



# Rural Development in Racha-Lechkhumi



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## Project title

**Rural Development in Racha-Lechkhumi**

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## General information

Region: Racha-Lechkhumi (Georgia)  
Duration: October 2008-December 2011  
Budget: CHF 3'000'000

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## Project partners

- Implementing partner: CARE Georgia and local sub-contracting partners
  - Institutional partner: Ministry of Agriculture and the office of the President's Representative in Racha-Lechkhumi
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## Project objectives

Farmers and small rural enterprises in Racha-Lechkhumi have improved skills and capacities in the field of dairy production and mixed farming. They achieve increased quality and volume of production and succeed in selling their produce. The interaction between the farmer households, their communities and local self-government is enhanced and contributes to transparent decision-making with a participation of all stakeholders.

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## Background

The region is less vulnerable to natural disasters as the municipalities apply principles of disaster risk reduction and prevention. The region of Racha-Lechkhumi is one of the most underdeveloped parts of Georgia, with the lowest population density of all regions of Georgia. As a result of continuous out-migration, the region's population has declined almost by half since the independence of Georgia. Arable farmland is limited and production is very low. There is a need for agricultural intensification and new methods to improve the quality and quantity of agricultural production and strengthen and develop links to markets. To

address this, the project applies a market development approach and works along the value chains which are most relevant for the impoverished and remote villages in the target region.

Racha-Lechkhumi is prone to landslides, floods, and erosion due to tectonic movements and seismic activities, which is aggravated by often unsustainable agricultural practise.

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### Project activities

The project's activities cover the following areas, mostly focusing on the municipalities of Ambrolauri and Oni

- Advisory services in the field of livestock breeding, mixed farming and honey production
- Demonstration plots to promote improved varieties and cultivation techniques
- Support to providers of agricultural inputs
- Strengthening the system of veterinary services
- Support of producers' associations in the field of machinery and
- Capacity building for entrepreneurship
- Matching grants for promotion of value-adding production, processing or marketing
- Support of the regional governor's office with a small Business and Market Development Unit.

In the field of disaster risk reduction, the project supports municipal authorities in the field of a watershed mapping and pasture management and small grants for community initiatives linked to the livestock or other value chains.

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### Expected results

The project also supports capacity building for a more successful lobbying of Racha's interests at the national level.

A total of 3000 farmer households in 20 communities benefit from advisory services or enjoy improved access to veterinary services and agricultural inputs. Participating farmers are expected to increase their incomes by 10-30 percent.

A total of 60 matching grants, especially in support of service providers such as veterinary and agricultural input shops, help to stimulate the market dynamics in the livestock and mixed farming value chains.

20-25 action research projects are undertaken to demonstrate improved techniques in food crop production and livestock breeding.

20 communities develop disaster risk and pasture management plans and benefit from improved small-scale infrastructure.

A Business and Market Development Office is established in the Regional Governor's Office.



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**Swiss Cooperation Office  
South Caucasus**

Swiss Cooperation Office South Caucasus  
**Embassy of Switzerland**

Radiani street 12, 0179 Tbilisi, Georgia  
Phone: (+995 32) 225 36 82 / 83, 222 37 21  
Fax: (+995 32) 225 36 84  
E-mail: [tbilisi@sdco.net](mailto:tbilisi@sdco.net)  
Web - page: [www.swisscoop.ge](http://www.swisscoop.ge)