

Project title	Rural Development in the Region of Kakheti-inception phase
General information	Region: Kakheti (Georgia) Duration: November 1, 2011 – June 30, 2012 Budget: CHF 565'000
Project partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementing partner: HEKS-EPER (Switzerland) • Institutional partner: Ministry of Agriculture of Georgia, Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure, regional and local authorities.
Project objective	<p>The objective of the inception phase is to conduct in-depth analysis of the livestock market systems as well as set-up a proper project structure.</p> <p>The overall objective of the project is to contribute to the development of the livestock sector in Kakheti. The income of farmers in Southern Georgia is to increase by contributing to the transition towards a durable market economy in livestock sector. This shall be achieved through increasing productivity and profitability of meat and milk production and by providing for an efficient access to markets in the districts of Dedoplistskaro, Sagarejo and Signaghi.</p>
Background	<p>Agriculture is merely the fourth most important economic sector of Georgia, representing approximately ten percent of the national GDP and absorbing roughly half of the country's labor force. The Kakheti region is one of the leading agricultural regions in Georgia and shows high levels of unemployment and poverty. Its population relies to a large extent on subsistence agriculture. Some eighty percent of the population live in rural areas and are engaged in agriculture, supplying Tbilisi and other regions of Georgia with agricultural products. Although women are actively involved in farm work, their role is often underestimated and they face difficulties in securing land and getting access to extension services, inputs and credits. In all three target municipalities (Sagarejo, Signagi and Dedoplistskaro) farming is the major economic activity. Livestock farming is the main economic activity for the majority of poor households and has the potential to support pro-poor growth. Through better access to services, inputs and markets, poor farmers can improve their economic situation. The project is in line with the Swiss Cooperation Strategy South Caucasus 2008-2012 and the priorities set by the government of Georgia which has declared agriculture to be a priority for the country's development.</p>
Project activities	<p>The project works with different stakeholders involved in the livestock sector (veterinaries, artificial inseminators, milk and meat processors, input suppliers, relevant government institutions).</p> <p>The core project activities will be defined after the inception phase.</p>
Project results	<p>Based on the findings of the inception phase, the expected results of the project are following, but might become subject to a change:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subsistence and semi-subsistence livestock holders have access to veterinary services and increasingly use them; • Improved in-farm fodder production and access to appropriate cattle nutritional inputs and to knowledge allows subsistence and semi-subsistence livestock holders to improve livestock nutrition practices; • Subsistence and semi-subsistence livestock holders have improved the genetic potential of their cattle stock; • Subsistence and semi-subsistence livestock holders have efficient market access in the dairy and meat value chains. <p>The final project beneficiaries are about 16'000 to 20'000 farmers in the region of Kakheti.</p>