



CARITAS CZECH REPUBLIC COUNTRY OFFICE in Georgia

We Help Where Needed

Results of Our Work in Numbers
2015-2023



GENERAL INFORMATION

Caritas Czech Republic's Country Office in Georgia was established in 2015.

The Georgian Country Office has more than 30 employees and collaborators.

Up to 70 projects have been implemented so far.

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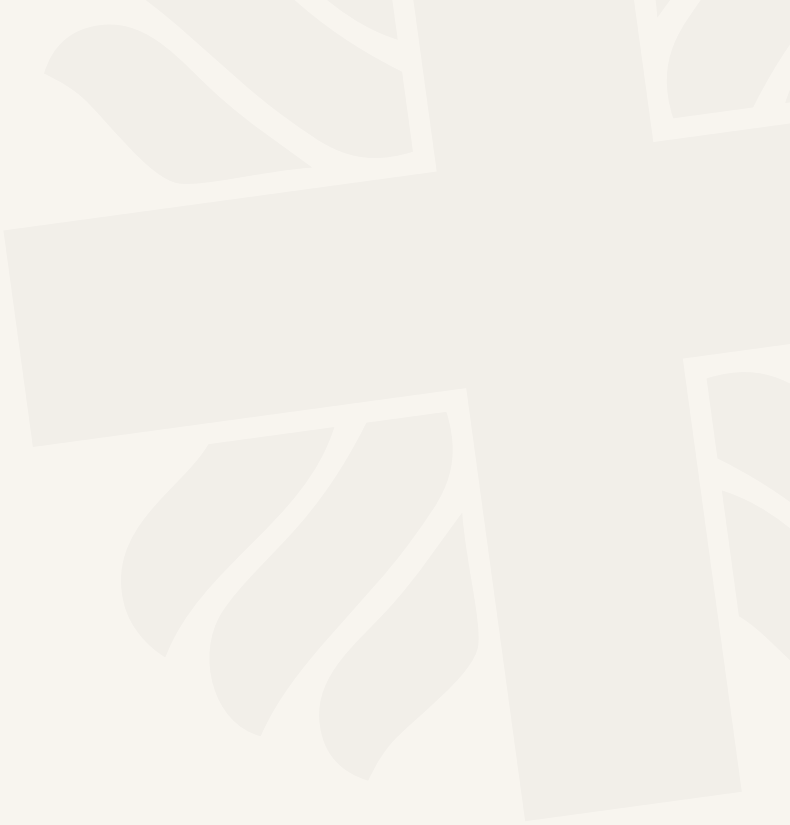
Country Director's Letter

Caritas Czech Republic has been working on development activities in Georgia since 2008 when the country program was launched. Until 2014, we mainly worked through cooperation with local partner organizations. A year later, Caritas Czech Republic's full-fledged mission was established and a new stage of my life, as the Country Director, started.

Georgia is an interesting country with its history and culture and its ethnically diverse population. Despite the frequency of hardships over the centuries, the Georgian people have always been striving to build a better country for their future generations.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union and declaring Georgia as an independent state, we faced a number of challenges – we had to practically rebuild our country which turned out to be very difficult to deal with alone.

With this in mind and considering the long and positive history of our friendship with our Western partners, donor organizations from Europe and the US immediately offered a helping hand and have been assisting us in the development of our country already for more than 30 years. Caritas Czech Republic, a noted organization with 100 years of experience in helping out where needed, has turned out to be one of the main actors in this direction.



While establishing the country's mission, Caritas Czech Republic defined the core areas to support Georgia such as healthcare, social protection, rural development and environmental protection.

Caritas Czech Republic's team focuses on the most vulnerable groups in the country and strives to improve healthcare and social services available to the Georgian population and assists the Government of Georgia in the implementation of healthcare and social reforms. We aim at greater social inclusion and a stronger civil society and provide support to communities in rural mountainous regions to improve living conditions by strengthening skills and access to resources. Environmental protection is at the heart of several of our activities. We are extremely grateful to our international donor organizations and partners for all of their assistance in supporting our work.

In this publication, we are pleased to present the results of the years of our joint work together with our donors and local and international partners. We believe that with our support to the Georgian people, we are contributing to a better future for this country and changing the lives of each citizen of Georgia.

Ekaterine Meskhrikadze,
Caritas Czech Republic's Country Office Director



HEALTHCARE



Caritas Czech Republic has been supporting the Government of Georgia in implementing healthcare reforms nationwide since 2015. Our activities include improving and assuring the quality of primary care services, support for early detection and prevention of oncological diseases, developing and implementing digital health solutions and assuring quality of maternal and child healthcare services.



Enhancement of Primary Healthcare

Primary healthcare is the “gateway” of the healthcare system – it protects a patient from the risk of the further development of diseases and prevents the next levels of healthcare from being overloaded. Caritas Czech Republic works on updating evidence-based clinical protocols, promotes the capacity-building of family doctors, and supports the introduction of a unified electronic management information system across the country.



The capacities of primary healthcare medical personnel (**69 doctors and 74 nurses**) of 44 rural primary healthcare facilities of Dusheti and Zugdidi municipalities were strengthened in improving the quality of management of common acute and chronic health problems.

- A total of **139 online training sessions** were conducted – 48 for Dusheti municipality medical personnel and 91 for Zugdidi municipality medical personnel.
- A total of **132 on-site support supervision visits** were conducted – 48 visits to the Dusheti municipality and 84 visits to the Zugdidi municipality.



- **3 site visits** were conducted in each primary healthcare facility.
- A total of 205 online **supportive supervision sessions** were conducted – 86 of them for Dusheti municipality primary healthcare facilities and 119 for Zugdidi primary healthcare facilities.



10 clinical protocols for primary healthcare were updated and approved by the Ministry of Health of Georgia.

- **50 computers** were handed over to rural doctors in the Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti and Mtskheta-Mtianeti regions.
- **200 doctors** were trained in doctor-patient communication specific, patient rights, and bioethics through accredited courses.

IT Solutions for Improving the Healthcare System in Georgia

Caritas Czech Republic works on the development and implementation of a primary care management information system and an electronic medical records system nationwide. Electronic systems will enable Georgia to receive data from all primary healthcare facilities in an ordered form on the quality of clinical processes, including reliable and valid statistics on disease management and prevention work. Electronic tools are used to measure and improve quality such as immunization coverage and cancer screening rates, quality monitoring of children's growth and development and the management of non-communicable diseases (hypertension, diabetes, cardio-vascular, etc.). The implementation of IT solutions is accompanied by on-site and remote training sessions provided to primary healthcare centers to familiarize them with the new software and help them master the use of the e-systems.



The electronic platform of unified queues, telemedicine and referrals

for primary healthcare was created and introduced in 5 primary healthcare facilities of Tbilisi, 16 rural ambulatories of the Dusheti municipality and 28 rural ambulatories of the Zugdidi municipality.



● To implement E-MIS in pilot facilities, a total of **157 online training sessions** and **104 on-site visits** were conducted for rural primary healthcare facilities and 5 primary healthcare centers.

● A total of **80 online training sessions** and **42 on-site visits** were conducted in the Dusheti municipality. A total of **65 online trainings** and **53 site visits** were conducted in the Zugdidi municipality.



A country-wide **online system for booking COVID-19 vaccinations** was created.



A **Unified Electronic Management Information System (E-MIS)** including Electronic Medical Records for Primary Healthcare was created.



The **COVID-19 Laboratory information system** was built for effective COVID-19 surveillance and **30 trainings** in the use of laboratory information system were provided to **456 specialists** working at the Lugar research laboratory and NCDC zonal district laboratories in the cities of Batumi and Kutaisi.

Increased Quality of Pediatric Care

Since 2020, Caritas Czech Republic has been actively working on improving the quality of child health and development services through the training of rural doctors and practice facilitation. The work carried out includes updating the pediatric protocols and the provision of respective training sessions and supportive supervision for rural healthcare practitioners all over the country.

Caritas Czech Republic has been involved in remote monitoring of 0-6 child growth and development in 50 rural ambulatories. Both family doctors and early intervention specialists were trained in providing teleconsultations to facilitate service delivery in distant areas where the early care is unavailable.



2 clinical protocols for the management of hospital-associated

pneumonia and ventilation-associated pneumonia of pediatric patients at the hospital were designed and approved

by the Ministry of Health of Georgia. **200**

pediatricians were trained respectively.





5 clinical protocols in pediatric topics -

Management of upper and lower respiratory infection in children by family doctors, management of acute diarrhea in children by PHC, children with fever - clinical management by PHC, monitoring and screening of child development by family doctors - have been designed and approved by the Ministry of Health of Georgia.

- 376 trainings and 514 supervision meetings were delivered to medical personnel.
- 40 nursing protocols were updated and 9 nursing protocols were created in 2019 with the purpose of the quality assurance of nursing practice at hospitals and long-term care facilities.
- The State Protocol on the Diagnosis and Management of COVID-19 Infection in Pediatric Patients was elaborated and approved by the Ministry of Health of Georgia.



Prevention, Early Detection and Treatment of Oncological Diseases

Since 2010, Caritas Czech Republic has been working to support cancer prevention, which includes both awareness-raising information campaigns and the capacity-building of medical staff. One of the main turning points of our organization was the establishment of the Zugdidi Screening Center in 2019 and equipping it in accordance with modern standards.



The Zugdidi Screening Center was built in

2018-2019 and equipped with the latest generation mammography machine, colposcope, ultrasound equipment, surgical instruments, and laboratory inventory.

- In 2020, **120 family doctors** underwent training sessions in oncology.
- In 2020-2021, **more than 6 000 citizens** of West Georgia attended awareness-raising campaigns related to cancer prevention and screening.
- In 2022, the Rukhi and Batumi public hospitals were equipped with **modern minimally invasive surgical devices** and their medical personnel was trained in onco-gynecological topics.





In 2019-2022, **12 300**
patients received
screening and other types of
medical services at the Zugdidi
Screening Center.





Development of the HIV Self-Testing Support Service Protocol

Georgia has a significant stigma around the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) and the acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS). This is the reason why it is a challenge for people in risk groups to decide to get tested for HIV, thereby increasing the number of people infected without knowing their HIV status. Caritas Czech Republic supported the development of the behaviorally informed message box, which has been tested for effectiveness in motivating people to self-test for HIV. Based on the research results, the most effective communication messages were selected for the development of follow-up campaigns by the respective governmental entities.



An HIV self-testing support service protocol has been

developed and **5 doctors and 7 peer consultants** were trained respectively in order to provide stigma-free advisory.



Interventions During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, Caritas Czech Republic rapidly tailored most of its activities to cope with the severe situation caused by the spread of the virus. This included the updating of clinical protocols and adapting them to the challenges caused by the pandemic, ensuring the respective capacity-building activities for healthcare practitioners and the provision of computers to rural ambulatories enabling them to remotely manage the conditions of patients.



974 doctors from 10 regions of Georgia

participated in the training sessions on the management of suspicious cases of COVID-19 at the primary healthcare level and **300 pediatricians** were trained in the management of COVID-19 cases in children.



41 computers were handed over to rural doctors in West Georgia for improving work processes in COVID-19 pandemic settings as well as ensuring attendance to COVID-19 related online training sessions.





A training course in the management of side effects of COVID-19 vaccination for **1156 rural doctors** was held in **10 regions of Georgia**.



1160 rural doctors from all **10 regions** of Georgia received supportive supervision and expert consultation from 32 practice facilitators on the management of COVID-19 in children and improvement of the quality of child health and development.



28 ambulatories of the Zugdidi municipality received personal protective equipment during COVID-19 as well as **hundreds of personal computers, glucometers, pressure devices, and pulse oximeters**. **55 oxygen concentrators** were delivered to the Georgian Medical Holding.



Up to **300 pediatricians** in Tbilisi and the regions were trained for implementing new protocols for the diagnosis and management of the COVID-19 infection in pediatric patients.



About **200 doctors** of the online clinic for the management of COVID-patients were trained on the principles of effective telephone communication and practical issues related to vaccination against COVID-19.



SOCIAL CARE



Caritas Czech Republic has been addressing the disability issue for years with the aim of protecting the rights of persons with disabilities and providing them with proper services.

Since 2020, we have been carrying out a large-scale initiative to support the Government of Georgia in the deinstitutionalization process. This implies the development of relevant legislative initiatives and the provision of family-type homes and services for persons with disabilities living under state care.

In 2015-2021, we carried out an initiative to provide quality and affordable services for children with the autism spectrum disorder as a result of which the environment for such children and their families in Georgia has significantly improved.

In 2017-2022, one of the main focuses of our work was the support for the most vulnerable members of society – children with severe disabilities. To improve the quality of their lives and to alleviate their conditions, we contributed to the creation of a new Long-Term and Palliative Care Unit at the Zhvania Children`s Hospital in Tbilisi.

In 2022, we carried out another very important initiative in support to the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) under the Joint Program Leave No One Behind — From Policy and Principles to Practice in Disability-Inclusive Development in Georgia.

Rights-Based Services for Adults with Disabilities

In Georgia, the process of transferring adults with disabilities from large boarding houses to family-type homes began in 2011 and is still ongoing. In 2020, Caritas Czech Republic in close cooperation with the Government of Georgia and respective partners, developed a deinstitutionalization strategy and an action plan. In addition, our organization took responsibility for providing community-based homes and services for persons with disabilities who had previously lived in two large boarding homes under state care.



On the initiative of the State Care Agency, a necessary **strategy and action plan on independent living and deinstitutionalization** was developed.



115 persons with disabilities of the Dusheti and Martkofi boarding homes received psycho-emotional support.



**6 family-type homes
for adults with**

disabilities were procured,
rehabilitated and handed over
to the State Care Agency.



Rights-Based Healthcare Services

Persons with disabilities still face various challenges when accessing health and social care services in Georgia. This concerns not only physical access to healthcare facilities but also other barriers such as attitudes and stigma as well as the lack of respective skills among health professionals. In 2022, Caritas Czech Republic together with our partner organizations worked on an analysis and a revision of health legislation and provided recommendations to the Parliament of Georgia to initiate relevant legislative changes and align them in accordance with the principles of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).



In 2022, 4 laws were analyzed regarding healthcare to harmonize them with the requirements of UNCRPD in order to improve accessibility to and create disability-friendly healthcare services. The respective recommendations on changes were submitted to the Parliament of Georgia.



Quality and Accessible Services for Children with the Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

Children with the autism spectrum disorder and their families in Georgia face various challenges. Most of these issues relate to the early identification of autism as well as financial and geographic access to therapy services across the country. One of the main obstacles is the insufficient preparation of primary health care professionals to identify the risk of autism and refer children to relevant rehabilitation centers. On the other hand, local specialists in the regions lack the professional skills to provide quality care to children with ASD. Many municipalities still do not have the necessary tools for a full diagnostic assessment of children with a suspected autism spectrum disorder. There are a lot of municipalities where the local government does not fund the provision of autism services. During 2015-2021, Caritas Czech Republic, together with its local partners, autism service providers and The Government of Georgia, worked actively to establish new autism centers, providing quality autism services and create a supportive environment for children and their families in Georgia.

● **113 autism specialists** from all over Georgia were trained in the diagnosis and management of the autism spectrum disorder.

● **12 autism professionals** were trained in the introductory Early Start Denver Model (ESDM Model) and **30 specialists** were trained in the SCERTS Model.

● **15 autism specialists** were prepared at an ABA supervisor level.

● **4 autism centers** (in the cities of Telavi, Kutaisi, Kobuleti and Zugdidi) had their capacities strengthened and **3 new autism services** (the Akhaltsikhe municipality and the cities of Ozurgeti and Ambrolauri) were established.

● **1447 children** were screened to assess the risk of the Autism Spectrum Disorder.



A State Protocol on the identification, diagnosis and management of the autism spectrum disorder was developed and approved by the Ministry of Health of Georgia.





National Autism Service Standards were

developed and approved by
the Government of Georgia.





● **111 children** were assessed through the Gold Standard of autism diagnosis – ADOS-2.

● **41 behavior therapists** were trained in using evidence-based assessment methods used for working with people with the Autism Spectrum Disorder (ABLLS-R, Essential for Living).

● **3 inclusive education classes** were opened in the regions of Georgia in public kindergartens in the cities of Telavi, Zugdidi and Tbilisi.

● The Assessment of Basic Learning and Language Skills – Revised (**ABLLS-R**) as well as the functional Skills Assessment Tool – Essential for Living (**EFL**) were translated into Georgian and adapted.

Children's Long-term and Palliative Care Services in Georgia

Since 2017, Caritas Czech Republic has been working on the development of long-term care services focused on the social and medical needs of children with severe disabilities under state care. The support provided envisaged the establishment of a long-term and palliative care unit – Medical-Social House at the Zhvania Pediatric Academic Clinic in Tbilisi, its provision with all of the necessary medical equipment, the elaboration of a package of regulatory documentation for the creation of long-term and palliative care services and capacity-building for medical personnel.



Medical-Social House, a structure for long-term care of children, was established on the fifth floor of the newly-built Zhvania Pediatric Academic Clinic of TSMU and was provided with medical equipment.



● A package of **regulatory documentation for the creation of a long-term care system was prepared.**

● **Child-Oriented Care – a training course based on the bio-psycho-social model of long-term care for children, was created.**

● The personnel of the clinic were trained and **the Pediatric Long-term Care manual was prepared** and published.

● More than **200 doctors from across the country underwent a training course** on new standards of doctor-patient communication accredited by the Ministry of Health of Georgia.

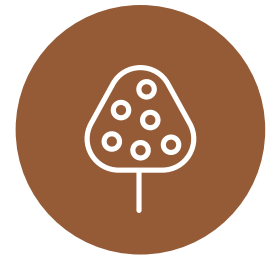
● A new **clinical protocol on the management of several pediatric nosologies was prepared** and appropriate accredited training was provided to the pediatricians employed in various clinics in the country.

● A special multi-sensory room – **Snoezelen MSE was created and equipped** at the children's Fireflies Land hospice. The medical personnel of the clinic underwent appropriate training on its use.

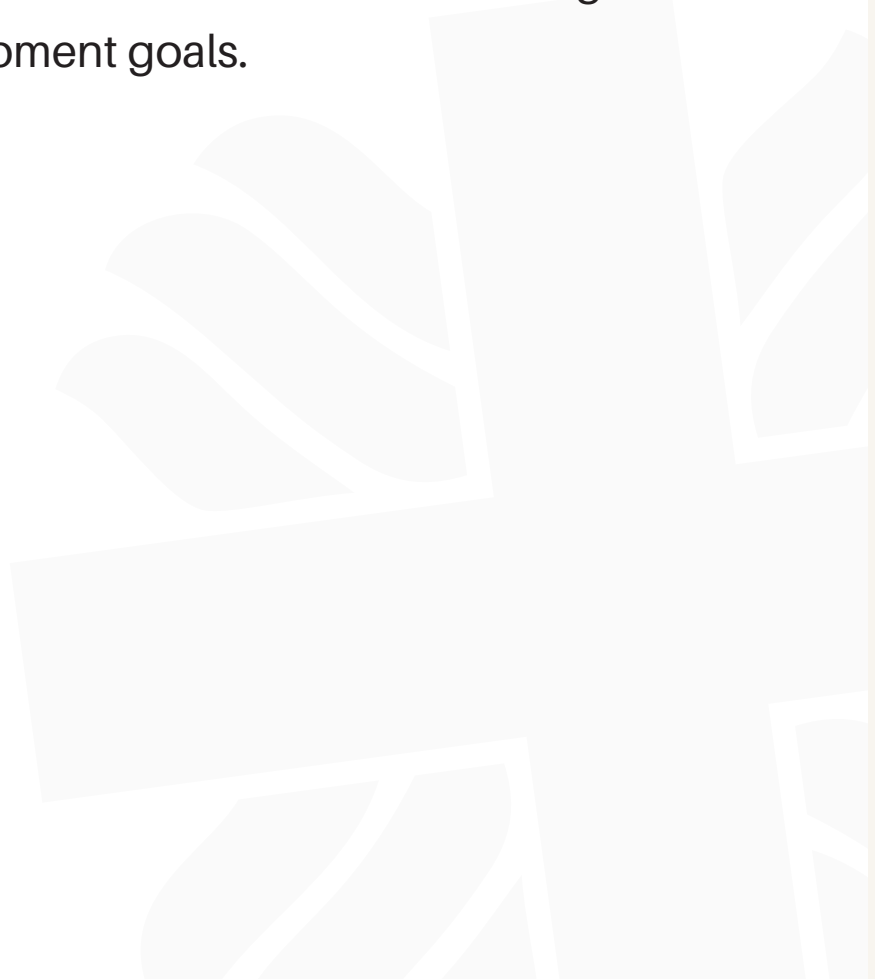




RURAL DEVELOPMENT



The growth of highland regions is part of Georgia's regional development policy. However, it requires a specific approach as mountainous settlements, contrary to other regions of the country, have limited agricultural resources, fewer economic opportunities and are more at risk of natural disasters. Caritas Czech Republic's rural development initiatives include supporting local farmers and entrepreneurs in mountainous settlements of Georgia and providing trainings tailored to the local needs. Our interventions contribute to Georgia's national sustainable development goals.



Development of Rural Mountainous Areas

As part of its rural development activities, Caritas Czech Republic focuses on improving the socio-economic conditions of the people living in mountainous regions of Georgia.

Thanks to funding from the European Union's ENPARD program, we have been supporting the socio-economic development in the Khulo municipality for four years. Under the project, we supported the activation of local youth, capacity building and local entrepreneur support through the provision of grants.



Local Action Group (LAG)
in Khulo was established.



Since 2015 Caritas Czech Republic has been supporting the Tusheti community, focusing on the development of traditional farming systems, including wool processing practices. The initiative has also supported tourism development and the value chain through a variety of material and technical support.

During 2021-2022, our support focused on the Racha-Lechkhumi and Kvemo Svaneti regions to strengthen local entrepreneurs and socially vulnerable families through material and technical assistance.





● Since 2022, a two-year initiative has been carried out to increase the income of the farmers living in the Tusheti and Pshav-Khevsureti areas as well as the Khulo municipality by changing their practices related to animal husbandry with a view to more effective and sustainable management methods.

● **90 residents** from Khulo and Tusheti municipalities and the region of Racha-Lechkhumi and Kvemo Svaneti were trained in business planning and management, marketing and sales.

● **40 farmers** from the Tusheti municipality were trained in modern agricultural practices.

● **22 households** from the Tusheti municipality received seeds and necessary tools to implement modern agricultural practices.

● **15 shepherds** were trained in using modern machinery during the sheep-shearing process.

● **101 residents** from the Khulo and Tusheti municipalities and the region of Racha-Lechkhumi and Kvemo Svaneti received grants for business startup and development.

● **500 jobs were created** in the Khulo municipality, **10 jobs** were created in the Tusheti municipality and **40 jobs** were retained in the region of Racha-Lechkhumi and Kvemo Svaneti.

● **220 beneficiaries were trained** in business management and marketing in the Khulo municipality.

● **273 beneficiaries were trained** in pasture management, sustainable forest management, disaster risk reduction, agri-tourism and eco-tourism in the Khulo municipality.

● **846 vulnerable** individuals living the region of Racha-Lechkhumi and Kvemo Svaneti were supported with poultry to maintain their livelihood activities during COVID-19.



The first medical aid service was established in Tusheti.



● **6 artificial insemination (AI) specialists were trained** in order to conduct AI procedures in the Tusheti municipality, the Pshav-Khevsureti region and the Khulo municipality.

● **4 grant proposals** were developed for the Tusheti Protected Landscape area in order to achieve independent development and attract new donors.

● **65 LAG members** were trained in the LEADER approach and the LAG concept.

● **More than 70 farmers** from different regions of Georgia were trained in farm bio-security standards, animal well-being, pasture management, basic veterinary practices and business plan development.

● **A Local Development Strategy** including a tourism development strategy for the Khulo municipality was developed based on the LEADER approach.





ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION



Environmental pollution remains one of the major challenges of the modern world. Contemporary urban, industrial, economic and technological development has brought significant benefits to mankind but, on the contrary, its consequences have negatively impacted the quality of human life and health. Georgia is currently facing environmental challenges caused by direct human activity and the global consequences of climate change. With this in mind, Caritas Czech Republic's environmental interventions are focusing on the introduction of waste separation and recycling and wastewater management practices.

Waste and Wastewater Management

Since 2018, Caritas Czech Republic's environmental activities focuses on raising awareness about the importance of sustainable waste management and introducing relevant practices in rural Georgia. In this regard, our organization has been actively supporting the development of infrastructure in the regions for waste collection, separation and recycling and introducing waste separation, recycling and composting practices in the Racha-Lechkhumi and Kvemo Svaneti region and providing respective technical assistance in the Dusheti and Khulo municipalities.

● **Waste recycling models** were developed for the Oni, Ambrolauri, Lentekhi and Tsageri municipalities and approved by the municipal governments.

● **The Intermunicipal waste recycling model** for the Racha-Lechkhumi and Kvemo Svaneti region was developed and approved by the regional government.

● **127 farmers** underwent capacity-building sessions in composting practices.



3 waste collection vehicles and 299

waste bins were procured and handed over to the Oni, Ambrolauri, Tsageri, Lentekhi, Dusheti and Khulo municipalities. The Oni municipality has also received **1 assanization vehicle** to manage waste from the wastewater treatment facilities.





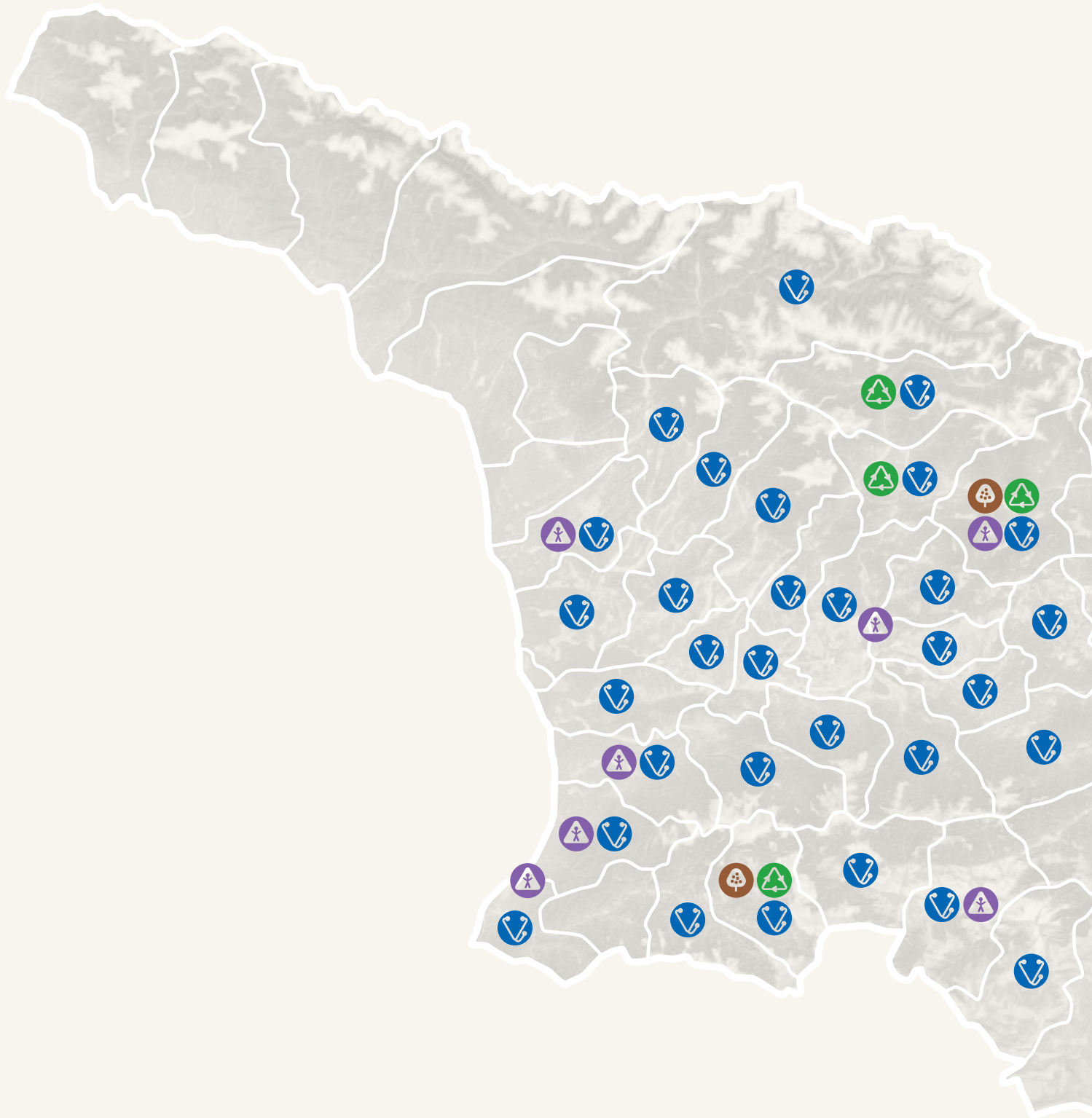
● **56 subsistence farmers** and **15 schools** were supported with all necessary equipment for making compost in the Racha-Lechkhumi and Kvemo Svaneti region.

● **30 teachers** went through the training on environmental education and **459 pupils and youth** in the circular economy in the Racha-Lechkhumi and Kvemo Svaneti region.

● **A strategy and action plan for wastewater management** was developed and shared with the Oni municipality government and the municipal water supply network maintenance center.

● **25 representatives** from public administration, self-government and civil society increased their capacities in wastewater treatment and best practices/solutions.

● **8 model wastewater infrastructures** were installed in the Oni municipality.



PROJECT MAP

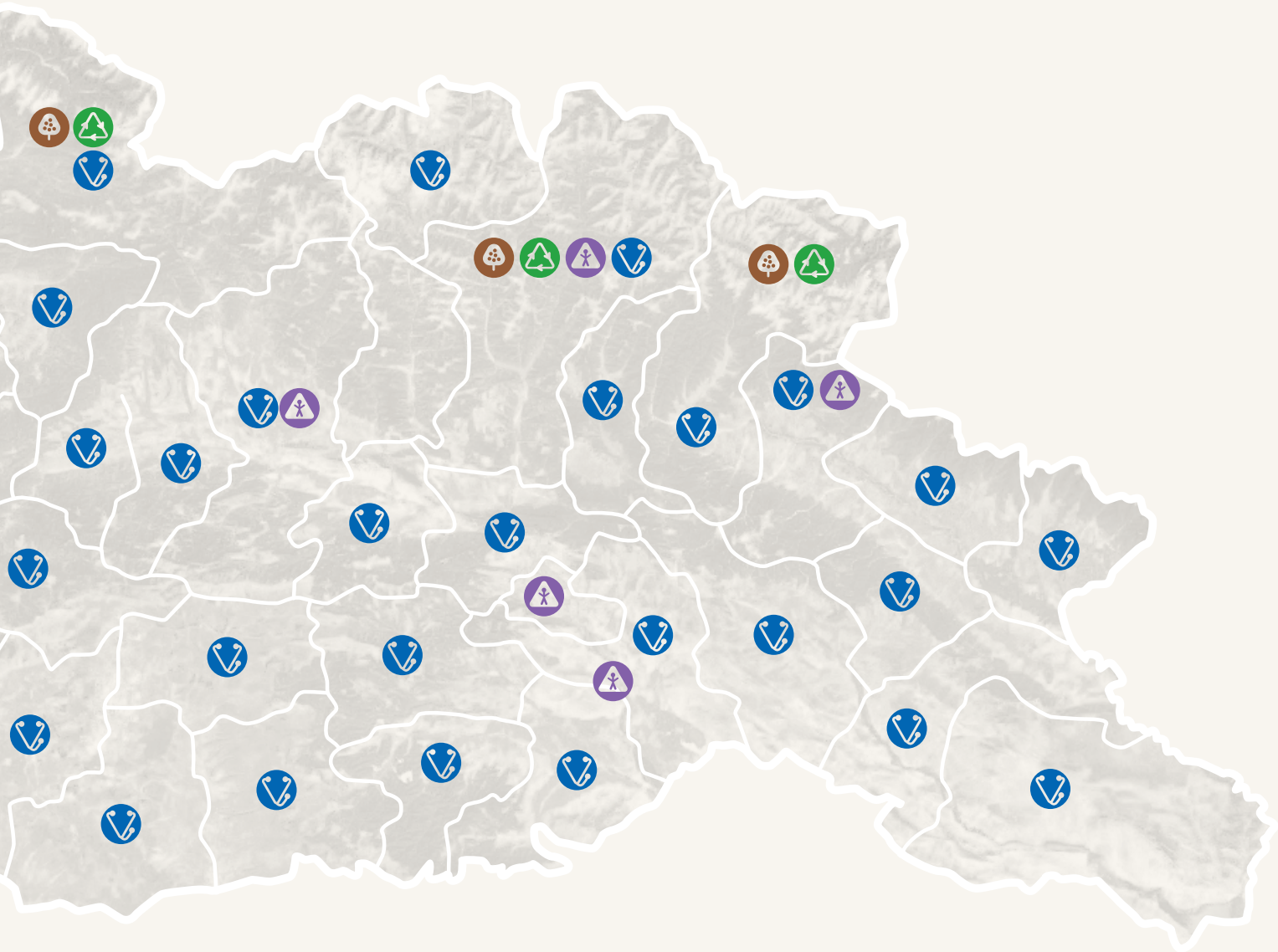
The markers on the map indicate the areas of Caritas Czech Republic's work in different municipalities of Georgia.

**HEALTHCARE**

**SOCIAL CARE**

**RURAL DEVELOPMENT**

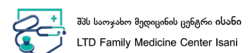
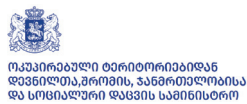
**ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION**



Donor Organizations Supporting Caritas Czech Republic's Work in Georgia



Our Partners





CARITAS CZECH REPUBLIC IN GEORGIA

8 Kartožia st. IV Building, I Entrance, IX Floor, Apt 24, 0186 Tbilisi, Georgia

(+995) 032 222 02 14

ccrg@caritas.cz

georgia.charita.cz

www.facebook.com/CCRGeorgia2015