

Address of the Georgian Civil Society Organizations to the Government of Georgia

In 1994, Georgia officially joined UN International Pact on “Economic, Social and Cultural Rights”, which binds the signatory party to eradicate famine, and ensure that citizens have access food required by their nutritional needs.

According to Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) definition, “Food Security” is understood as every human individual’s reliable physical and economic access to nutritious, non-harming and diverse food, which is necessary for their active and healthy life. Therefore, food security is based on the following four pillars:

1. Existence of food - a) local production is developed; b) effective regulations, including import market regulations
2. Food accessibility - a) *physical accessibility*, such as the development of distribution chain (e.g. to conflict regions, or to mountainous regions); b) *economic accessibility*, which presupposes population wellbeing and proper functioning of social welfare system;
3. Food consumption - daily consumption of food by population, that is safe, required for individual to remain healthy and diverse in variety. This in turn requires adequate level of population awareness and proper functioning food security system in place, as well as, best possible minimization of food waste;
4. Food provision security - a state of a country, where shortage of basic food items and/or price fluctuation is effectively managed with the following instruments: environment and market monitoring, and natural disaster and crisis management system, that includes proper functioning of early warning system, food banks and/or fiscal instruments.

Hence, food security is one of the cornerstones of the national security of the state. At the same time, ensuring food security requires mutual multi-party coordination of economic, agricultural, health-care, social welfare and education systems.

According to the latest research¹, 70% of our population suffers from food insufficiency and is afraid the situation will further deteriorate. At the same time, approximately 50% of population income is spent on food. Due to limited income, population **cannot** access locally grown, diverse and healthy products. Due to this, child development impediment problem is observed in Georgia, especially among the poor layers of society. Iodine and Iron deficit, obesity and other non-contagious diseases are frequently observed as well.

Against this background, Georgia still has not adopted framework document on Food security and Nutrition and does not yet have coordination system to manage food security risks.

Therefore, learning from international experience and receiving technical assistance, as well as, becoming part of global food security discourse remain some of the challenges Georgia is facing.

The “Committee on World Food Security” (CFS) is the major international forum, that works on global food security (<http://www.fao.org/cfs/cfs-home/en/>). UN FSC is an inclusive international and inter-governmental platform tasked to review global food security and nutritional situation, and to develop recommendation policy, to coordinate care to ensure food security and nutritional needs are met during short-term crisis, as well as, in area that require long-term structural attention.

The UN Committee on World Food Security is an independent body. Each state willing to participate in it must apply individually. As of today, 139 UN members are part of the Committee that includes every EU member state and every neighboring country to Georgia. It must be noted that CFS does not have any kind of mandatory membership fees.

Unfortunately, Georgia is not yet a member of the Committee on World Food Security. Due to this, Georgia is yet unable to become part of the regional and global strategic framework development processes, does not receive information on technical issues and does not receive expert support which would enable it to access latest information and learn from best experiences.

Therefore, Georgian civil society (52 Georgian civil society organizations, members of Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum) addresses to the Georgian **Government to** discuss the

¹ “National Research on the Situation of the Nutrition in Georgia and Azerbaijan”, Tbilisi, 2015. Oxfam UK, Biological Farming Association “Elkana” - Within the frames of the EU funded project - “Preparation of National Food Security Strategy in Southern Caucasus and support for Small Enterprises”.

possibility of joining the UN Committee on World Food Security. This will help Georgia elaborate and implement efficient food security policy.

Signatories:

1. Biological Farming Association “Elkana”
2. European Initiative - Liberal Academy Tbilisi
3. Caucasus Environmental NGO network (CENN)
4. Mercy Corps Georgia
5. The Center for Strategic Research and Development of Georgia
6. Analytic Center “World Experience for Georgia”
7. Foundation ”Multi- Ethnic Resource Centre on Civic Education Development”
8. "Women Enterprise" Fund Georgia
9. Energy Efficiency Foundation
10. OXFAM Georgia
11. Georgian Association of Regional Broadcasters
12. Community Foundation GENIUS LOCI
13. Student Youth Council
14. Union "Anti-Violence Network of Georgia"
15. Center of Development and Democracy
16. The Greens Movement of Georgia / Friends of the Earth - Georgia
17. in “Peaceful and Business Caucasus”
18. Association European Studies for the Innovative Development of Georgia
19. Youth Alternative
20. Local Democracy Agency - Georgia
21. IDP Women Association “Consent”
22. Public Advocacy.
23. International Center for Advancement of Research, Technology & Innovation (ICARTI)
24. Association for the Farmers' Rights Defence
25. Foundation “Caucasus Environment”
26. Association for the efficient use of the Georgian energy resources
27. The Union of Azerbaijan Women of Georgia
28. Georgian Trade Union Confederation

29. Europe Foundation
30. "School-Family-Society" Association
31. International Center of Geopolitical research
32. Georgian Association "Woman in Business"
33. Association of Tea Producers Georgia "Georgian Tea"
34. Civil Society Institute
35. Cultural-Humanitarian Fund "Sukhumi"
36. International Society "Caucasian Mosaic"
37. Repatriates' Union
38. Association - Society for Development
39. International Business Development and Investment Promotion Centre
40. People's Harmonious Development Society
41. Institute for Euro-Atlantic integration and strategic studies
42. Bridge of Friendship – Kartlosi
43. Human Rights Center
44. Open Society Georgia Foundation
45. Democracy Institute
46. International Business and Economic Development Centre
47. Samtskhe-Javakheti Regional Association "Toleranti"
48. Georgia Alliance for Safe Roads
49. Women with University Education
50. Georgian Foundation for Strategic and International Studies
51. Institute for Development of Freedom of Information (IDFI)
52. „Healthy World“