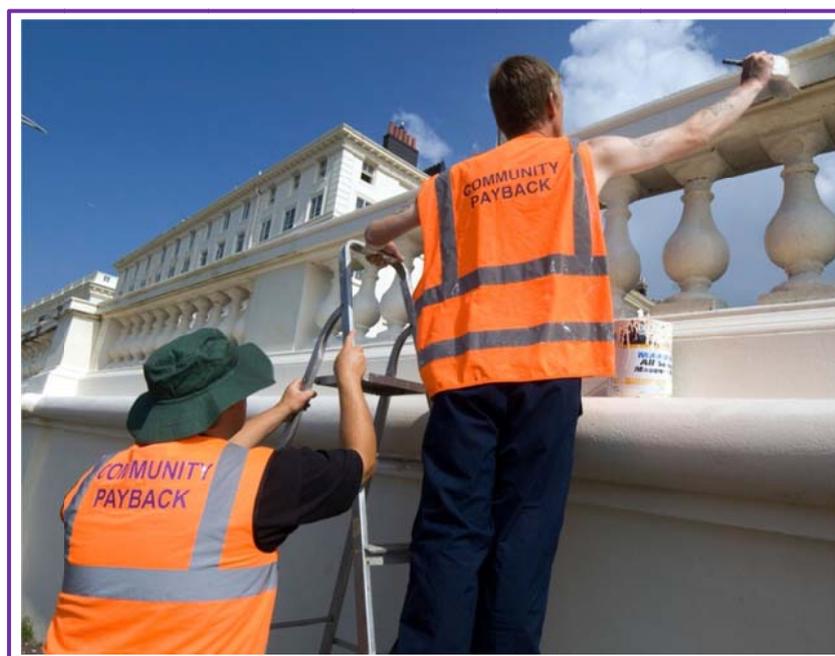




Challenging the Overuse of Imprisonment in Georgia and contributing to the Decrease in Prison Population

Impact Evaluation



Open Society Foundation

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Contents

1. Introduction	2
1.1 Background and context	2
1.2 Project description	3
1.3 Match funding	4
2. Evaluation Purpose and Methodology	5
2.1 Purpose of the evaluation	5
2.1 Research methodology	5
2.2 Data collection	6
3. Theory of Change	8
4. Results of the Impact Evaluation	9
4.1 Target Outcome 1 – Increased use of community service	9
4.2 Target Outcome 2 – Increased use of parole	14
4.3 Target Outcome 3 – Early release of offenders on health grounds	18
5. Conclusion	21
6. Lessons Learnt and Recommendations	22
6.1 Project design	22
6.2 Alternatives	23
6.3 Early release mechanisms	23
7. References	24
Annex 1 – Timeline matrix	25

1. Introduction

1.1 Background and context

Georgia’s political and criminal justice context has changed considerably since the beginning of the project. Back in 2010, when the project was originally planned, the Georgian Government operated a ‘Zero Tolerance’ criminal justice policy that led to harsh sentencing policies and an increase in the use of incarceration.

In practice, Georgia’s punitive penal policy had a number of consequences for sentencing, which included an increase in the length of prison sentences. The early release system for prisoners was also affected, which resulted in a diminishing number of prisoners released on parole. Moreover, there was limited use of alternative, non-custodial sentences such as community service. The cumulative nature of these putative penal policies led to a consistent increase in Georgia’s prison population, which exacerbated Georgia’s prison overcrowding problem. As table 1 demonstrates, Georgia’s prison population increased year on year between 2005 and 2011, which was largely attributed to the Government’s Zero Tolerance criminal justice policy.

Year	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Number of prisoners	9,688	15,465	18,309	18,659	21,239	23,684	24,114	19,349	9,185
Increase/decrease		+5,777	+2,844	+350	+2,580	+2,445	+430	-4,765	-10,164

*Table 1: Georgia prison population 2005-2013
(Source: 2005-2007 Ministry of Justice of Georgia; 2008-2013 MCLA of Georgia)*

Despite the punitive criminal justice policy, there were some positive signs of reform. In December 2008, with the support of the European Commission, the President of Georgia established a Criminal Justice Reform Inter-Agency Coordination Council that was entrusted with the elaboration and implementation of criminal justice reform in-line with international standards (<http://www.justice.gov.ge>, Accessed 3 July 2013). In 2009, the Council formulated a Criminal Justice Reform Strategy and Action Plan. The strategy outlined the challenges to the criminal justice sphere and aimed to develop a comprehensive sectoral approach to issues such as prison overcrowding, system of alternatives and juvenile justice. Working groups were established (see figure 1) to coordinate and monitor the implementation of the Criminal Justice Reform Action Plan. Membership of the working groups included representatives from relevant governmental agencies, international organisations and NGOs.

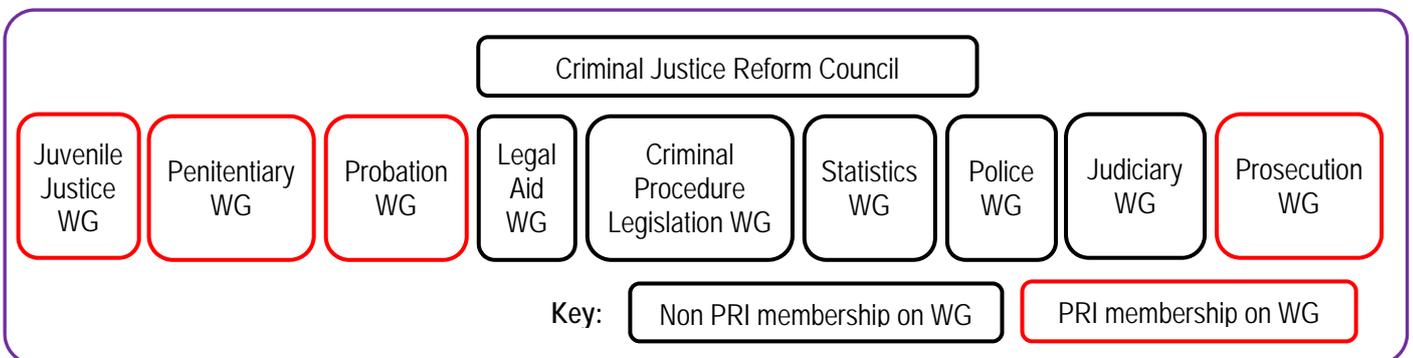


Figure 1: Criminal Justice Reform Working Group structure

In 2010 the context for implementing the project therefore seemed favourable. As figure 1 demonstrates, PRI was a member of four working groups and both of the project objectives – alternatives and parole – were key priorities for the Criminal Justice Reform Strategy. However, several key informants that were interviewed for this evaluation noted that in reality there was minimum Government buy-in and it was difficult for civil society to engage in the reform process:

Under the previous Government, the Criminal Justice Strategy process was a tick-box exercise. Government would say that the European Commission is implementing, why don't you ask them. (Interview with Georgian Young Lawyers Association, 11 June 2013)

Before the election, it was difficult for civil society and international organisations to have a dialogue with Government. Government excluded NGO's from the Criminal Justice Reform process because NGO's criticised Government's policies. Pressure was applied from civil society and the Government didn't like it. (Interview with Open Society, 11 June 2013)

The change of Government in October 2012 was a key turning point for the criminal justice reform process in Georgia. The new Government (Georgian Dream coalition) was committed to reforming the criminal justice system. In December 2012, the new Government adopted the Law on Amnesty. According to MCLA statistics, 8,692 prisoners were released from criminal responsibility under the law. On 30 September 2012, the number of prison inmates constituted 22,299. After the large-scale amnesty, on 30 April 2013, the number of prison inmates constituted 10,202 (MCLA; 2013). This represents a 54% decrease in the prison population over a seven month period. The goal of the OSI/PRI project is to decrease the prison population in Georgia. In evaluating the impact of this project, it is clear that the change in Government and large-scale amnesty is the main reason why there has been a drastic decrease in the prison population in Georgia. However, this was an external factor that PRI had no control over. PRI's performance therefore should be judged on the extent to which it achieved the project objectives – increased use of community service and parole.

With the change in Government, the 'Zero Tolerance' policy was abandoned for a more liberalised criminal justice policy. All of a sudden there was political will on the government side and the focus shifted to implementation:

With political change, the reform process has accelerated. Changing the approach is one thing, how to implement the approach is different. The focus now is on implementation. (Interview with the European Commission Delegation to Georgia, 11 June 2013)

The Government is very open now. They realise they are in trouble. They are not hiding the problems. There is an opportunity now to work with Government and to implement changes. The real work is to be done now. There are thousands of issues to work on and everything is important. (Interview with Support to the Reform of the Criminal Justice System in Georgia, EU project, 10 June 2013)

1.2 Project description

Table 2 provides a summary overview of the project. It should be noted that as the project progressed and the context changed, other objectives emerged a priority for the project. In particular:

- Promoting early release of gravely/terminally ill prisoners. This became a key objective for the project in 2011 and is consistent with the project rationale as it fits under the promotion of early release mechanisms.
- Restriction of Liberty as an alternative to Imprisonment. This emerged as an objective in 2011 and is consistent with the project rationale as it falls under alternative to imprisonment.

See Annex 1 for a timeframe matrix, which outlines the story of how the project unfolded on a month-by-month basis.

Project Title:	Challenging the Overuse of Imprisonment in Georgia and contributing to the Decrease in Prison Population
Timeframe:	June 2010 – December 2011 (phase 1) January 2012 – June 2013 (phase 2)
Funding partner:	Open Society Foundation
Goal:	To promote the effective use of non-custodial and early release measures as a way of challenging the overuse of imprisonment and contributing to a decrease in the prison population in Georgia.
Specific objectives:	1) To promote the increased use of community service as an alternative to imprisonment throughout Georgia 2) To assist the establishment of more effective system of early conditional release (parole)
Activities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Training workshops - Roundtable meetings, events and workshops - Distribution of leaflets and posters - Promotional work through media (radio interviews and newspaper articles) - Lobbying and support through bilateral meetings - Develop situation analysis paper - Policy dialogue - Provision of expertise and technical support - Promotion of good practice model examples
Budget:	Phase 1: \$70,130 USD (\$59,000 USD support from Open Society) Phase 2: \$65,080 USD (\$59,000 USD support from Open Society) Total: \$135,210 USD (£118,000 USD support from Open Society)
Project stakeholders	<p><i>Government</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ministry of Corrections and Legal Assistance (MCLA) - Ministry of Justice - Penitentiary Department and National Agency of Probation under MCLA - Joint Commission of MCLA and Ministry of Health, Labour and Social Security - Working Groups for Penal Reform - Judiciary, prosecutors, defence lawyers - Parole boards <p><i>International organisations</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Open Society Foundation - Council of Europe - European Commission Delegation to Georgia (EU funded rule of law projects) - Norwegian Mission of Rule of Law Advisers to Georgia (NORLAG) - UN Agencies - UNICEF, UNDP, UNOHCHR <p><i>Civil Society</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Georgian Young Lawyers Association (GYLA) - Article 42 of the Georgian Constitution - Youth for Justice - Former Political Prisoners for Human Rights - Human Rights Centre

Table 2: Summary information of the project

1.3 Match funding

During the implementation of the Open Society project, PRI was able to raise additional funds for the project activities through an EU-funded project ‘Promoting a Liberalization of Criminal Justice System through the involvement of civil society’. Activities jointly covered by the Open Society and EU grants included: training for probation officers, retreat and reimbursements for working group members, printing of leaflets and posters on community service.

2. Evaluation purpose and methodology

2.1 Evaluation purpose

This evaluation forms part of a series of evaluations being undertaken by PRI in an effort to test and develop methods to rigorously assess and effectively communicate the medium-to-long-term impact of PRI's projects and programmes. See box 1 for a definition of impact evaluation.

Box 1: Defining Impact Evaluation

Stern et al (2012) define impact evaluation as:

- Evaluating the positive and negative, primary and secondary long-term effects on final beneficiaries that result from an intervention;
- Assessing the direct and indirect causal contribution claims of these interventions to such effects especially for the poor whether intended or unintended;
- Explaining how policy interventions contribute to an effect so that lessons can be learnt

Much of PRI's work is essentially advocacy and policy-based which produce intangible outcomes (e.g. raised awareness) that are difficult to measure. Moreover, complex advocacy-based interventions do not lend themselves to traditional quasi-experimental impact evaluation designs. PRI works primarily at enabling change at an institutional level (e.g. Government) and rarely works directly with its final beneficiaries (e.g. prisoners/offenders). Most of PRI's work is project-based with defined timeframes of typically 2-3 years. Trickle-down changes at the offender/prisoner-level do not fit within such short timeframes. Results take time to mature and evaluations are typically done at the end of a project. To assess change at the final beneficiary level, this evaluation would need to be carried out 3-5 years after the project has ended to allow for changes to occur for prisoners/offenders. However, in 3-5 years-time it would be extremely difficult to assess PRI's contribution to such changes because of the number of external factors involved (e.g. other interventions and changes in the political and legal context) and PRI would miss the opportunity to draw lessons from the evaluation that can be incorporated into future project design.

As part of PRI's broader Evaluation and Learning Plan, PRI's Evaluation and Organisational Learning Adviser (Adviser) is undertaking a series of evaluations to identify, develop and test some impact evaluation models that help to overcome some of the challenges described above. This evaluation represents the first of the evaluation series and the Adviser has adapted a rigorous quantitative research methodology known as Process Tracing. The impact evaluation will focus on assessing the short to medium-term outcomes that occur at the institutional level (e.g. legislative and policy changes).

2.2 Research methodology

Process tracing is consistent with a theory-based evaluation design (see box 2). Impact evaluation is an opportunity to test a programme's theory through the links in the causal chain. In terms of method, this tendency is close to 'process tracing' (George and McKeown, 1985; Collier, 2011), which is defined by Aminzade (1993) as 'theoretically explicit narratives that carefully trace and compare the sequence of events constituting the process.' These casual chains are typically represented graphically as a causal map.

Box 2: Theory-Based Evaluation

In order to explain we need theory to bridge the gap between data and interpretation of that data; and in the case of impact evaluation to bridge the gap between 'causes' and effect'.

Theory-based evaluation is process orientated. It regards the programme as a conjunction of causes that follow a sequence. It follows a change pathway of a programme from its initiation through various causal links in a chain of implementation, until intended outcomes are reached. The process is built upon a 'theory of change' - a set of assumptions about how an intervention achieves its goals and under what conditions (Stern et al, 2012).

Process Tracing is a complex methodology in which a series of preparatory steps culminate in the identification of a set of targeted outcomes. These represent the most recent and important desired achievements of the project. Once these targeted outcomes are identified and clearly stated, data collection and analysis focus on determining the extent to which these targeted outcomes were realised and the importance of the projects contribution to those outcomes. Oxfam have developed a Process Tracing Protocol that outlines the key steps involved in the process. Drawing on the guidance provided by the Oxfam Protocol, the Adviser facilitated a Process Tracing evaluation exercise that included the following steps:

1. Analysis of project documentation generated by PRI.
2. With the PRI South Caucasus team, facilitate the reconstruction of a theory of change for the project.
3. With the PRI South Caucasus team, identification of 3 targeted outcomes.
4. Analysis of project activities (e.g. monitoring reports) to develop a detailed timeframe matrix for the project.
5. Interviews with a range of external stakeholders to identify and evidence (a) what targeted outcomes actually materialised; (b) the plausible causal explanations that underpinned the changes; (c) PRI's contribution to the change.
6. Analysis of additional documentation (e.g. relevant reports produced by other agencies) and secondary data (e.g. Government statistics) to verify the qualitative data collected in step 5.
7. Draft a final report documenting the research process and key findings.

2.3 Data collection

Data collection is a key element of the Process Tracing method. To gather the information necessary to carry out this evaluation, the Adviser used the following data collection methods:

1. Analysis of project information generated by PRI, which included:
 - Project planning documents
 - Monitoring reports sent to OSI
 - Monthly monitoring reports sent to PRI's Executive Director
2. Review of a sample of the large number of reports, publications, and other grey material generated by external project stakeholders. Such documentation included:
 - Georgia's Criminal Justice Reform (CJR) Strategy and Action Plan (2009-13)

- CJR Annual Progress Reports published by the CJR Inter-Agency Coordinating Council (2009-12)
 - CJR Coordination Council Working Groups minutes (2009-13)
 - Draft Report on Fulfilment of Conditions of the EU-Georgia Financing Agreement – Criminal Justice Reform, Year 2 (20013)
 - Criminal justice statistical data provided by the National Statistical Service of Georgia (www.geostat.ge)
3. Semi-structured interviews and a theory of change exercise with key PRI staff (PRI South Caucasus Director and Programme Coordinator)
4. Semi-structured interviews with key informants from external project stakeholders that were in a position to offer specific validation of evidence regarding the targeted outcomes. Key informants included representatives from the following stakeholders:
- National Probation Agency (Government)
 - Ministry of Justice, Department of Corrections (Government)
 - Open Society – Georgia office (International partner)
 - European Commission Delegation to Georgia (International partner)
 - The Norwegian Mission of Rule of Law Advisers to Georgia (NORLAG – international partner)
 - Support to the Reform of the Criminal Justice System in Georgia (EU funded project)
 - Article 42 of the Georgian Constitution (NGO)
 - Georgian Young Lawyers' Association (NGO)

3. Theory of change

Figure 2 outlines the theory of change for the project. In consultation with the PRI South Caucasus Region, three target outcomes were identified to focus the evaluation:

- Target Outcome 1 – Increased use of community service as an alternative to imprisonment
- Target Outcome 2 – Increased use of parole as a mechanism for early release
- Target Outcome 3 - Offenders released early on health grounds

Community service and parole were chosen because they were the two main objectives of the project. Offenders released early on health grounds was identified as a focus because (a) it emerged as a key priority for the project in 2011; (b) there had been some tangible results in this area; (c) PRI was involved in a broader civil society campaign on the issue. Restriction of liberty is an interesting area that became a priority area for the project in 2011. Restriction of liberty was not chosen as a target outcome because it was felt that not enough time had elapsed for tangible outcomes to be realised.

A detailed theory of change for each targeted outcome is presented in the next section.

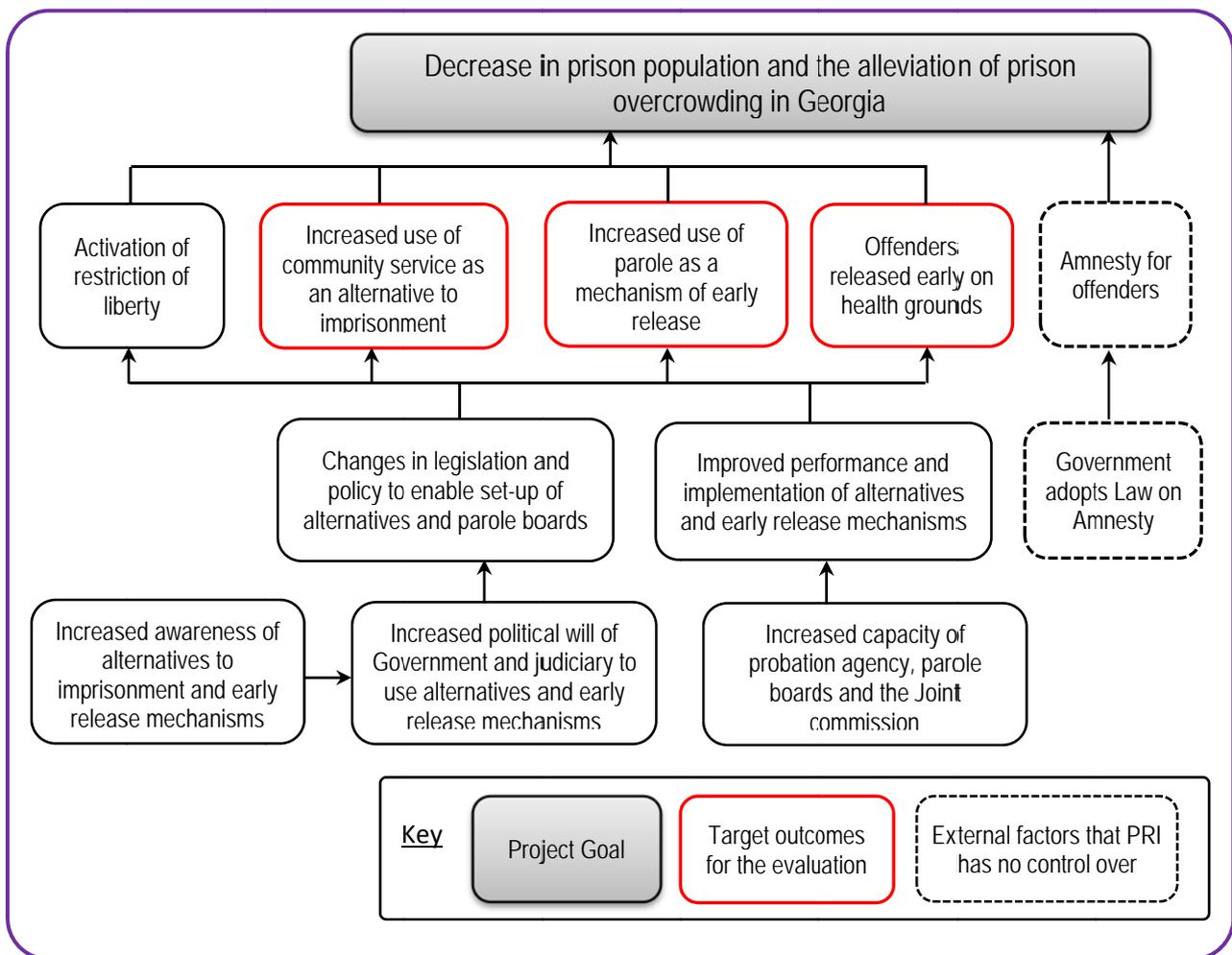


Figure 2: Theory of Change for the Prison Overcrowding Project

4. Results of the impact evaluation

4.1 Target outcome 1: increased use of community service as an alternative to imprisonment

The use of non-custodial sentences such as community service as an alternative to imprisonment is a relatively new concept to Georgians. Between 2005 and 2010, community service represented less than 1% of all applied sentences (see table 3). In recent years, to combat the prison overcrowding problem in Georgia, international organisations such as the Open Society and PRI have been advocating for the increased use of community sanctions as an alternative to imprisonment with due regard to the needs of both victims and offenders.

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Imprisonment	38.4%	46.9%	46.2%	42.5%	45.7%	45.8%	41.1%	40.3%
Corrective labour	2.0%	0.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Suspended conviction	41.0%	41.4%	45.3%	51.0%	46.9%	47.6%	52.3%	48.6%
Fine	18.1%	10.8%	3.9%	4.9%	7.2%	6.5%	6.2%	7.1%
Suspended sentence	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Community service	0.0%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.0%	0.4%	3.9%
Other penalties	0.5%	0.5%	4.4%	1.5%	0.2%	0.1%	0.0%	0.1%

Table 3: Type of sentence prescribed by court (source: Supreme Court of Georgia)

Extent to which the outcome materialised

One of the main objectives of the project was the increased use of community service as an alternative to imprisonment. In recent years, increased use of community service has been one of the major priorities for the National Probation Agency. Joint and coordinated efforts of the Probation Agency, Prosecution, local self-government institutions and NGOs such as PRI resulted in an increased use of community service in 2012 compared to 2011 (see table 4). Specifically, in 2011 478 probationers were involved in community service, while in 2012 this number reached 1074; which represents a 125% increase in 2012 compared to the previous year. Table 4 provides conclusive evidence that the outcome did materialise during the project timeframe (2010-13).

Region	Received Cases ¹			Completed Cases		
	2011	2012	2013 (first quarter)	2011	2012	2013 (first quarter)
Tbilisi	71	339	16	54	346	11
Shida Kartli	45	113	28	39	116	14
Mtskheta Mtianeti	73	50	2	15	56	5
Qvemo Qartli	20	153	42	7	162	24
Kakheti	58	63	7	52	65	11
Samtskhe- Javakheti	23	47	31	77	64	14
Imereti	156	114	43	136	148	44
Guria	8	18	1	9	20	0
Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti	2	33	7	1	34	5
Racha-Lechkhumi	5	6	0	5	5	0
Adjara	17	39	28	45	58	12
Total	478	975	205	440	1074	140

Table 4: (source: Georgian National Probation Agency, May 2013)

¹ Difference between received and completed cases is caused by the number of cases transferred each year.

Causal explanation

The theory of change below (Figure 3) illustrates the causal processes that led to the realisation of an increased use of community service in Georgia. There are two main strands that underpin a community service theory of change: (a) sentencing and (b) implementation.

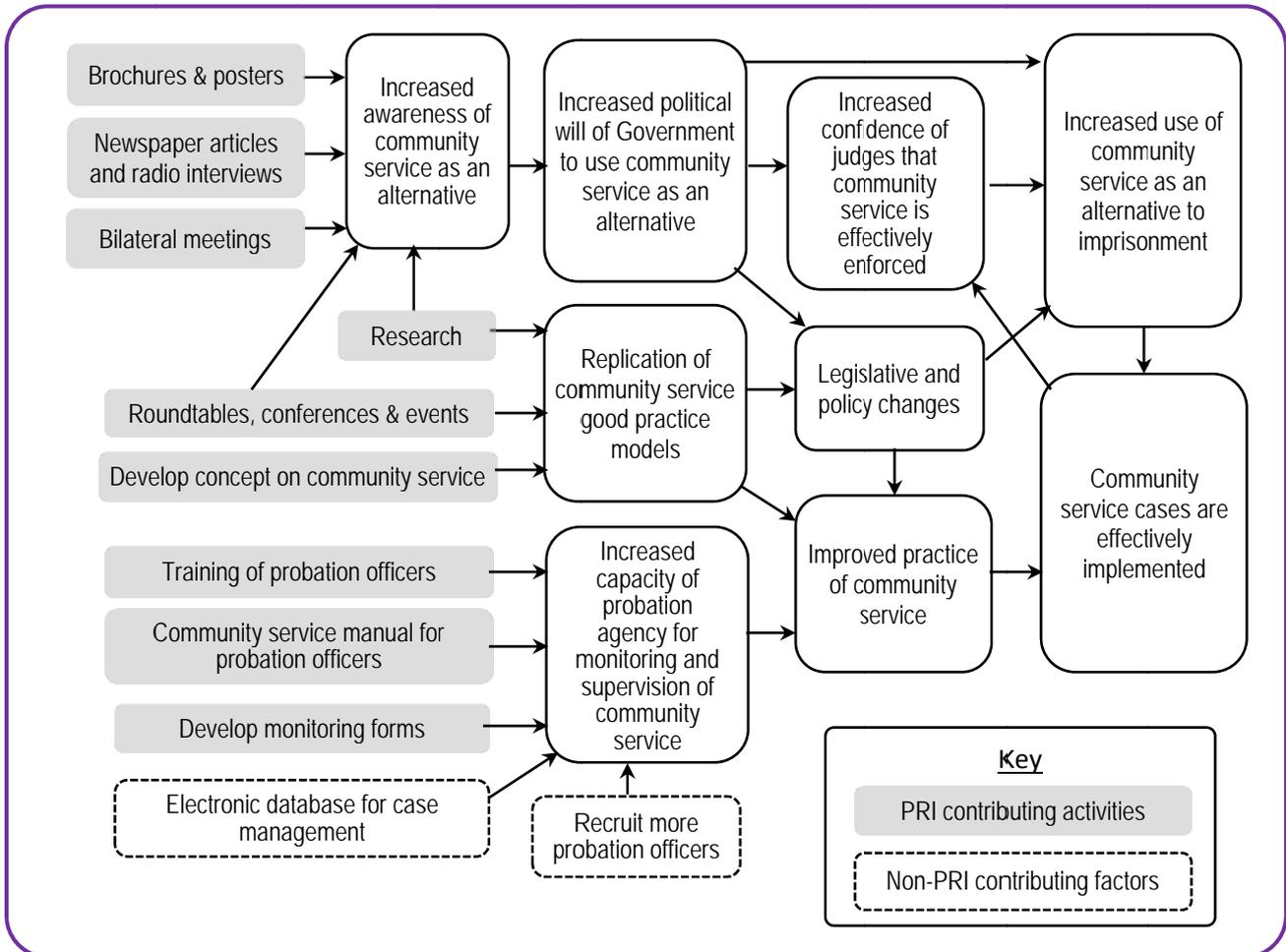


Figure 3: Community Service in Georgia Theory of Change

When an offender commits a crime, judges should be empowered to use non-custodial sanctions such as community service. The key stakeholders in sentencing are the Ministry of Justice, the court, judges, prosecutors and lawyers. On the sentencing side, the key indicator is quantitative: ‘an increase in the number of community service sanctions prescribed by the court, compared to the previous year’.

In 2010, Georgian judicial authorities claimed that the reason for lack of application of non-custodial sanctions was the failure of relevant bodies to enforce community service sentences. To prescribe a community service sanction, judges therefore need to be confident that the sanction will be effectively enforced by the National Probation Agency. For this to happen, there needs to be an improvement in the implementation and enforcement of community service. However this does assume the judges are empowered to prescribe community service:

Judges always prefer incarceration to non-custodial sanctions. Judges are not going to change their ways unless the Ministry of Justice says this is the way to do it. They will only do something if they are told to. (Interview with Open Society, 11 June 2013)

The above statement suggests that the court will prescribe community service sanctions if there is an increase in political will to use community service as an alternative, which materialises in practice through changes in Government policy and legislation to enable the enforcement of the sanction. In March 2011, a community service law was passed that encompassed several changes, including granting the authority to probation officers to match the work placements to the individual needs and abilities of the offender. Previously, work placements were prescribed in the court judgement which created technical problems. Following these legislative amendments, Government officials declared that they intended to replicate the successful model of using community service which was piloted in Tbilisi, to other regions of Georgia, which would encompass approximately 500 offenders in 2012.

There is the assumption that there is effective communication between the stakeholders involved:

One of the major challenges to the increased use and effective implementation of community service in Georgia is the lack of communication between the Probations Agency and the courts. Moreover, there is also a communication break-down between the judiciary and Government departments. (Interview with EU Support to the Reform of Criminal Justice in Georgia, 10 June 2013)

As outside entities, civil society and international organisations can play a key role to improve the communication and coordination between Government stakeholders. For example, in November 2010, PRI initiated and hosted a Community Service Working Group meeting that involved representatives from the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Corrections and Legal Assistance (MCLA), Tbilisi municipalities and Norwegian Mission of Rule of Law Advisers to Georgia (NORLAG). The representatives discussed issues concerning the effective enforcement of community service and identified possible work placements in the different districts of Tbilisi. To achieve political will and buy-in to the concept of community service, there is a need to raise awareness amongst the various Government stakeholders on community service and alternatives:

There is still a need to raise awareness about community service as an alternative with the courts. We only execute. (Interview with National Probation Agency, 10 June 2013)

The main external factor that secured political will was the change in Government:

Under the zero tolerance policy, the Government didn't want alternatives. Alternatives were viewed as too lenient. From 2009 to 2011 there were harsh punishments. With the change in Government, there is now the political will and there is an opportunity to institutionalise community service as a viable alternative to imprisonment. (Interview with NORLAG, 12 June 2013)

When an offender receives a community service sentence, their case is then passed on to the National Probation Agency. On the implementation side, the focus is on improving the quality and performance of Agency to effectively implement the sanction. In 2011 PRI worked with the Probation Agency to develop a community service concept that replicated good practice community service models from other EU countries. Over the project lifetime, there have been some notable achievements to increase the capacity of the Probation Agency so they can effectively implement:

Community service has always been an option. However, in the past no one could execute the sentence. In recent years we have improved our performance. Our probation officers now interview offenders to find out what they can do and use a computerised database to match their skills to the work placement. (Interview with Probation Agency, 10 June 2013)

With the help of international organisations and NGOs such as the EU, NORLAG and PRI, the Probation Agency has:

- Developed a monitoring system which includes a database and administrative forms to monitor cases
- Trained Probation Officers on how to effectively implement community service cases. The focus of training is currently on improving the Probation Officers social skills so they can effectively communicate with offenders.
- Developed a community service manual for probation officers
- Developed a computerised database which provides the court and the Agency a snapshot of the available work placements
- Recruited more Probation Officers, which has reduced the number of cases per officer.

In practice, sentencing and implementation are mutually linked. If community service cases are effectively implemented by the Probation Agency, the court will be more inclined to prescribe community sanctions during sentencing. However, to improve performance in practice there does first need to be cases to implement.

PRI's contribution

The project focused on both increasing the use of community service and improving the capacity and performance of the Probation Agency to effectively implement. On the sentencing side, the project primarily focused on raising awareness amongst the various Government stakeholders on community service and alternatives. Between June 2010 and December 2011 (phase 1), PRI raised awareness on community service by:

- Conducting 31 bilateral meetings throughout the regions with the Probation Agency, MoJ, MCLA, representatives of local municipalities, prosecutors and judges.
- Publishing and distributing 500 brochures and 100 posters
- Giving 3 interviews to a national radio station, 1 interview to journalists and arranged for an article to be published in a national newspaper on the issue of community service
- Helped to organise and participated in 3 conferences/roundtables on the issue of community service. The PRI Regional Director presented statistics on sentencing and application of community service, and organised and led side-events on community service.

Such activities undoubtedly helped to raise the awareness of community service, which in turn led to an increase in political will. The table below shows how PRI's awareness raising activities helped to contribute to the changes in community service legislation.

Timeframe	Key Event	PRI contribution	Outcome
December 2010	Develop concept on community service	PRI provides technical support to MoJ and helps them to develop a community service concept that outlines practical solutions for the more efficient and effective implementation of community service.	The community service concept is consistent with international good practice
January 2011	Media	PRI participated in interviews with journalists and arranged for an article to be published in a national newspaper on the issue of community service	Increased public awareness of community service as an alternative to imprisonment
February 2011	Roundtable on Community Service organised by MCLA and MoJ	PRI gave a presentation on the practical application of community service and the need for matching offender skills to their placement	After the conference, it was announced that a policy-level Coordination Council would be established to coordinate a

			community service pilot in Tbilisi
March 2011	Community service legislative amendments		A community service law is passed by parliament, which enables the practical enforcement of this sanction

Table 5: PRI's contribution to the series of events that led to changes in legislation

On the implementation side, PRI's strong relationship with the Probation Agency enabled them to work effectively with the Agency to help them implement systems, develop a concept and to improve the Agency's capacity:

PRI is one of our main partners on the Probation Working Group. PRI offers us technical support and advice. We trust their expertise and we are open to help. PRI has become part of our team. (Interview with National Probation Agency, 10 June 2013)

Table 6 demonstrates PRI's significant contribution in developing the capacity of the Probation Agency which has enabled the effective implementation of community service cases:

Timeframe	PRI Activity	Output	Outcome
February 2011	PRI held a 3-day training workshop on community service. Co-organised with Human Dynamics.	15 Probation officers trained.	Probation Officers skills are and knowledge on community service is improved.
March 2011	PRI developed forms/tools for registration and supervision of community service cases. These include: needs assessment; individual sentence plan; periodic and final reporting; guidelines for municipalities.	10 tools are developed and approved by Head of National Probation Agency.	Tools used by Probation Officers, which has helped to improve data collection and logging
June 2011	3 community service training workshops.	53 Probation Officers trained	Probation Officers skills are and knowledge on community service is improved.
February 2012 – June 2012	PRI works with the Probation Agency to develop a manual for Probation Officers. PRI wrote the community service section of the manual.	Manual is developed and produced.	Probation Officers have detailed guidelines to effectively implement community service cases
July 2012	2 community service training workshops.	40 Probation Officers trained	Probation Officers skills are and knowledge on community service is improved.

Table 6: PRI's capacity building activities

It should be noted that other factors beyond PRI's influence, notably the development of the database and the recruitment of more Probation Officers, also contributed to the increased capacity and improved performance of the Probation Agency. In 2011, the number of probation officers was increased from 123 in 2010 to 173 in 2011. As Table 7 highlights, the recruitment of new probation officers has significantly decreased the average number of cases per officer.

Year	Number of probation officers	Average number of cases per officer
2010	119	240
2011	123	263
2012	173	161
2013 (first quarter)	225	82

Table 7: Average number of cases per officer (source: National Probation Agency 2013)

Moreover, other projects such as the European Union’s ‘Support to the Reform of the Criminal Justice System in Georgia’ and other actors such as NORLAG, Human Dynamics and the European Union also made a significant contribution in this area.

Overall, PRI’s contribution to the increased use of community service and the improved implementation has been impressive. During the first phase (2010 to 2011) the project was very much focused on raising awareness and developing the Probation Agency’s capacity, which resulted in clear tangible results (e.g. legislative amendments). However, it should be noted that the second phase of the project (January 2012 – June 2013) was less focused on community service. During the first phase, PRI implemented 31 activities relating to community service. This dropped to just 7 activities in the second phase. With the change in Government in October 2012, there is now the political will to reform the Georgian penal system and to use alternatives such as community service. PRI’s activities in the first phase have helped to lay the foundations for this to happen. However, there is clearly much work still to be done and PRI’s lack of activity in the second phase could be seen as a missed opportunity to institutionalise community service as an alternative to imprisonment in Georgia.

4.2 Target outcome 2: increased use of parole as a mechanism for early release

In Georgia, Parole Boards have been established under the supervision of the Ministry of Corrections and Legal Assistance (MCLA). Three boards for early conditional release are in operation. There is a board in Western Georgia and another board in Eastern Georgia. The third board is focused specifically on juveniles.

Extent to which the outcome materialised

Table 8 demonstrates that the number of offenders released on parole has increased year on year during the project lifetime. In 2011 the number of offenders released on parole increased by 30.7% compared to 2010. In 2012, the number of offenders released early increased by a significant 314% compared to 2011. This is conclusive evidence that the outcome did actually materialise. It should be noted that the change in Government in October 2012 has had an impact on these figures. The new Government activated the use of parole and released over 200 prisoners within a month of taking power (PRI South Caucasus report to the Executive Board).

Year	Number of offenders released early on parole	Percentage increase compared to the previous year
2010	316	
2011	413	+30.7%
2012	1,298	+314%

Table 8: Number of offenders released early on parole (source: ...)

Causal explanation

The theory of change below (Figure 4) illustrates the causal processes that can contribute to (a) the increased use of community service in Georgia; and (b) the appropriate early release of prisoners. It is clear from the figures presented in table 8 that the number of offenders released on parole was increasing before the change in Government. However, it is generally acknowledged by all those that were interviewed that the performance of the Parole Boards was very inconsistent and that decisions were not based on objective criteria. The focus now is very much on improving the parole system to ensure that decisions are made on an objective basis.

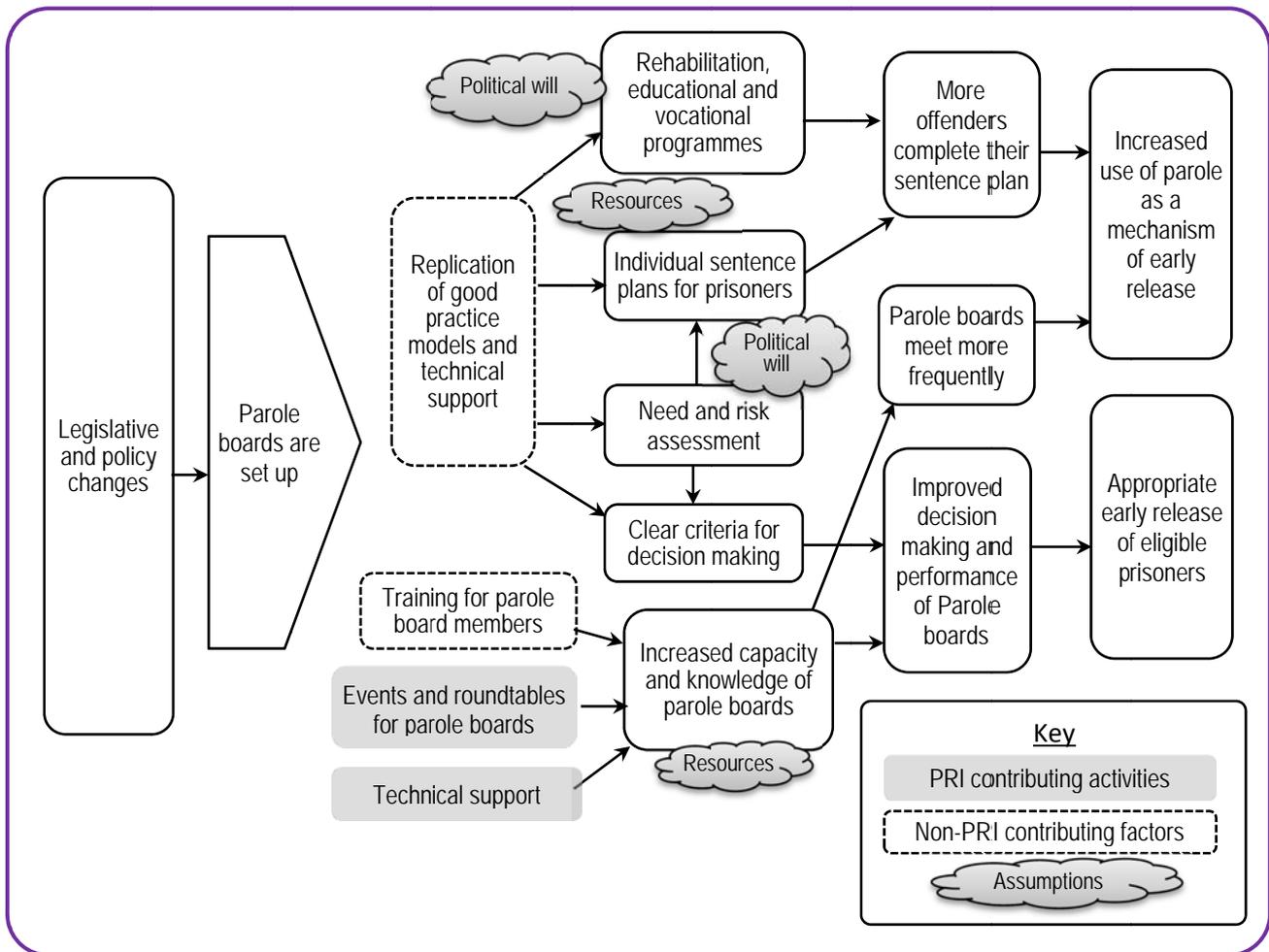


Figure 4: Parole in Georgia Theory of Change

According to the Code of Imprisonment of Georgia, the three Local Parole Boards are obliged to consider a case of juvenile every three months, whereas a case of adult prisoners should be reviewed every six months. However, before the change in Government the Parole Boards were not meeting on a regular basis and cases were not being reviewed on a six monthly basis:

Before change In Government there was no political will and consequently there was nothing on parole. Parole Boards were working with the old procedure and there was no grounds for decision making. (Interview with EU Support to the Reform of Criminal Justice in Georgia, 10 June 2013)

With the change in Government, there is now political will to improve the parole system. The authorities now see that there is a need for individual decision making criteria that is tied to individual sentence plans. There has been progress with this for juveniles:

We now have individual sentence plans for juveniles: their psychological conditions and risks are now considered. During the parole hearing there is now an oral hearing and the lawyer is present. Parole boards now have better information to make objective decisions: they have the reason for committing the offence and how the juvenile feels about it. There is also increased contact with juveniles after early release and there are conditions in place. (Interview with the Ministry of Justice, Department of Corrections, 13 June 2013)

However, the progress for adult prisoners has been slow. Even with the change in Government, there is still no risk or needs assessment. NORLAG identified challenges to improving the parole system:

Statistics show that parole was on the increase before the election. Since the change in Government there has been an improvement in the Parole Boards performance. However, the Parole Board decisions are unpredictable. Challenges included: so few staff; no vocational and rehabilitation programmes; too many offenders; lack of systems and mechanisms in place. (Interview with NORLAG, 12 June 2013)

Even with the dramatic decrease in the prison population, there is still isn't the capacity to carry out-out risk/needs assessment, to design individual sentence plans and to interview prisoners during a parole hearing. As a result, Parole Boards still lack the information to make objective decisions. To overcome the capacity issues, the Ministry of Justice and MCLS have decided to replicate the juvenile justice parole process for women offenders:

We need to replicate the juvenile parole process. We are currently doing a pilot to replicate it to women offenders a we are also considering a pilot for lifers. We do not have the resources or the capacity to roll it out across the system. (Interview with the Ministry of Justice, Department of Corrections, 12 June 2013)

Such pilots demonstrate a political will to reform the parole system and is a sensible way to overcome the capacity and resource constraints. Indeed, the Government is now very open to working with international donors and civil society to improve the parole system. The Department of Corrections welcomed the EU's announcement of new rehabilitation programmes in Georgia and believe that civil society can play an important role in the delivery of educational, vocational, rehabilitation and socialisation programmes. As the theory of change demonstrates (figure 2), such programmes will better prepare prisoners for early release and will help to reintegrate them back into society, which will have a positive impact on reoffending rates.

PRI's contribution

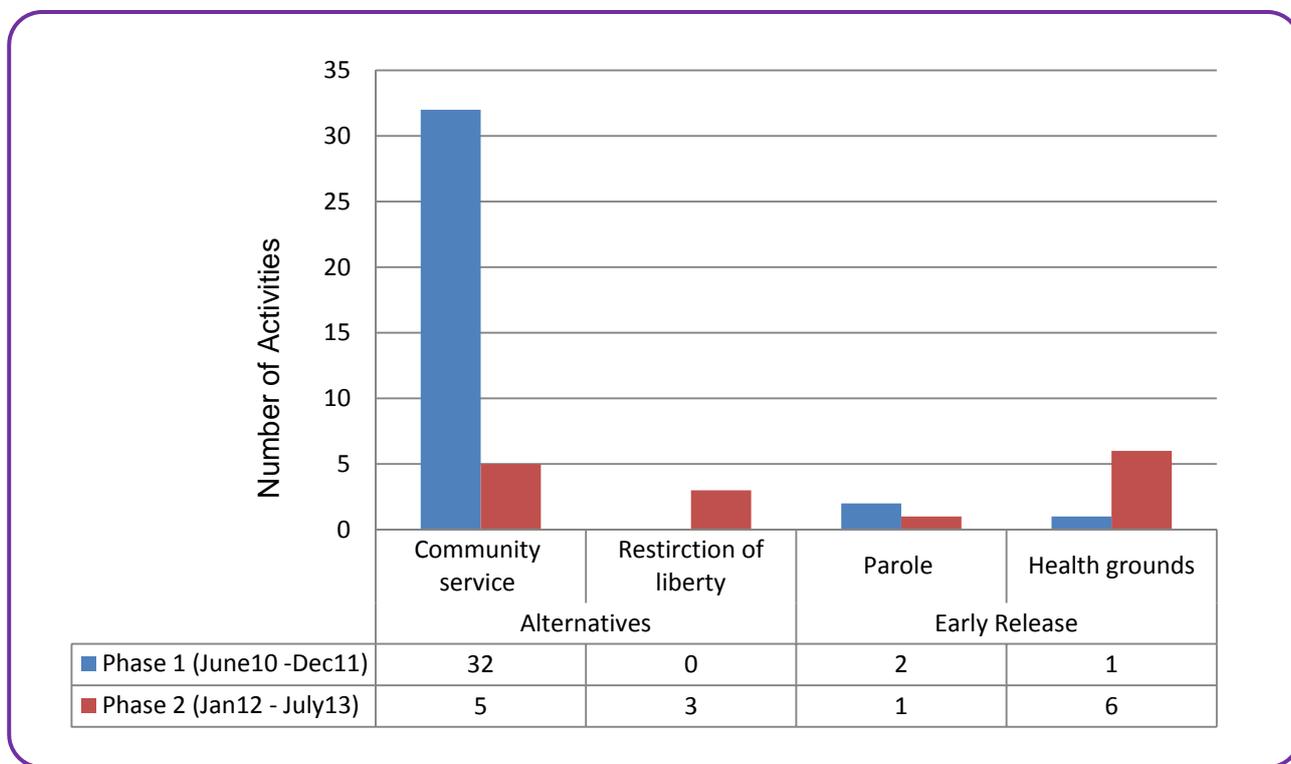
A review of the project activities (figure 5) shows that PRI was much less focused on early release compared to alternatives in both phase 1 and 2. For both phases 1 and 2, PRI completed 3 activities relating to parole. At the end of phase 1, PRI explained why the project was less focused on parole:

With regard to working with the parole boards it has not been possible to undertake actual activities, as the authorities maintained that not enough time had passed since the start of the functioning of these boards in October 2010, and also that they were not in a position, due to lack of rehabilitation programmes and individual sentence planning, to take bold or extensive decisions regarding granting the release of prisoners on parole. (Phase 1 final narrative report, December 2011)

The above statement highlights the problems that PRI faced with regards to engaging with Government of on the issue of parole. PRI's South Caucasus Regional Director noted that parole was a problematic area for the project and that there was much more resistance from Government on parole compared to alternatives and health. Indeed, several of the people interviewed during the evaluation noted how difficult it was for civil society to work constructively with the Government under the previous regime:

"Under the previous regime, it was impossible for civil society to have a constructive dialogue with government" (Interview with GYLA, 11 June 2013)

“The old Government lost touch with reality. It lost touch with its own people. Civil society is the link between the people and Government. Civil society can help Government to identify and address needs. The previous Government’s relationship with civil society was superficial – it was a tick-box exercise.” (Interview with the EC Delegation to Georgia, 11 June 2013)



*Figure 5: Activity review of the OSI Prison Overcrowding project
(Source: project monitoring reports and monthly reports to PRI Executive Director)*

A risk analysis during the project design stage could have highlighted such problems in advance and the project could have been redesigned accordingly. For example, an analysis of the strength of PRI’s relationship with various Government stakeholders may have highlighted the difficulties of engaging with parole boards and more emphasis could have been given to alternatives where the PRI’s relationship with the Probation Agency was strong.

Despite such challenges, PRI did make some small incremental steps on parole during the first phase. In 2010, PRI submitted comments on the draft statute of decentralised parole boards established by the new Code of Imprisonment that came into force on 1 October 2010. PRI highlighted the need for proper legal procedural safeguards for offenders whose application for conditional release would be reviewed by the Board. It is not clear whether this recommendation was taken up by Government.

Towards the end of 2011, PRI participated in a roundtable discussion on the ‘Roles and Functions of Local Boards on Early Conditional Release’ in Georgia, organised by the Council of Europe. During the discussion, PRI offered recommendations on the Statute and methodology of the existing parole boards. As a result of the plenary discussion, a set of common recommendations was developed and submitted to the MCLA. However, it is not clear whether PRI’s recommendations were taken up and acted upon by the MCLA.

Despite the lack of activity in phase 1, parole remained a key objective for phase 2 of the project. With the change of Government in October 2012, the Government were more willing to engage with civil society on parole issues:

“Prisoners are being released early now because of the change of Government. However, the parole system and structure needs to work better. There is a role for civil society to play in terms of highlighting what the problems are and working to improve the performance of the parole boards.” (Interview with Open Society, 12 June 2013)

PRI’s South Caucasus Regional Director noted that PRI couldn’t really do anything on parole until the change of Government. On 13 June PRI organised a one-day working meeting for high-level Government officials and members of Parole Boards. PRI presented research on the ‘Criteria and Risk Factors of the early release of prisoners’. Participants discussed the challenging issues of the Early Release Mechanism.

During the meeting, PRI also presented preliminary findings of a survey on the needs of women prisoners which was commissioned through PRI’s global Bangkok Rules programme. The research was welcomed by the Ministry of Justice as it provided background information that will inform the women prisoner pilot project that will involve individual sentence plans and interviews for women prisoners who are eligible for parole. It is too early to assess the outcomes of this working group meeting. However, the evaluator attended the meeting and it was clear that (a) everyone present respected PRI’s expertise on parole issues; and (b) that Government Officials and parole board members are willing to engage and listen to PRI on the issue of parole. In many ways, the window of opportunity for working on parole issues is now so it is unfortunate that the OSI project is coming to an end. If PRI does manage to secure future funding to continue to work on this area, it is recommended that it focuses on specific target groups (e.g. early release of women prisoners).

4.3 Target outcome 3: offenders released early on health grounds

In December 2010, a Joint Commission of MCLA and the Ministry of Labour, Health and Social Affairs was established to review the early release from punishment on the basis of health grounds. Legislative amendments now enable offenders (probationers and prisoners) suffering from serious and terminal illness to apply to the Commission for early release.

Extent to which the outcome materialised

Statistical evidence on the number of offenders released early on health grounds were not made available for this evaluation. However qualitative data obtained from interviews made it clear that during the project period there has been an increase in the number of people released early from prison and probation on the basis of health grounds. Indeed, several interviewees noted that releases have increased since the change in Government in 2012. Interviewees noted:

“The previous Government ordered doctors not to release prisoners on health grounds. Since the change in Government, a number of gravely ill prisoners have been released.” (Interview with Article 42, 10 June 2013)

“This [released early on health grounds] is happening now. New legislation has come into force that lists the different diseases.” (Interview with Open Society, 11 June 2013)

“There have been legislative changes to enable early release on health grounds. The new decree in December 2012 has enabled it to happen. This has been one of the most tangible results of the reform process so far.” (Interview with GYLA, 11 June 2013)

Number of people released on health grounds has increased in the past year.” (Interview with NORLAG, 12 June 2013)

Such comments seem to confirm that this outcome has materialised. However, without statistical evidence it is difficult to assess the degree to which the outcome has materialised and it is not possible to look at the year on year trends. It is recommended that civil society organisations involved on this issue should work with Government to collate statistical data.

Causal explanation

The theory of change below (figure 6) illustrates the causal processes that led to the realisation of offenders being released early on health grounds. Legislative amendments in December 2010 paved the way for the establishment of Joint Commission between the MCLA and the Ministry of Health. This Joint Commission is empowered to make decisions on whether a prisoner or probationer may be released early on health grounds.

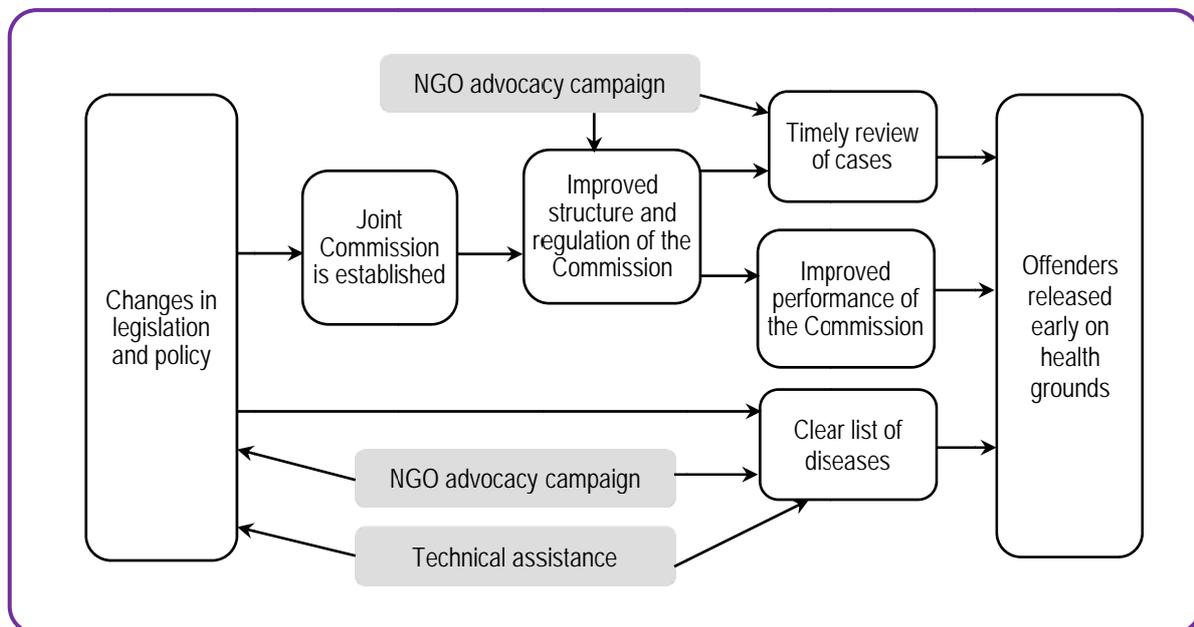


Figure 6: Released early on health grounds theory of change

Since the establishment of the Joint Commission, civil society has highlighted several gaps in legislation and practice. Such flaws are analysed below.

Composition of the Commission fails to ensure examination of application a timely manner. Doctors are not permanent members of the commission and do not participate in final decision-making. As a result, final decisions are made by political figureheads rather than by medical experts. Moreover, there have been problems with convening the members of the commission that has led to delays in the review of cases. Legislation (Joint Order) does not determine the timeframe for the Commission to examine a prisoner’s application. In 2012, case research conducted by GYLA found several cases where the prisoner had died before the Commission had made its decision (GYLA; 2012).

The Joint Order has also been criticised by civil society for adopting an inadequate list of illnesses. Medical experts noted that the list of illnesses is outdated and in need of updating (GYLA; 2012). A number of cases have been rejected by the commission because the wording on the application did not exactly match word for word the description of the illness in the Joint Order.

With the aim of closing these gaps in legislation and improving the structure and regulation of the Commission, several NGOs have coordinated a joint advocacy campaign. The advocacy campaign has been organised by Penal Reform International; Georgian Young Lawyers Association; Article 42 of the Georgian Constitution; Youth for Justice; Human Rights Centre. The GYLA interviewee noted that the campaign was strategically coordinated:

In August 2012, we had three meetings to draft a petition. Together we drafted a report that highlighted legislative gaps. 60 NGOs were involved in this process. Each NGO brought different expertise to the table. For example, we had the legal expertise. PRI held more meetings in the regions. It was a coordinated and strategic campaign. (Interview with GYLA, 11 June 2013)

The campaign members used their influence on the Penitentiary Working Group and Probation Working Group to bring about changes in policy, legislation and practice. For example, on the probation side:

The Rapporteur noted that the amendment has been made to the Law on Probation regarding the early release of probationer considering his/her health condition. The amendments will be enforced as soon as the joint order of the MCLA and MoLHSA is approved regarding the list of diseases. On the basis of the listed disease the probationers will be eligible for extinction of conditional sentence. (Probation Working Group minutes, May 2012)

The contribution of civil society to changes in legislation and practice with regards to early release of offenders on health grounds was noted by several interviewees:

There have been changes in legislation in this area. For example, the list of diseases has been updated. I know that PRI, Youth for Justice and GYLA have made some good contributions to these changes. Government is open to help and NGO's are keen to contribute. This is a good example of how NGO's can contribute. (Interview with Open Society, 11 June 2013)

There have been lots of amendments made to legislation and policy in this area. 98% of the recommendations came from civil society. Civil society contributed well to this. (Interview with Ministry of Justice, Department of Corrections, 12 June 2013)

PRI contribution

As highlighted above, the NGO advocacy campaign made a significant contribution to the changes in legislation and practice with regards to the early release of offenders on health grounds. PRI is a key player and leader of this advocacy campaign. Table 9 highlights how PRI contributed to the campaign.

Timeframe	PRI Activity	Output	Outcome
October 2010	PRI organised several meetings with Government to inquire into the issue of gravely ill prisoners and to identify existing problems. PRI held interviews with the Head of Medical Forensic Bureau; defence lawyers; representatives of the Medical Department of MCLA	Meetings organised Interviews conducted	Problems in legislation and practice are identified.
April 2012	PRI organised a meeting with local NGOs who are working on the issues of early release of ill prisoners. Participants shared	Meeting with NGOs organised	NGOs agreed to establish a joint advocacy campaign to lobby for the early release of

	information and brainstormed on joint ways of addressing the problem		terminally ill prisoners
May – June 2012	PRI helped to organise several meetings with NGOs to identify gaps in legislation and practice. Campaign members developed recommendations on how to improve the existing system, including changes to the Statute of the Joint Commission	Campaign meeting organised	Recommendations to address the problems in legislation and practice are developed
September 2012	PRI contracted a medical doctor to examine the regulations of governing the release of terminally or gravely ill prisoners. Analysis showed that regulations are outdated and incompliant with modern classification of diseases. Expert was hired to update the classification of diseases.	List of diseases is updated	Clear list of diseases that is compliant with international standards
November 2012	PRI organised two campaign meetings to discuss recommendation to amend the Standing Commission statute.	Recommendations are agreed by NGOs	Recommendations submitted to MCLA and Ministry of Health
December 2012		Legislative and policy changes (new decree) are passed by the new Government	

Table 9: PRI's contribution to the early release of offenders on health grounds campaign

It is clear from table 9 that PRI provided leadership to the campaign and was instrumental in bringing about legislative changes. However, other NGOs such as GYLA and Article 42 were also key players and contributed well to this outcome. The campaign is an example of how civil society organisations can pool their expertise and work together strategically to bring about tangible change.

5. Conclusion

The goal of this project was to challenge the overuse of imprisonment and to contribute to a decrease in the prison population in Georgia. At the beginning of the project (2010) the prison population of Georgia was 23,114. By the end of the project (2013) the prison population reduced to 9,185, which represents a 60% decrease. It is clear that the change in Government in October 2013 and the ensuing Law on Amnesty which saw 8,692 prisoners released from criminal responsibility was the main reason why the project goal was realised. The change in Government was an external factor that PRI had no control over and it would be unfair to judge the projects performance based on prison population statistics. Therefore, this evaluation has focused on evaluating the impact and assessing PRI's contribution to three targeted outcomes (1) increased use of community service; (2) increased use of parole; (3) offenders released early on health grounds.

The community service statistics presented in table 4 are conclusive evidence that during the project timeframe there was an increased use of community service. This evaluation has found that PRI made a significant contribution to (a) the increased awareness of community service as an alternative; (b) replication of community service good practice models; and (c) the increased capacity of the probation agency for monitoring and supervision of community service. PRI made a significant contribution on the sentencing (increase use) and implementation (effective enforcement) side of community service. Indeed, an analysis of PRI's activities in 2011 (table 5) shows that PRI made a significant contribution to the community service legislative amendments in March 2011, which helped to enable the practice enforcement of community service sanctions.

Table 8 demonstrates that the number of offenders released early on parole has increased year on year during the project period. In 2012, the number of offenders released on parole increased by a

significant 314% compared to 2011. However, PRI's contribution to this outcome has been limited. PRI was unable to work on this area because the authorities felt that not enough time had passed since the parole boards had been set-up in October 2010. On the community service side, PRI had a very strong relationship with the Probation Agency which paved the way for PRI to make a significant contribution that led to changes. On the parole side, it seems that PRI's relationship with the parole boards were not strong enough for PRI to make a difference. It therefore made sense that in 2011 PRI should change its strategy on the early release side and focus on the early release of terminally and gravely ill prisoners.

Qualitative information obtained from interviews with key informants suggest that during the project period there has been an increase in the number of offenders released early on health grounds (e.g. the release of terminally/gravely ill prisoners). Table 9 provides evidence that PRI helped to coordinate an NGO campaign that was instrumental in bringing about legislative changes in December 2012, which paved the way for the early release of offenders on health grounds.

6. Lessons learnt and recommendations

6.1 Project design

Identifying specific, measurable and achievable objectives/outcomes	
Lesson	<p>The project plan included two objectives (community service and parole) that were quantitative: increased use. Within the project timeframe, it was unrealistic for PRI to raise awareness, secure political will and increase the use of community service and parole. These outcomes did materialise but is difficult to evidence how PRI contributed.</p> <p>The theory of change exercise showed that for both community service and parole, PRI was focused on improving performance and developing capacity so that alternative and early release mechanisms are effectively implemented. A set of objectives relating to improved performance and effective implementation would have helped to strengthen the project strategy. This would have helped to ensure that PRI's performance was measured against objectives that it had more influence over and were realistic to achieve within the project timeframe.</p>
Recommendation	PRI should incorporate theory of change as a planning tool into its planning process. PRI regional offices should map a theory of change and use this as a communication tool with the PRI head office to ensure that objectives are specific, measurable and achievable within the project timeframe.

Identifying assumptions and risks	
Lesson	The project plan did not include the identification of key assumptions or an accompanying risk analysis. The project design assumed that PRI had a strong relationship with the parole boards and overseeing authorities. This assumption did not hold true and as a result PRI was not able to contribute effectively to early release of prisoners through parole.
Recommendation	Project plans should include the identification of assumptions and risks. The feasibility of the project design should be tested (and changed) by the likelihood of such risks occurring and the significance of the impact on the project if they did occur.

Feeding the learning into the project plan	
Lesson	The project plan for phase 2 should have included an updated list of objectives that reflected the changing context and learning gained from phase 1. For example, restriction of liberty should have been included as an objective and early release through parole should have been made more specific to focus on (a) early release of offenders on health grounds; (b) early release of women prisoners.
Recommendation	In consultation with donors, PRI needs to ensure that the learning gained through monitoring and evaluation is fed into the project design. Moreover, project plans should be flexible to ensure they are periodically updated in-line with changes in the external context.

6.2 Alternatives

Developing new projects on community service and alternatives	
Lesson	By focusing on raising awareness, sharing models of good practice and developing the capacity of the Probation Agency, PRI made a significant contribution to the effective implementation of community service in Georgia. With the change in Government, there is more work to be done and an opportunity to institutionalise community service as an alternative to imprisonment. Based on PRI's experience, expertise and the relationship it has with the Probation Agency, PRI is in a good position to continue its work on community service in Georgia. PRI is also in a good position to continue its work on the restriction of liberty and the establishment of half-way houses.
Recommendation	PRI should use the evidence and learning from this evaluation as a springboard to develop new projects relating to alternatives. PRI should proactively develop partnerships with NGOs that have the experience and expertise to deliver rehabilitative and reintegration services. The learning on alternatives from this evaluation should be shared with other PRI regions.

6.3 Early Release mechanisms

Focusing on early release of juveniles, women prisoners and offenders that are gravely/terminally ill	
Lesson	On the early release side, this evaluation has shown that the Georgian Government does not have the resources nor the capacity to invest in individual sentence plans, need/risk analysis and parole hearings for all prisoners. As a result, the quality of parole board decisions has been inconsistent. The Georgian government has therefore focused on developing pilot parole projects for juveniles, women prisoners and gravely/terminally ill prisoners that incorporate international good practice. PRI should focus on supporting the Government to effectively implement these pilot projects.
Recommendation	Rather than having broad objectives and indicators relating to parole, future South Caucuses PRI project applications should be more focused on the early release of specific target groups (e.g. women and juveniles). This learning should be shared with other PRI regions and partners.

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Annex 1 – Timeline matrix

Time	Key event	Community Service	Parole	Health
July 2009	Criminal Justice Reform Council adopt Criminal Justice Reform Strategy/ Action Plan			
June 2010	Start of OSI project – phase 1	First community service (CS) bilateral meeting with Head of Probation Agency. 9 bilateral meetings in 2010		
Sep 2010	<i>Alternative Sentencing Conference</i> PRI, the Council of Europe, EU Rule of Law Project, UNICEF and NORLAG held a conference on alternative sentencing 23 September. To raise awareness. The conference was very well attended by government officials, civil society and international organizations.	CS bilateral meetings with: (2) Head and Deputy Head of National Probation Agency; (3) Head of Tbilisi Probation Bureau <i>Alternative Sentencing Conference</i> High level government officials made policy statements that favoured increased use of community service throughout the country in line with the National Strategy and Action Plan for the Reform of Criminal Justice System. PRI presented statistics on sentencing and the application of non-custodial sanctions, particularly community service, emphasizing the high proportion of prison sentences and still meagre use of community sanctions.		
October 2010		CS bilateral meetings with: (4) First Deputy Chief Prosecutor; (5) Head of Old Tbilisi City Hall; (6) Head of Georgian Bar Association; (7) Head of Medical Department at the National Forensic Service	Parole Boards and are established and functioning. PRI has contributed comments on the draft statute of decentralized parole boards established by the new Code on Imprisonment (came into force on October 1, 2010) with a view of ensuring proper legal procedural safeguards for convicts whose applications for conditional early release will be reviewed by these bodies. International expertise by a Dutch expert, Mr. Jan van den Brand was engaged on the statute later.	Meetings were also undertaken separately to inquire into the issues of early release of gravely ill prisoners and to identify existing problems. Interviews were held with the Head of Medical Forensic Bureau, defence lawyers, representatives of the Medical department of the Ministry of Corrections and Legal Assistance.
Nov 2010		Community Service Working Group is set-up by PRI, which included reps from Ministry of Justice, Probation National Agency, Tbilisi municipalities and NORLAG. Aim: to discuss issues concerning the		

Time	Key event	Community Service	Parole	Health
		<p>effective enforcement of community service.</p> <p>Possible work placements in different districts of Tblisi identified as a problem by working group.</p>		
Dec 2010	Number of prisoners continue to rise	<p>PRI SC submit first interim monitoring report to OSI</p> <p>CS bilateral meetings with (8) Head of Probation Bureau in Rutavi; (9) Head of Rustavi City Court</p> <p>PRI has been approached by the Ministry of Justice, in charge of coordinating criminal justice reform, to aid them in developing the community service concept and practical solutions for better and more efficient application of community service.(monitoring report, Dec 2010)</p>		
January 2011		<p>CS bilateral meeting with (10) Head of Mayor Service for Greening and Ecology about community service placements for offenders; (11) Deputy Head of National Probation Agency</p> <p>PRI participated in interviews with journalists on Jan 14 2011.</p> <p>PRI arranged for an article to be published in a national newspaper on the issues of community service with a view of raising public awareness about this sanction, its current use in the country, the advantages, existing problems and opportunities, etc</p>		
Feb 2011	<p>PRI participated in the Roundtable on Community Service organized by the Ministry of Corrections and Ministry of Justice on 14 Feb 2011.</p> <p>The purpose of the event was to present initiatives of the government for the promotion of increased use of community service and to declare political support for this alternative to imprisonment.</p> <p>The event marked the high priority given by the authorities to the application of this alternative to imprisonment and the new initiatives were voiced in terms of draft law and newly elaborated concept for increased use of CS.</p> <p>Shows increased political will before the change in Government.</p>	<p>Second Community Service Working Group meeting is held at PRI office. Allocation of work placements is again discussed. All stakeholders attended. After February the working group meetings were discontinued</p> <p>Conference organised by Ministry of Corrections and of Justice (Feb 14 11).</p> <p>CS meeting (12) to plan the training for probation officers. Bilateral meeting with Secretary of the Criminal Justice Reform Interagency Coordination Council</p> <p>3-day CS Training workshop for probation officers (23-25 Feb). Co-organised with Human Dynamics. Focus on increasing the understanding and</p>		

Time	Key event	Community Service	Parole	Health
	<p>PRI raised points about the practical application of the community service, and the need for proper assessment of a convict for improved matching of work placement by a probation officer, so that the punishment is not degrading or inhuman.</p>	<p>building skills of probation officers who are dealing with community service cases. (funded through EU project)</p> <p>After the conference, it was announced that a policy-level Coordination Council would be established in Tbilisi specifically for dealing with the issues of community service and piloting this non-custodial alternative in the capital city. 15 officers trained.</p> <p>PRI held a seminar for journalists on Feb 5 which included a component on community service. Two international experts from Estonia and Norway were invited as guest speakers on best practice community service. 15 journalists attended the event. [raising awareness through the media]</p>		
<p>March 2011</p>	<p>International Conference on Probation was held in Batumi – “Probation in Georgia – Sharing International Experience”.</p> <p>PRI Regional Director led a Working Group on community service and made a presentation about the international recommendations to the Georgian Probation service for improving the enforcement of this non-custodial sanction.</p>	<p>Community Service law passed – envisions several changes which are to facilitate the practical enforcement of this sanction, including granting the authority to probation officers to match the work placements to the individual needs/abilities of an offender</p> <p>Head of National Probation Agency approves community service registration and supervision forms. Forms are being used by probation officers. This has improved data collection and logging</p> <p>CS bilateral meetings (13) with Head of Probation Bureau. Meeting in Telavi regarding the community service</p> <p>PRI Regional Director gave an interview to Radio Liberty about the issue of CS and the adoption of legislative amendments. [raising awareness through the media]</p>		
<p>April 2011</p>	<p>PRI Regional Director gave a radio interview and highlighted the challenges in the CJS and the problems of prison overcrowding. Need for alternative sanctions</p> <p>[raising awareness through the media]</p>	<p>CS bilateral meetings with (14) head of Shida Kartli Probation Bureau on community service; (15) head of Legal Unit; (16) Head of local Government on community service placements; (17) Head of Gori District Court; (18) Head of Kutasi Probation bureau; (19) Deputy Mayor; (20) Head of Kutaisi City Court; (21) Head of Guria Probation Bureau; (9) Head of Ajara Probation Bureau; (22) Deputy</p>		

Time	Key event	Community Service	Parole	Health
		Mayor Batumi City; (23) Head of Batumi City Court; (24) Head of Probation bureau in Svaneti region; (25) Head of Administration; (26) Head of Zugdidi District Court		
May 2011		CS bilateral meeting (27) with Deputy Head of National Probation Agency Legislative amendments were developed and adopted in March, 2011 to facilitate the practical enforcement of community service.		
June 2011	25 probation officers trained 13 probation officers trained Workshop topics: essence of Community Service; national legislation about practical enforcement of CS; collaboration with local Government; control and supervision of offenders serving the sentence.	Second Community Service Training Workshop (12-13 June); 15 probation officers trained. Third Community Service Training Workshop (18-19 June) Fourth Community Service Training Workshop (25-26 June) PRI SC submit second interim monitoring report to OSI Workshops match-funded through EU project CS meeting (28) with Deputy Head of National Probation Agency about the trainings on probation		
July 2011				
August 2011		CS bilateral meetings with (29) Head of Racha Probation Bureau; (30) Head of Local Municipality; (31) Judge at Racha District Court; (31) Deputy Head of Local Government; (32) Probation Officer		
Sep 2011		CS bilateral meeting with (33) First Deputy Chief Prosecutor; (34) Deputy Head of National Probation Service		
October 211	Retreat for the working group on preparation of internal regulations of the Probation Agency. PRI contributed to this retreat. A package of legislative amendments were drafted and later submitted to parliament and approved.	500 brochures distributed 100 posters On community service – sent to probation bureaus, prosecutors office, courts and local Gov [raising awareness] International conference – Georgian probation system: realities and challenges. PRI contributed by bringing-in Estonian expert, who presented about the Estonian experience of developing		

Time	Key event	Community Service	Parole	Health
		<p>community service.</p> <p>PRI regional director led a session on community service and also contributed to the discussion within a working group on the planning and implementation mechanism on community service.</p>		
Nov 2011				
Dec 2011		<p>PRI SC submits final narrative report for OSI phase 1?</p> <p>PRI Regional Director gives a radio interview on non-custodial, community sanctions on 22 December [raise awareness through media]</p> <p>Working Group meeting of experts to develop the concept of community service, outlining activities to be undertaken during 2012 to increase the application.</p> <p>These were later submitted to Ministry for further discussion.</p>	<p>PRI participated in a Round table discussion on “The Roles and Functions of Local Boards on Early Conditional Release” in Georgia, supported by the Council of Europe. Two international experts also participated in the round table discussion – Mr. Alexander Cameron (Head of Scottish Committee on Early Conditional Release) and Mr. Jan Van Dan Brand (member of a national advisory board of the Minister of Justice of Netherlands on Execution of Sentences). Ms. Khasia contributed her recommendations on the Statute and methodology of the existing parole boards.</p> <p>As a result of plenary discussions, a set of common recommendations was developed and later submitted to the Minister of Corrections and Legal Assistance.</p>	
January 2012	<p>Start of phase 2 OSI</p> <p>Final narrative report was finalised and submitted to OSI. Follow-up communications between OSI and PRI.</p> <p>The proposal for 2012 activities was drafted and submitted to the OSI for review. (check proposal against what happened)</p>	<p>CS Planning meeting with reps of NPA on 6 Jan. Discussed project activities in 2012 in relation to the probation system. Similar coordination meetings are held periodically with Probation Agency.</p>		
Feb 2012	<p>Criminal justice analysis report circulated to Government and civil society stakeholders. As a</p>	<p>A meeting was held with the deputy head of probation agency on content and publication of a</p>		

Time	Key event	Community Service	Parole	Health
	follow-up to the report, a meeting was requested by the MoJ. At the meeting, issues raised in the report with regards to the Georgian Criminal Justice Sector were discussed.	manual for probation officers, which is planned under the EU project.		
March 2012	The new contract of the second phase of OSI project is signed and the project commenced retrospectively from Jan 2012			
April 2012				On April 11 th PRI organised a working meeting with local NGOs who are working on the issues of early release of ill prisoners including Georgian Young Lawyers Association, Article 42 of the Georgian Constitution, and Youth for Justice, Human Rights Centre. The aim was to share information about the situation and think of joint ways of addressing the problems in this regard. It was decided that the NGOs would conduct joint advocacy campaign to lobby for the early release of terminally ill prisoners.
May 2011				On May 11 PRI organised another working group meeting (the previous one was held on April 11) with NGO to identify gaps in legislation and practice with regard to early release of gravely/terminally ill prisoners. NGOs: Georgian Young Lawyers Association, Article 42 of the Georgian Constitution, and Youth for Justice, Human Rights Centre As part of the joint advocacy campaign to lobby for the early release of gravely/terminally ill prisoners the group developed a number of recommendations on how to improve the existing system, including changes to the Statute of the Standing Commission which is in charge of deciding early release of terminally ill prisoners..
June 2012	EU Human Rights Seminar – PRI RD gave a presentation on the implications of Zero Tolerance Policy prison overcrowding	Roundtable on community service organised by MCLA and MoJ. PRI RD raised the need for activating the mechanism for the replacement of remaining prison sentence with community service		PRI was instrumental in organising several Working group meetings of human rights NGOs working on the issues of illness-based release of prisoners.

Time	Key event	Community Service	Parole	Health
		<p>for low risk prisoners.</p> <p>First working group meeting to develop a manual for probation officers. The WG aims to assess the needs of probation officers via a survey. PRI worked on the structure of the manual and finalised the questionnaire. PRI plans to work on the community service section of the manual.</p>		<p>One such meeting was conducted on 11 of June. During the meeting the final version (prepared by PRI) of main documents was reviewed and Recommendations prepared by PRI following discussions on the Statute of the Commission in charge of making decisions on early release of terminally ill prisoners.</p>
July 2012		<p>PRI carried out two training workshops (July 24-27) for probation officers on the topic of community service. Trained 40 probation officers who were recruited in early 2012</p> <p>The training workshops looked at the national legislation, as well as international standards in terms of the concept and application of the community service, it reviewed international best practice, the use of electronic monitoring and special tools (registers and forms elaborated by PRI) to supervise the offenders serving this sentence.</p>		
Aug 12				
Sept 2012	<p>Statistical data were gathered to update the Criminal justice research analysis report.</p>			<p>PRI contracted a medical doctor to conduct examination of regulations governing the release of terminally or gravely ill prisoners. The analysis showed that regulations to be outdated and incompliant with modern classification of diseases. The expert was therefore hired to update the regulation.</p> <p>Working meeting with the expert Rusudan Beriashvili was conducted on 28 September. During the meeting the regulation was reviewed and the general standards were agreed.</p>
October 2012	<p>Change in Government. The Georgian Dream coalition wins election.</p>	<p>International Probation Conference – 19 October</p>		
Nov 2012				<p>On 2 and 3 Nov 2012, PRI organised two Working Group meetings with NGOs to discuss recommendations to amend the Standing Commission statute on release of gravely ill prisoners and the list of diseases</p>

Time	Key event	Community Service	Parole	Health
				<p>which are subject to compassionate release from imprisonment. The recommendations were submitted to the Ministry of Corrections and the Ministry of Healthcare which operates the joint standing commission in charge of making decisions about compassionate release of ill prisoners.</p> <p>NGOS involved: Article 42 of the Constitution, GYLA, Empathy, GCRT, Youth for Justice, Global Initiative on Psychiatry. Were these recommendations taken-up?</p>
Dec 2012	Roundtable meeting under the EC project			
Jan 2013	No activities			
Feb 2013	Criminal Procedure Code – relevant to EC project. See monthly report.			
March 2013	<p>5 Roundtable meetings in the regions - Rustavi, Gori, Kutaisi, Batumi and Zugdidi. 1 Roundtable meeting with civil society and lawyers in Tbilisi.</p> <p>Main issues for discussion included draft amendments to the Criminal Procedure Code of Georgia, Criminal Code, Code on Imprisonment and the Law on Probation. Feedback was gathered in all six cities from lawyers and NGO representatives and included in the feedback provided to the parliament of Georgia.</p>			
April 2013	<i>Joint petition on Criminal Procedure Code</i> PRI and GYLA prepared a joint statement for parliament about amendments to Criminal Justice Code of Georgia.			
June 2013		PRI evaluate OSI and EU project	On 13 June PRI organised a one-day working meeting for high-level Government officials and members of Parole Board and presented research on the 'Criteria and Risk Factors of the early release of prisoners'. Participants discussed the challenging issues of the Early Release Mechanism. PRI presented preliminary findings of the survey on the needs of women prisoners. This research was welcomed by the Ministry of Justice as it provided background information that will inform their pilot project .	
July 2013		End of OSI project		