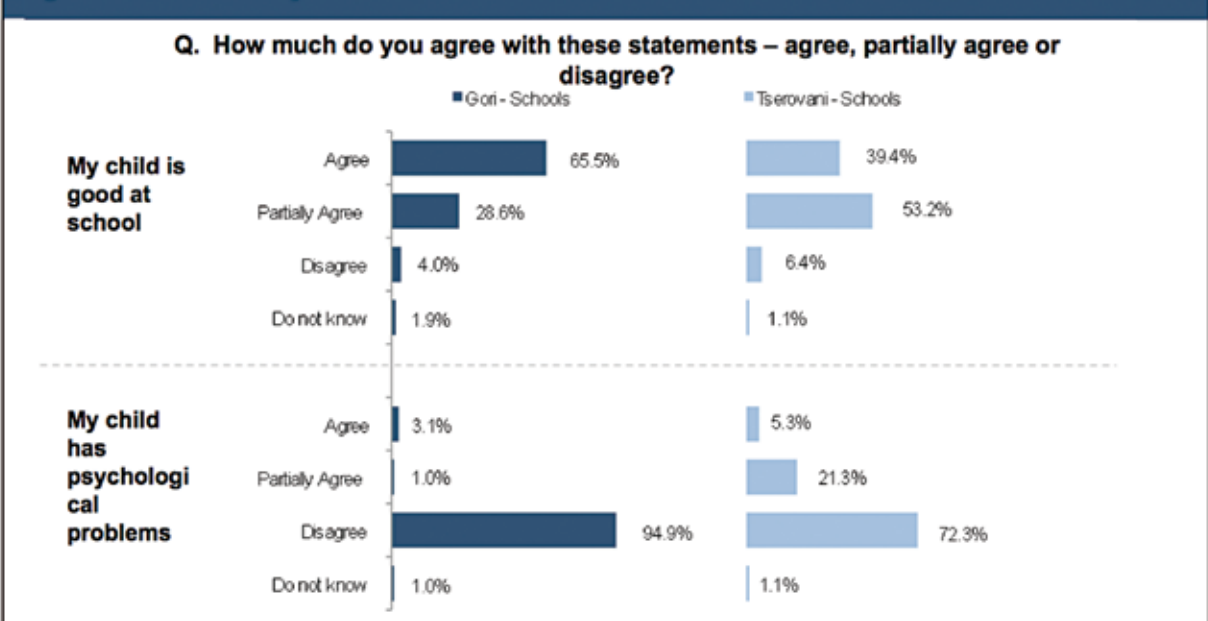
**Figure 35. Parental help in school subjects (responses of parents)**



**Figure 36. Boards of Trustees at schools**



**Figure 37. Boards of Trustees at schools**



## ***Annex 2: Interviews Held with Key Informants***

The research team conducted semi-structured interviews with the following key informants:

- Programmes Department, Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia (MoES)
- Education Management Information System, MoES
- Regional Development Office, Department of Education Resource Centres, MoES
- Teacher Professional Development, MoES
- “Lampari” Georgian Union of Educators
- Ministry of Refugees and Accommodation of Georgia (MRA)
- Culture & Sports Department, Ministry of Education & Culture of Autonomous Republic of Abkhazia
- Ministry of Education & Culture of Autonomous Republic of Abkhazia
- National Examination Centre
- Unicef

## Annex 3: Questionnaires

### Student Questionnaire General information

F1. What is your age?

F2. Where were you born?

This region, city	1
Abkhazia	2
South Ossetia	3
Other city of Geo	4
Other	5

F3. Are there IDPs in your family?

No, no one	0
Mother	1
Father	2
Grandmother, grandfather	3
Don't know	99
Other (specify)	

F4. How many people do you live with? .....

F5. Who lives with you?

Mother	1
Father	2
Grandmother	3
Grandfather	4
Sister	5
Brother	6
Other relatives	7
Other non-relatives	8

F6. Who is your primary caregiver?

Mother	1
Father	2
Grandmother	3
Grandfather	4
Sister	5
Brother	6
Other relatives	7
Other non-relatives	8

### Section A – School attendance and school-related issues

A1. What class are you currently enrolled in? .....

A2. What class were you enrolled in the previous academic year? .....

A3. Did you miss previous school year? If yes, what was the reason?

No	0
Health reasons	1
Did not have clothing	2
Did not have books	3
Did not want to go	4
Was working	5
Other	

A4. How do you usually go to school – walk or take a transport?

Walk	1
bicycle, horse or other	2
Family transport	3
Public transport	4
Equally – transport and walk	5
Other (Specify)	



- A5. How much do you usually spend on transportation in a day - to get to school and back? ..... GeL
- A6. How long does it take you to reach the nearest bus/minibus stop? ..... (min)
- A7. How long does it take you to reach the school (including time spent waiting for the transport.....)(min, hr)
- A8. Have you ever changed the school?
- |     |   |
|-----|---|
| Yes | 1 |
| No  | 2 |
- A9. How many times have you changed the school? .....
- A10. What was the reason for changing the school?
- |  |   |
|--|---|
| Changed residence                      | 1 |
| Did not like prev teacher/teachers     | 2 |
| Did not like school environment        | 3 |
| Did not have good relations with peers | 4 |
| Children did not treat me well         | 5 |
| Other (Specify)                        |   |
- A11. In the last semester how often did you miss classes – frequently, sometimes or never?
- A12. During the last semester can you say that you missed classes for a few days(less than a week), a week, 2-3 weeks, a month, more than a month, almost the whole semester?
- A13. What was the main reason(s) for missing classes? Why did you miss classes?
- |  |   |
|--|---|
| illness                                  | 1 |
| Didn't have textbooks                    | 2 |
| Didn't have clothes                      | 3 |
| Studied at home myself                   | 4 |
| Studied with pr.tutors                   | 5 |
| Work                                     | 6 |
| My school is far, takes time to reach it | 7 |
| Other (Specify)                          |   |
- A14. Do you get help from your family member(s) in learning school subjects?
- |                |   |
|----------------|---|
| No             | 0 |
| Yes, Often     | 1 |
| Yes, Sometimes | 2 |
- A15. Do you stay extra hours in school (after lessons)?
- |                |   |
|----------------|---|
| No             | 0 |
| Yes, Often     | 1 |
| Yes, Sometimes | 2 |
- A16. Do you have a private tutor?
- |     |   |
|-----|---|
| Yes | 1 |
| No  | 2 |
- A17. Which subject(s) are you learning with private tutor(s)?
- |                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| Math              | 1 |
| Foreign language  | 2 |
| Generic skills    | 3 |
| Georgian language | 4 |
| History           | 5 |
| Other (Specify)   |   |
- A18. Do you pay for private tutoring?
- |            |    |
|------------|----|
| Yes        | 1  |
| No         | 2  |
| Don't know | 99 |
- A19. Do you take private lessons from your class teacher?
- |     |   |
|-----|---|
| Yes | 1 |
| No  | 2 |

A20. Are you enrolled in sports classes, if yes, which?

Not enrolled	1
Football	2
Basketball	3
Swimming	4
Boxing, wrestling	5
Other(Specify)	

A21. Are you enrolled in extra-curricular activities such chess, dance, painting ..... If yes, which

Not enrolled	1
Dancing	2
Painting	3
Chess	4
Singing	5
Music	6
Art	7
Other(Specify)	

A22. Do you pay for extra-curricular activities?

Yes	1
Not for all	2
No	3

A23. Did any school-sponsored activities take place in your school such as sports competitions, drama, ..... where you could've participated?

Yes	1
No	2
Don't know	99

A24. Did you participate? If not, why?

Yes	1
No, nobody has offered	2
No, did not want to participate	3
Did not have time	4
Was ill	5
Other (Specify)	

A25. In the last school semester were you involved in any community activities, if yes, which?

No	0
Yes	1
Earth day	2
Cleaning day	3
School yard greening day	4
Other	
Don't know	99

## Section B – everyday activities

B1. On a normal school day, how much time do you spend doing each of these things

	No time	always	sometimes	frequently	seldom	Don't know
I watch television and videos	0	1	2	3	4	99
I play computer games	0	1	2	3	4	99
I play or talk with friends	0	1	2	3	4	99
I do jobs at home (e.g. house chores, ...)	0	1	2	3	4	99
I read a book for enjoyment	0	1	2	3	4	99
I read newspapers, journals	0	1	2	3	4	99
I do homework	0	1	2	3	4	99

B2. In the last semester, have you had a paid job?

Yes,	1
No,	2
refuse to answer	99

## Section C- property

C1. Do you have any of these things at home?

	Don't know	Yes	1	No	2
Calculator	99	Yes	1	No	2
Computer (in a working condition)	99	Yes	1	No	2
Internet connection	99	Yes	1	No	2
Study desk / table for your use	99	Yes	1	No	2
A room of your own	99	Yes	1	No	2
Textbooks for all school subjects	99	Yes	1	No	2
Landline number	99	Yes	1	No	2
Cell phone	99	Yes	1	No	2
Your own cell phone	99	Yes	1	No	2
TV set (in a working condition)	99	Yes	1	No	2

C2. Do you use a computer this year? (do not include play station) If yes, how often

C3. Do you use internet this year? If yes, how often

	C2	C3
Never	0	0
Everyday	1	1
2-3 times a week	2	2
Once a week	3	3
Once or twice a month	4	4
Once in several months	5	5
More seldom	6	6

C4. Do you have computer at school?

Yes	1
No	2
Don't know	99

### C5. Do you have access to internet at school?

Yes	1
No	2
Don't know	99

### C6. Where do you use computer mostly (do not include play station)?

### C7. Where do you use internet mostly?

	C6	C7
At home	1	1
At school	2	2
Internet cafe	3	3
Friends home	4	4
Neighbors home	5	5
Other	6	6

### C8. For what purpose do you usually use internet?

Working (write school assignments)	1
Working (search)	2
Playing (computer games)	3
Chatting	4
Downloading music, movies	5
Social networks (facebook, myspace, etc)	6
Checking email	7
Other (Specify)	

## Section E – School assessment

### E1. Please rank the quality of your school in the following: .....would you say it is poor, average or good?

	Not available	Poor	Average	Good	Do not know/no response
Toilet facilities	0	1	2	3	99
School cafeteria	0	1	2	3	99
School furniture	0	1	2	3	99
Safety at school	0	1	2	3	99
Georgian language teaching	0	1	2	3	99
Foreign languages teaching	0	1	2	3	99
Math teaching	0	1	2	3	99
Science teaching (physics, chemistry, ...)	0	1	2	3	99
Social science teaching	0	1	2	3	99
Overall school quality	0	1	2	3	99

### E2. In school did any of these happen during the last semester?

	Never	once	Several times	Don't know/no response	Not relevant
Something of mine was stolen	0	1	2	99	77
I was hit or hurt by other student (s) (e.g. shoving, hitting, kicking)	0	1	2	99	77
I was made to do things I didn't want to do by other students	0	1	2	99	77
I was made fun of or called names	0	1	2	99	77
I was isolated by others (they didn't want to play with me)	0	1	2	99	77
I was hit or hurt by teacher	0	1	2	99	77
I was frightened by teacher (shouted at me)	0	1	2	99	77
I was called IDP	0	1	2	99	77

**E3. How would you rate your performance in the following subjects – poor, average or good?**

How would you rate your performance in the following subjects – poor, average or good?	Poor	Average	Good	Don't know/no response	Not relevant
Georgian language and literature	1	2	3	99	77
Foreign language	1	2	3	99	77
Math	1	2	3	99	77
Science subjects (physics, chemistry, biology)	1	2	3	99	77
Social Science subjects (History, geography)	1	2	3	99	77

**E4. Do you think your teachers grade you fairly? If not, do they over or under grade?**

Yes	1
no, they under grade	2
no, they over grade	3
Don't know	99

**E5. Let's talk about your school. How much do you agree with these statements?**

Agree, partly agree, disagree

	Agree	Partly agree	Disagree	Don't know/no response	Not relevant
I like being in school	1	2	3	99	77
I feel safe at school	1	2	3	99	77
Students in my school show respect to each other	1	2	3	99	77
I get help from other students on grasping school subjects	1	2	3	99	77
I help other students with grasping school subjects	1	2	3	99	77
I get additional help from my teachers on grasping school subjects <i>without a pay</i>	1	2	3	99	77
I think that teachers in my school care about me	1	2	3	99	77
If I receive an unfair grade I can talk to my teacher (s) about it and she will listen to me	1	2	3	99	77
If I have problem my teacher will listen to me	1	2	3	99	77
My teachers try to settle things by hearing both sides	1	2	3	99	77
My teachers favor non-IDP students	1	2	3	99	77
My teachers favor affluent students	1	2	3	99	77
My teachers favor those students who take private classes from her/him	1	2	3	99	77
Teachers praise students when they are doing well	1	2	3	99	77
Teachers verbally abuse students (call names, ...	1	2	3	99	77
Teachers use physical punishment (e.g. punching, ...	1	2	3	99	77

Section G: Conditions at home and relations with parents

**G1. Let's talk about your family. How much do you agree with these statements?**

Agree, partly agree, disagree

	Agree	Partly agree	Disagree	Don't know/no response	Not relevant
I have a possibility to seat quietly at home and prepare homework	1	2	3	99	77
My parents (guardians) talk with me about what I am doing in school	1	2	3	99	77
My parents, family members help me with school assignments (how frequently do we need to know?)	1	2	3	99	77
Most of the adults in my family (parents, aunts, uncles, grandparents) think that education is very important	1	2	3	99	77
My parents do not care about how well I do as long as I pass	1	2	3	99	77
My parents visit the school for parents meetings	1	2	3	99	77

**G2. How often does it happen that:**

	Never	frequently	sometimes	Seldom	Don't know/ no answer	Not relevant
You do not have enough food to eat at home?	0	1	2	3	99	77
You do not have proper clothes for the season?	0	1	2	3	99	77
You feel cold at home – it is not warm enough? (do we need this?)	0	1	2	3	99	77
You were supposed to get medical help and you were not taken or seen by the doctor	0	1	2	3	99	77
You were supposed to have medicines and they were not given to you / purchased for you?	0	1	2	3	99	77
You do not like clothes that you wear?	0	1	2	3	99	77
Your parents physically hurt you (hit, ...) when they punish you?	0	1	2	3	99	77
Your parents shout at you, threaten you to harm you ....?	0	1	2	3	99	77

## Section K Friendship

**K1. How many close friends do you have?**

**K2. Do you have non- IDP friend(s)? If yes, how many?**

**K3. Do you have IDP friend(s)? If yes, how many?**

**K4. How do you get along with IDP children?**

**K5. How do you get along with non -IDP children?**

	K4	K5
Well	1	1
more or less	2	2
not very well	3	3
don't know them	4	4
know them but do not get along	5	5
cannot answer	99	99

**K6. If not getting along well with IDP children: what are the reasons for that?**

.....

**K7. If not getting along well with non- IDP children: what are the reasons for that?**

.....

**K8. When you have problems at school who you are most comfortable talking to at school?**

**K9. When you have problems outside the school, who you are most comfortable talking to outside of the school? Nobody, teachers, principal, classmates, parents, sister/brother, close friends, other**

	K8	K9
Nobody	0	0
Teachers	1	1
Principal	2	2
Classmates	3	3
Parents	4	4
Sister/brother	5	5
Close friends	6	6
Other		

## Section H - Education Plans

### H1. How far in school do you expect to go?

Basic level only	1
Secondary level	2
Don't know	99

### H2. Are you going to take vocational education classes

Yes	1
No	3
don't know	99

### H3. Are you going to continue studies at a higher level – college, university

Yes	1
No	3
don't know	99

### H4. In which field do you want to continue studies?

Math	1
Business	2
Medicine	3
Economics	4
Humanities	5
Science	6
Social sciences	7
Foreign languages	8
Other(Specify)	
don't know yet	99

### H5. What are the reasons for not intending to enter HEI?

Do not have money	1
I am not good at studying	2
Not interested	3
Other (Specify)	
Don't know	99

# Parent Questionnaire

## General information

**A1. Does (name) attend school this year?**

Yes	1
No	2

**A2. Why didn't (name) attend school from September/October this school year?**

Health reasons	1
Did not have clothing	2
Did not have books	3
Did not want to go	4
School is far	5
Was working	6
Other	

**A3. What school is the child currently enrolled in?.....**

**A4. What class is the child currently enrolled in? .....**

**A5. What class was the child enrolled in the previous academic year? .....**

**A6. Did he/she miss previous school year? If yes, what was the reason?**

No	0
Health reasons	1
Did not have clothing	2
Did not have books	3
Did not want to go	4
Was working	5
Other	

**A7. Has the child ever changed the school? If yes how many times? 0 .....**

**A8. What was the reason for changing the school?**

Changed residence	1
Did not like prev teacher/teachers	2
Did not like school environment	3
Did not have good relations with peers	4
Children did not treat me well	5
Other (Specify)	

**A9. How well do you think that (name) was performing in school last semester Would you say: very poor, poor, average, above average, highly above average?**

Very poor	1
Poor	2
Average	3
Above average	4
Highly above average	5

**A10. How hardworking is (name)? Would you say: very poor, poor, average, above average, highly above average?**

Very poor	1
Poor	2
Average	3
Above average	4
Highly above average	5



**A11. Does the child attend school extra hours?**

Yes	1
Used to attend	2
No	3

**A12 In the last school semester has anyone in the house was helping (name) with his/her work/education?**

Did not need help	0
Needed help but nobody helped him/her	1
Mother	2
Father	3
Sister/brother	4
Grandfather/grandmother	5
Other relatives	5
Other non-relatives	6
Friend	7

**A13. What subjects was this help given in?**

Georgian language	1
Math	2
Foreign language	3
Science	4
Social science	5
Generic skills	6
Other (Specify)	
Don't know	99

**A14. In what way was the help provided – it was a direct help with homework or help only when the child was stuck?**

Direct help	1
When stuck	2
Don't know	99

## **Section B –visits to schools**

**B1. Have you ever visited the child's school?**

Yes	1
No	2
Don't remember	99

**B2. In the last semester how frequently have you been visiting the school?**

Several times a week	1
Once a week	2
Several times a month	3
On a monthly basis	4
Every other month	5
Less frequently	6
Just once	7
Don't remember	99

**B3. Did you visit the school because you were invited / asked by school teacher(s) or because you yourself wanted to see the school/teachers?**

I wanted to	1
Was asked to go	2
Both reasons	3
Don't remember	99

**B4. What were the reasons for school visit(s)?**

**B5. What was the reason for the last visit?**

To see the school	1
Child's performance	2
Teacher's performance	3
Child's discipline	4
Administrative issues	5
Other	
Don't remember	99

**B6. When did you visit the school last time? .....days ago..... months ago**

**B7. Have you heard of school supervisory board?**

**B8. Have you heard of school supervisory board?**

**B9. Have you attended any meetings at your child's school?**

	B7	B8	B9
Yes	1	1	1
No	2	2	2
Don't remember	99	99	99

**B10. During the last semester did you make any payment(s) to school / teacher(s) – formal or informal?**

No	1
Yes, formal payment	2
Yes, informal payment	3
Yes, both	4
Don't remember	99

**B11. What was that payment for?**

Curricular activities	1
Books, materials	2
Heating	3
Repair, cleaning	4
Extracurricular	5
Recreational	6
Presents for teachers/principals	7
Other	
Don't remember	99

**B12. During the last semester did you have any expenses on the following school related activities?**

- School uniform
- Forms for drama, dancing etc
- Excursion expenses
- School drama, concert
- Other (specify)

**B13. Does (name) have private tutor in any subject – paid or unpaid? If yes, in which subjects?**

	B13.1 Paid	B13.2 Unpaid
Doesn't have paid and /or unpaid tutor	0	
Georgian language	1	
Math	2	
Foreign language	3	
Science subjects	4	
Social science	5	
Generic skills	6	
Other		
Don't know	99	

## Section C – School

**C1. Please rank the quality of your child's school in the following:-- would you say it is poor, average, very poor**

	Not available	Poor	Average	Good	Do not know/no response
Toilet facilities	0	1	2	3	99
School cafeteria	0	1	2	3	99
School furniture	0	1	2	3	99
Safety at school	0	1	2	3	99
Georgian language teaching	0	1	2	3	99
Foreign languages teaching	0	1	2	3	99
Math teaching	0	1	2	3	99
Science teaching (physics, chemistry,...)	0	1	2	3	99
Social science teaching	0	1	2	3	99
Overall school quality	0	1	2	3	99

**C2. Could you please tell me what is your primary source of information about the school in general?**

**C3. Could you please tell me what is your primary source of information about the quality of education offered at child's school?**

	B7	B8	B9
Own observation	1	1	1
Child's opinion	2	2	2
Other parent's opinion	3	3	3
Teacher's opinion	4	4	4
Other			
Don't know, cannot answer	99	99	99

**C4. How much do you agree with these statements – agree, partially agree or disagree?**

	Agree	Partially Agree	Disagree	Do not know	Not relevant
I find that parents of non-IDP children are friendly to me	1	2	3	99	77
I find that parents of non-IDP children are friendly to my child	1	2	3	99	77
I find that parents of IDP children are friendly to me	1	2	3	99	77
I find that parents of IDP children are friendly to my child	1	2	3	99	77
My child gets along well with local children	1	2	3	99	77
My child gets along well with IDP children	1	2	3	99	77
My child has good communication skills	1	2	3	99	77
My child is good at school	1	2	3	99	77
My child has psychological problems	1	2	3	99	77
My child has behavioral problems	1	2	3	99	77

## Section H – living conditions

**H1. How many people currently live in your family?**

**H2. Are there IDPs in your family?**

No, no one	0
All members are IDPs	1
Child's mother	2
Child's father	3
Grandmother, grandfather	4
Other relatives/family members(specify)	5

**H3. Does this house/apartment belong to your household, do you rent it or do you live in somebody's house without any payment?**

Belongs to the HH	1
Live in the house without payment	2
Rent	3
Long-term agreement	4
Other	99

**H4. Is this house/apartment provided to you by the state?**

Yes	1
No	2

**H5. How many sq.meters is the total area of the house/apartment?**

**H6. Do you have yard? If yes, how many Sq. meters?**

**H7. How many rooms are there in the house/apartment?**

**H8. How far is the nearest bus/minibus stop?**

**H9. How would you assess the condition of your living compartment – is it good, acceptable, bad or very bad?**

Good	1
Acceptable	2
Bad	3
Very bad	4

**H10. Type of the living compartment: *Record observation.***

Collective centre	1
Former hotel building	2
School or kindergarten building	3
State building	4
Ordinary block house (not habituated by IDPs)	5
Private house	6
Other	

**H11. Main material of the outer walls: *Record observation.***

Brick/cement blocks/stone	1
Wood	2
Mixed	3
Other	99

**H12. Main material of the dwelling floor in the living compartment: *Record observation.***

Wood planks/parquet	1
Concrete/cement	2
Earth	3
Other	99

**H13. Main material of the roof: *Record observation.***

Metal	1
Ceramic tiles	2
Concrete	3
Wood planks	4
Other	99

**H14. What type of fuel does your household mainly use for cooking?**

**H15. What type of fuel does your household mainly use for heating?**

Electricity	1
Propane gas	2
Kerosene	3
Coal/charcoal	4
Wood	5
Other	99

**H16. Does your household usually buy or bake bread at home?**

Bake at home most of the time	1
Buy bread most of the time	2
Equally – bake/buy	3
Don't know	99

**H17. What is the main source of drinking water for members of your household?**

Piped into dwelling	1
Piped into yard	2
Public tap in the building	3
Public tap/well in the yard	4
Other	

**H18. What kind of toilet facility do members of your household usually use?**

Public toilet inside the building	1
Public toilet outside the building/flush	2
Public toilet outside the building/ no flush	3
Private toilet inside the building	4
Private toilet outside the building/flush	5
Private toilet outside the building/ no flush	6
Other	

**H19. Do you or your household members have the following things in working condition?**

Washing machine	1
Audio/video equipment, DVD	2
TV set	3
Computer	4
Line phone	5
Mobile phone	6
Refrigerator	7
Car	8
Mini bus, lorry	9
Agricultural land	10

**H20. Do any of your household members receive any type of assistance from the state?**

	Yes	No
Social assistance	1	2
Family assistance	1	2
Age pension	1	2
IDP payment	1	2
Lost family member	1	2
Veteran	1	2
Disability	1	2
Orphan	1	2
Orphan	1	2
Adoption	1	2
Reintegration	1	2
Other		

## Section D - Demographic data

### D1. Sex of the respondent:

Female	1
Male	2

### D2. Age of the respondent:

18-24	1
25-34	2
35-44	3
45-54	4
55-64	5
65 and more	6

### D.3 Education

	1
Incomplete general	2
Complete general	3
General special	4
Incomplete higher	5
Complete higher	6
PhD degree	6

### D4. Marital status

Single	1
Married	2
Divorced	3
Widow	4
No response	99

### D5. How would you assess your household's economic situation

Hardly enough for food	1
Enough for food, not enough for clothes	2
Enough for food and clothes, not enough for equipment	3
Enough for food, clothes, equipment, not enough for a car or house	4
Can buy everything without saving/borrowing	5
Don't know, cannot answer	99

### D6. Has your household been without food in the last 12 months? If yes, how frequently – rarely, sometimes, frequently, or most of the time?

Never	1
Rarely	2
Sometimes	3
Frequently	4
Most of the time	5
Don't know/no answer	99

**D71. Approximately how much was your private monthly income (including all sources)?**

**D72. Approximately how much is your household members combined monthly income?**

	<b>D7.1. Private monthly income</b>	<b>D7.2. Family monthly income</b>
	<b>..... GeL</b>	<b>..... Gel</b>
Don't have	0	0
<100	1	1
101-300	2	2
301-500	3	3
501-700	4	4
701-900	5	5
901-1200	6	6
1200-1500	7	7
1501-2000	8	8
2001-2500	9	9
2501-3000	10	10
3001-4000	11	11
4001-5000	12	12
5001<	13	13

## **Annex 4: Guidelines for Focus Groups with Children and Parents**

### **Guide for Moderators of Focus Groups IDP and non-IDP school children**

- **Introductory session**

Moderator's introduction, explaining the role of moderator and goals of the study.  
Introducing FG rules, self-introduction of participants

- **Social integration experiences**

**a) Daily life**

- What happens in a typical day between when you get up to when you go to bed?
- At what time do you get up?
- What do you usually do in the morning?
- Do you attend school? Do you attend school regularly or you miss lessons? Why?
- When you miss lessons, what do you do? Where do you go?
- What do you do in the evening?
- Do you spend evening at home? What do you do at home?
- Where else do you go in the evening? What do you do there?
- Where do you meet your friends/other children?
- At home? How do you spend time together at home?
- Where else? What do you do there?
- What do you do on weekends?
- Do you spend weekends at home? What do you do?
- Where else? What do you do there?

**b) Social interaction**

- What associations come to your mind while hearing the word IDP ?
- Please choose 5 adjectives for the word IDP. Why did you select this particular adjectives?
- Are there IDPs around you? What kind of relationship do you have with them?
- Do you have any IDP friends from Abkhazia or South Ossetia? How would you describe your relationship? If not, what is the reason?
- Do IDP children feel different in school, neighbourhood? Why?
- In general, how do you know that a person is IDP?
- Do you have conflicts in school or outside the school? Do other children have conflicts with each other?
- Who is involved in the conflict?
- Between peers/friends/classmates?
- Between students and teachers?
- Between upper graders in school/outside of school?
- What is the reason? How are conflicts started?
- Are these conflicts violent, verbal, other?
- How are conflicts solved?
- Have you ever witnessed a conflict between IDP/non IDP children?
- What is the reason? How are conflicts started?
- Are these conflicts violent, verbal, other?
- How are conflicts solved?
- **School**



**a. Overall attitude**

- Have you ever changed the school? Why?
- What do you like/dislike in your school?
- In general how comfortable do you feel in school? Why?
- Teachers
- Classmates
- Other
- Do you think you are doing well in school? If not, what hampers you from doing well in school?
- Do you find school a good place to concentrate on school work? \ What would you change to make your
- school better place? To increase your achievement in school?
- Do you wish to change the school? Why?

**b) Teaching and teachers**

- Do you like your teachers? Why?
- Do they grade you fairly and accurately?
- If not, can you tell an example when you or your friends were graded unfairly, why do you think it happened?
- How teachers punish students? How often does it happen?
- Do teachers treat students in different way? If yes, how and why?
- What would you change to make your school better place? To increase your achievement in school?
- Do you think teachers treat IDP/non- IDP students differently? explain
- **Looking to the future**
- What do you want to do after leaving school?
- Do you feel positive about the future?
- Which good things you think may happen in future? What are you going to achieve?
- What obstacles do you feel you need to overcome?
- What fears do you have regarding the future?

## **Guide for Moderators of Focus Groups** **IDP and non-IDP school children**

- **Introductory session**

Moderator's introduction, explaining the role of moderator and goals of the study.

Introducing FG rules, self-introduction of participants

- **Social integration experiences**

- a) **Daily life**

- What happens in a typical day between when you get up to when you go to bed?
- At what time do you get up?
- What do you usually do in the morning?
- Do you attend school? Do you attend school regularly or you miss lessons? Why?
- When you miss lessons, what do you do? Where do you go?
- What do you do in the evening?
- Do you spend evening at home? What do you do at home?
- Where else do you go in the evening? What do you do there?
- Where do you meet your friends/other children?
- At home? How do you spend time together at home?
- Where else? What do you do there?
- What do you do on weekends?
- Do you spend weekends at home? What do you do?
- Where else? What do you do there?

- b) **Social interaction**

- What associations come to your mind while hearing the word IDP ?
- Please choose 5 adjectives for the word IDP. Why did you select this particular adjectives?
- Are there IDPs around you? What kind of relationship do you have with them?
- Do you have any IDP friends from Abkhazia or South Ossetia? How would you describe your relationship? If not, what is the reason?
- Do IDP children feel different in school, neighbourhood? Why?
- In general, how do you know that a person is IDP?
- Do you have conflicts in school or outside the school? Do other children have conflicts with each other?
- Who is involved in the conflict?
- Between peers/friends/classmates?
- Between students and teachers?
- Between upper graders in school/outside of school?
- What is the reason? How are conflicts started?
- Are these conflicts violent, verbal, other?
- How are conflicts solved?
- Have you ever witnessed a conflict between IDP/non IDP children?
- What is the reason? How are conflicts started?
- Are these conflicts violent, verbal, other?
- How are conflicts solved?
- **School**

**a. Overall attitude**

- Have you ever changed the school? Why?
- What do you like/dislike in your school?
- In general how comfortable do you feel in school? Why?
- Teachers
- Classmates
- Other
- Do you think you are doing well in school? If not, what hampers you from doing well in school?
- Do you find school a good place to concentrate on school work? \ What would you change to make your school better place? To increase your achievement in school?
- Do you wish to change the school? Why?

**b) Teaching and teachers**

- Do you like your teachers? Why?
- Do they grade you fairly and accurately?
- If not, can you tell an example when you or your friends were graded unfairly, why do you think it happened?
- How teachers punish students? How often does it happen?
- Do teachers treat students in different way? If yes, how and why?
- What would you change to make your school better place? To increase your achievement in school?
- Do you think teachers treat IDP/non- IDP students differently? explain
- **Looking to the future**
- What do you want to do after leaving school?
- Do you feel positive about the future?
- Which good things you think may happen in future? What are you going to achieve?
- What obstacles do you feel you need to overcome?
- What fears do you have regarding the future?

## **Guide for Moderators of Focus Groups**

### **IDP and non-IDP schoolteachers**

- **Introductory session**

Moderator's introduction, explaining the role of moderator

Introducing FG rules, self-introduction of participants

- Let's get acquainted. Which school do you teach in? Do you work in other school as well?
- What is your work experience (years)? Do you have work experience other than teacher's?
- **Warm up**
- **Daily life of children**
- How would you describe attendance of students? Do they attend school regularly? If not, why?
- Is there a difference between IDP/non-IDP students in this respect?
- How would you describe academic performance of students? Are they doing well? What are the factors which in your opinion determine low academic performance of students (list)
- Is there a difference between IDP/non-IDP students in this respect? How would you explain this difference?
- What could help students improve academic achievement?
- **Friendship & social interaction**
- How would you describe relationship between children?
- How many close friends you have in and out of school?
- Do you mostly get on with classmates or neighbors? Who else?
- Do you have any IDP friends from Abkhazia or South Ossetia?
- If not, why?
- If yes, Do you have more IDP, or non-IDP friends? How would you describe your friendship with IDP children?
- Do they have conflicts in school? Between classmates? Between different classes? Between schools? How would you explain that?
- What are main reasons of conflict?
- Are these conflicts violent, verbal, other? Are they bullied?
- How are conflicts solved?
- Are there conflicts between IDP/non-IDP children? What is the reason of conflicts?
- Do IDP children feel themselves different at school?
- **Relationship between students/teachers**
- How would you describe relationship between teachers/students?
- Which incentives do you use to motivate students for better academic achievement?
- Which sanctions do you use?
- What are the reasons of tensions between teachers/ students?
- How often do you interact with parents ( at school, at child's home, at your home)?
- What are main reasons of meetings with parents? What issues do you usually discuss?
- Is there a difference between IDP/non IDP parents? Please explain
- **Working conditions**
- How would you describe working conditions? What do you like/dislike most of all?
- How can working conditions be improved in school?
- Do you give private lessons? If yes, how intensively? Do you go to student's place or they come to yours?
- In general, how would you describe the scope of private tutoring in your school/ location? How would you explain this?
- What are the reasons for PT?
- **Education reform**
- How well are you informed about the education reform? Which components of the reform are you aware of?
- How do you get information about the reform?
- Which components are most successful? Why?

- Which components are less successful? Why?
- **Professional development**
- Have you heard about teacher certification? What do you know about the process?
- Are you planning to participate in teacher certification? Why? When are you planning to participate?
- Did you use state voucher for professional development in 2009? Please explain
- Apart from state funded programs, have you participated in other programs?
- **Future plans**
- Are you planning to change job? Why?
- If you are planning to change job, will you work as a teacher? If not, where (in which field) are you planning to work?
- If you are planning to work as a teacher, what are the criteria you will use to select the school?