



Contracting authority: European Commission

Support to Civil Society in Georgia 2024

Annex A.1 – Grant application form - Concept note

Budget line(s):

Lot 1: BGUE-B2023-14.020211-C1-INTPA>NEAR

BGUE-B2023-14.020211-C1-INTPA>NEAR

Lot 2, 3: BGUE-B2023-14.020220-C1-INTPA>NEAR

Lot 4: BGUE-B2023-14.020111-C1-NEAR

Reference:

EuropeAid/180155/DD/ACT/GE

Deadline for submission¹ of concept notes:

27/02/2024 at 12:00 (Brussels date and time)

(in order to convert to local time click [here](#)²)

Number & title of lot	Lot 4: to counter disinformation and foreign interference and manipulation (FIMI)
Title of the action:	SAFIMI Georgia: Georgian Society Against FIMI , disinformation and coordinated inauthentic behaviour
Name of the lead applicant	Fundación Maldita.es contra la desinformación: periodismo, educación, investigación y datos en nuevos formatos
Nationality of the lead applicant ³	Spanish

¹ Online submission via PROSPECT is mandatory for this call for proposals (see section 2.2.2 of the guidelines). In PROSPECT all dates and times are expressed in Brussels time. Applicants should note that the IT support is open from Monday to Friday 08:30 to 18:30 Brussels time (except during European Commission public holidays in Belgium as published in the Official Journal).

² An example of a time converter tool available online: <http://www.timeanddate.com/worldclock/converter.html>

³ An organisation's statutes must show that it was established under the national law of the country concerned and that the head office is located in an eligible country. Any organisation established in a different country cannot be

Dossier No	
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considered an eligible local organisation. See the footnotes to the guidelines for the call.

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The controller of call for tenders is the head of contracts and finance unit R4 of DG Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations.

⁴ Pursuant to Regulation (EU) 2018/1725 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2018 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data by the Union institutions, bodies, offices and agencies and on the free movement of such data, and repealing Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 and Decision No 1247/2002/EC, OJ L 205 of 21.11.2018, p. 39.

⁵ This link will lead you to the "EuropeAid privacy statement" published in the Practical Guide General Annexes (see Annex A13).



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2 **DECLARATION BY THE LEAD APPLICANT**

1 CONCEPT NOTE

1.1. Summary of the action

1.1.1. Fill in the table below:

Objectives of the action	Overall objective: Build societal resilience in Georgia to mis/disinformation, FIMI and coordinated inauthentic behaviour (CIB) by strengthening multi-stakeholder—including media, civil society, government and the general public—and cross-sectoral understanding, awareness and responses. Specific objectives: 1. Strengthen the investigation, understanding of and resources to counter the FIMI, disinformation and coordinated inauthentic behaviour (CIB) challenges in Georgia among diverse stakeholders. 2. Foster broad-reaching, cross-sectoral multi-stakeholder collaboration and network building in Georgia in addressing the FIMI, disinformation and CIB challenges. 3. Enhance the capacities of media practitioners, CSO/NGOs/civil activists, and local government and public authority officials in Georgia to identify and counter FIMI/disinformation/CIB and contribute to a public dialogue grounded in facts. 4. Foster general public access to and engagement in evidence-based information, education, and dialogues that raise public awareness of and capacities to confront FIMI, disinformation and CIB in Georgia.
Target group(s)⁶	• Media practitioners, journalists, fact-checkers etc, especially local media outlets. • NGOs, CSOs, and civil activists. • Local government officials, public authorities and political party representatives • General Georgian public from diverse regions across Georgia including Samtskhe-Javakheti (Armenian minorities), Kvemo Kartli (Azerbaijani minorities), Imereti, Adjara, Samegrelo, and Kakheti, particularly young persons and speakers of minority languages (Armenia, Azerbaijani, and Russian) • Other stakeholders in the fight against FIMI/disinformation in Georgia, including academia, relevant coalitions/networks (national and international), and donors (national and international).
Final beneficiaries⁷	General Georgian public from diverse regions across Georgia, including young persons and minority language speakers. Georgian media and information ecosystem stakeholders, including media practitioners and organisations, CSOs, NGOs and civil activists, as well as government officials.
Expected outputs	1.1 Baseline study reaching minimum 10,000 views and at least 30 stakeholders.

⁶ **Target groups** are groups/entities who will directly benefit from the action at the action purpose level.

⁷ **Final beneficiaries** are those who will benefit from the action in the long term at the level of the society or sector at large.

	1.2 12 quarterly (taking 30 months of the project period) FIMI reports reaching a minimum 15 000 views per report and at least 30 stakeholders. 1.3 FIMI toolkit tailored to 3 primary target groups shared with at least 100 different stakeholders. 2.1 Multi-stakeholder community against FIMI and disinformation consisting of at least 20 members. 2.2 100 participants engaged across all virtual symposiums with an additional 50 participants attending each of the two in-person events. 3.1. Training programme and materials for media and CSOs to promote capacities to identify and tackle FIMI/disinfo in the Georgian media & info space. 3.2. Training programme and materials for local government and authority representatives to promote capacities to identify and tackle FIMI/disinfo in the Georgian media & info space. 3.3. 100 journalists, CSOs representatives and civil activists equipped with information, tools, and capacities to confront FIMI/disinformation. 3.4. 75 local government, public authority and political party representatives equipped with information, tools, and capacities to confront FIMI/disinformation. 4.1 Evidence-based content produced in 3 minority languages that fights FIMI/disinformation based on enhanced MDF chatbot service and tools. 4.2 High quality multi-format evidence-based media content countering FIMI & disinformation narratives reaching at least 200 re-publications + 500.000 views/impressions. 4.3 250 citizens equipped with media literacy skills to identify and counter FIMI/disinformation through CSO implemented training. 4.4 At least 20 local forums in different regions of Georgia engaging at least 500 participants in person and reaching 100,000 views.
Main activities	1.1.1. Baseline study on FIMI and mis/disinformation, also coordinated inauthentic behaviour (CIB) challenges in Georgia to identify vulnerabilities exploited by malign actors attempting to sow societal divisions 1.1.2. Publication and wide-reaching dissemination of this Baseline study report to key target groups, including launch event engaging stakeholders and comprehensive communications campaign + network mobilisation. 1.2.1. Periodic reports (6 per year) on primary mis/disinformation and FIMI narratives identified in the Georgia information sphere, as well as coordinated inauthentic behaviour (CIB) activities detected. 1.2.2. Publication and dissemination of periodic FIMI and CIB reports to relevant stakeholders: media; CSOs and civil activists, local public authorities.. 1.3.1. Development of a FIMI toolkit, including an overview of what FIMI is; key approaches and tools to identify and combat FIMI. The toolkit will be divided into 3 separate chapters for 3 primary target groups: media practitioners, CSOs and activists, and local government officials.

1.3.2. Publication and comprehensive dissemination campaign of FIMI toolkit. This will include a virtual launch event, plus targeted communications efforts to engage relevant target groups.

2.1.1. Establishment of a multistakeholder community against FIMI and disinformation in Georgia (SAFIMI), consisting of: Media and journalists; CSOs and NGOs; Public authorities, including local government representatives; Sectoral associations related to FIMI; International agencies and donor community.

2.1.2 The Georgian Community Against FIMI and disinformation (SAFIMI) will be cultivated and sustained through the establishment and operation of strategic communications channels and materials to engage and foster exchange between community members, consisting of: Establishment and maintenance of a website; Monthly e-newsletter.

2.2.1 Quarterly symposiums/meetings/forums of SAFIMI for community members to discuss and review the work of the community; and elaborate virtual exchanges between members to share experiences, skills, and information regarding the fight against FIMI/disinfo in their specific contexts.

3.1.1 Develop a training programme for media practitioners, CSOs, NGOs, and civil activists to build their capacities to tackle FIMI/disinfo in their environment.

3.2.1 Develop training programme for local government and authority representatives to build their capacities to tackle FIMI/disinformation.

3.3.1 Implementation of training programmes for media/CSO actors in 6 different regions (in two rounds, 1 per year). The courses will be practical exchanges bringing together both media actors and CSOs into the same space, encouraging networking and collaboration alongside knowledge and capacity building (subgrant support provided for participation).

3.4.1. Training programmes for local government/political actors will be implemented in each of the 6 regions (in two rounds, 1 per year). The courses will be practical exchanges to promote awareness and build knowledge and capacities.

4.1.1 Enhancement and promotion of the MDF semi-automated chatbot and disinformation monitoring tools. Tools developed to cater for minority languages spoken in Georgia (Armenian and Azerbaijanis) so that users are able to report and receive information in their own language. Plus, a promotional campaign to foster engagement in the tool, particularly among minority communities.

4.1.2 MDF production of multiformat evidence-based content tackling FIMI and mis/disinformation in minority languages. The content will be published by MDF as well as disseminated through their diverse communications channels, including through the chatbot service tailored to specific minority languages.

4.2.1. SAFIMI Media collective (subgrant support): 12 trained media actors (6 per year) (from T3.3.1) will be selected to establish a media collective dedicated to combating FIMI/disinformation through coordinated media efforts (fact-checking & pre-bunking). The media organisations will be provided with subgrants to carry out fact-checking/fighting disinformation efforts either a) producing content, and b) amplifying verified content produced by other partners.

	4.3.1 Trained regional/local CSOs and activists (with a particular focus on youth) implement workshops (subgrants): 12 (6 per year) trained CSOs will be provided with subgrants to implement their own media literacy and awareness-raising workshops to citizens, particularly young persons. 4.4.1 A campaign of public forums in different local municipalities across Georgia to discuss prominent issues in Georgian society relating to and raising awareness about the challenges of mis/disinformation and FIMI. These forums will target the local population, academia, and youth, while inviting respected and influential voices plus local SAFIMI community members to participate in face-to-face meetings. 4.4.2. Multi-platform awareness-raising campaign: the in-person forums will also be accompanied by an ongoing communications campaign to raise awareness about the FIMI / disinformation challenge. This campaign will include video recordings of the public forums that will be shared on social media.
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1.2. Description of the action: cover all the 7 points in the instructions: (max 2 pages)

SAFIMI Georgia will build societal resilience in Georgia to mis/disinformation, FIMI and coordinated inauthentic behaviour (CIB) by strengthening multi-stakeholder—including media, civil society, government and the general public—and cross-sectoral understanding, awareness and responses (Overall objective). Adopting a whole-of-society approach that combines comprehensive research, cross-sectoral coalition building, and tailored multi-stakeholder capacity building programmes and subgrant support, this two-and-a-half-year project will empower media practitioners—including fact-checkers and local journalists—CSOs/NGOs and civil activists, and local government and political party officials, among others in Georgia to contribute to the development of a Georgian society more aware, resilient and better equipped to confront mis/disinformation, FIMI and coordinated inauthentic behaviour (CIB).

The project brings together: **Fundación Maldita.es (MAL)** is a Spanish non-profit foundation that builds public trust by fighting disinformation and promoting transparency through journalism, education, technology, research and policy action. It provides actors affected by mis/disinformation and FIMI globally with tools, capacities, and information to make informed decisions and foster a more resilient, accessible, and trustworthy media & information ecosystem. **The Media Development Foundation (MDF)** is an NGO based in Georgia that promotes: human rights and an open, inclusive and pluralistic society; professional and institutional media development; media accountability and self-regulation; critical thinking and conscious media consumption. MDF promotes media literacy, facilitating the professional development of journalists and fostering cooperation with academia and educators; conducts fact-checking, investigates hate speech, anti-Western propaganda and CIB; and champions the rights of journalists and media consumers, as well as advocating on policy issues. **Transparency International Georgia (TIG)** is the Georgian chapter of Transparency International. Its goal is to combat corruption by promoting transparency and accountability. The organisation supports the Georgian government and public in implementing reforms, strengthening institutions, and advocating for good governance to foster a transparent and vibrant democratic environment. **Transatlantic Foundation (TF)** is the European arm of the German Marshall Fund of the U.S. and counts on three decades of comprehensive support for civil society, democracy, independent media and Euro-Atlantic integration in the countries east of the former Iron Curtain. TF work covers direct grantmaking, targeted capacity-building, leadership development, networking opportunities, and analytical and policy initiatives.

SAFIMI will firstly broaden the evidence and resource base in Georgia regarding mis/disinformation, FIMI and CIB by strengthening investigation into, understanding of and resources to counter these hybrid information challenges among diverse stakeholders (SO1). Mobilising the research expertise of MDF, MAL and TIG, the project will begin with **a comprehensive baseline study** to assess the nature and scope of these challenges in Georgia, particularly **identifying and mapping key vulnerabilities exploited by malign actors** and analysing: prominent FIMI and mis/disinformation narratives; Georgian media & information consumption behaviours, particularly young audiences; and the effectiveness of government measures. The study will result in recommendations to key stakeholders while providing a crucial knowledge foundation for the project. Following this, MDF and MAL will develop **periodic reports analysing the primary mis/disinformation and FIMI narratives and cases as well as CIB activities**

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detected in the Georgian information sphere over the prior period. Leveraging national and international networks, all research will be disseminated to diverse stakeholders through a comprehensive communications campaign—securing 100.000 views and reaching at least 30 different stakeholders, providing them with in-depth, up-to-date data and analysis on prevailing hybrid information threats in Georgia. Grounded in this research base, MDF, MAL and TF will then employ their extensive cross-border expertise tackling FIMI to develop a **multi-stakeholder FIMI toolkit**. Drawing on international insights and local experience, this toolkit will provide an in-depth introduction to FIMI and the challenges it poses in Georgia, equipping users with key approaches, techniques and resources to identify and combat FIMI cases. The toolkit will be divided into **three primary chapters each tailored to specific target groups**: media and journalists; CSOs & NGOs; and local government. The toolkit will be disseminated widely among at least 100 relevant actors, plus shared with the SAFIMI community and employed as a central resource in the capacity building activities detailed below.

Alongside evidence and resource development, *SAFIMI* will additionally foster broad-reaching, cross-sectoral multi-stakeholder collaboration and network building in Georgia to address FIMI, disinformation and CIB challenges (SO2) through the **establishment and cultivation of a multistakeholder community against FIMI and other information threats**. Building on established coalitions and networks, this community will bring together different actors affected by and engaged in tackling FIMI/disinformation/CIB in Georgia—including from media, civil society, public authorities such as local government, sectoral associations, and the international community—creating a platform to share knowledge, information, tools and experiences to promote understanding and collaboration in tackling hybrid information threats in Georgia. The community will be founded on the establishment of a memorandum of cooperation for members that will outline key principles and practices plus a steering committee to coordinate community activities. The *SAFIMI* Community will be cultivated through the establishment and operation of strategic communications channels and materials to engage and foster exchange between members, including a website and monthly newsletter. Added to this, **quarterly community symposiums** will be held bringing together members for **virtual cross-sectoral exchanges** including talks/Q&As with keynote speakers from the national and international field, capacity building activities and networking events reaching at least 100 participants. The materials and recordings from these symposiums will be published and disseminated throughout the community. Two (one per year) of these symposiums will be in-person events for all members as well as engaging international representatives with at least 50 participants.

Seeking to strengthen diverse actors within the *SAFIMI* community, this project will subsequently enhance the capacities of media practitioners, CSO/NGOs/activists, and local government and public authority officials in Georgia to identify and counter FIMI/disinformation/CIB and contribute to a public dialogue grounded in facts (SO3). Based on the abovementioned research and toolkit, MDF, MAL, TF and TIG will develop a **two-track training programme that equips participants with tailored knowledge and skills to confront hybrid information threats**. One track will be tailored to media practitioners, CSOs, NGOs and civil activists—introducing them to key counter-disinformation/FIMI tools such as the DISARM framework, fact-checking and pre-bunking skills, advocacy, public policy and media literacy responses, and community engagement techniques, among others—a second track will be designed for local government representatives, fostering their awareness of hybrid information threats and promoting skills to identify FIMI/disinformation/CIB cases and employ fact-based narrative approaches to their work. The training will be adapted to and implemented across six target regions in Georgia—Samtskhe-Javakheti, Kvemo Kartli, Imereti, Adjara, Samegrelo, and Kakheti—to more effectively respond to diverse and localised needs across the country reaching at least 175 beneficiaries.

Lastly, *SAFIMI* will mobilise the knowledge, community and capacities developed to foster general public access to and engagement in information, education, and dialogues that raise public awareness of and capacities to confront FIMI, disinformation and CIB in Georgia (SO4). Firstly, **MDF's semi-automated Telegram chatbot**—which permits real-time crowdsourced monitoring of disinformation and delivery of verified information—will be **enhanced to cater for minority languages spoken in Georgia** (Armenian and Azerbaijani) so that users are able to report and receive information in their own language. Employing these improvements, MDF journalists will **produce and disseminate evidence-based information in Georgian and 3 minority languages that debunks and prebunks identified FIMI and disinformation content and narratives**. Added to this, a **SAFIMI media collective** will be launched in which 12 local media actors trained in the previously mentioned activities will receive subgrant support to carry out collaborative fact-checking/fighting disinformation, producing content, and amplifying verified content produced by other partners—reaching 500.000 views and more than 200 re-publications. This will have a particular focus on the 2025 local elections but also work to address emerging disinformation and FIMI campaigns. Parallel to this, 12 trained CSOs and activists will receive subgrant support to implement their own **media literacy and awareness-raising interventions**, particularly focused on young persons,

to foster resilience against hybrid information threats in their communities among at least 250 citizens. Finally, **a campaign of public forums will be elaborated by TIG across at least 20 municipalities in Georgia**, targeting the local population, especially youth. These forums will bring together the public, local influential cultural voices as well as local SAFIMI community members for engaging community events exploring culture, history, art, music, literature with a focus on anti-disinformation and FIMI/CIB awareness topics. These forums—reaching at least 500 citizens—will be accompanied by an **ongoing national communications campaign to raise awareness about hybrid information threats and key resources** to confront them.

In terms of external factors, there is risk of poor engagement from diverse stakeholder groups, particularly state, government and political actors given the uncooperative political context in Georgia especially as some partners are watchdog organisations. However, both TF and TIG have extensive experience working with state actors in Georgia, and the international Euroatlantic reputation of TF is expected to further improve the credibility. Sustained engagement of media and civil society actors can prove challenging due to resource limitations of smaller organisations; SAFIMI subgranting and tailored resource support is specifically designed to foster more sustainable project participation. Further risks relate to the integrity of media partners which could undermine the project approach, however SAFIMI specifically focuses on building media capacity and trust and all partners are well equipped in this area. Meanwhile, the linguistic diversity of Georgia means that accessing some minority language communities might be difficult, hence a particular emphasis on multilingual content production in SAFIMI.

SAFIMI will mainstream the cross-cutting issues of democracy and good governance by directly tackling hybrid information threats such as FIMI which directly undermine democratic values and governance. SAFIMI will strengthen civil society and independent media as key pillars of democratic society, while ensuring diverse actors including citizens have access to quality information to make informed decisions and foster their democratic and civic participation. Moreover, support to youth is prioritised throughout the project particularly via CSO engagement and the local forums. Meanwhile, we address minority language and community rights in Georgia with training for civil society and media adapted to local contexts and multilingual content produced in Russian, Armenian and Azerbaijani.

Relevance of the action (max 3 pages)

1.2.1. Relevance to the objectives/sectors/themes/specific priorities of the call for proposals

SAFIMI firstly responds to the call objective to build societal resilience and strengthen the whole-of-society approach to disinformation. The project will carry out ongoing and comprehensive research into disinformation, FIMI and CIB cases and trends in Georgia, building a strong evidence base to act upon while contributing to in-depth, well-informed counter measures. Meanwhile, ongoing monitoring of the Georgian information space will be conducted, primarily under the operations of MDF supported by their semi-automated multilingual Telegram chatbot and disinformation database system—which permits crowdsourced monitoring of disinformation on hard-to-reach private messaging platforms like Telegram—and subgranted local media partners. Added to this, primary target stakeholders will be equipped with a comprehensive FIMI toolkit and resources along with tailored capacity building for: media, civil society, and local government officials. Finally, the establishment of the SAFIMI community will be rooted in a whole-of-society approach facilitating multi-stakeholder partnerships and cooperation across different sectors and regions, supported by international insights while grounded in local needs. Rather than replicating already existing efforts, SAFIMI will seek to bring them into a shared space to collectively exchange and build more effective responses to the disinformation threat in Georgia.

Secondly, SAFIMI will address the objective to raise awareness amongst the general public about hybrid information threats, including disinformation, FIMI and CIB. The project will involve multilingual evidence-based media content production by both MDF and subgranted media partners. An innovative media collective approach will foster collaborative efforts to improve the reach of and public access to quality, independent information that directly tackles disinformation and FIMI in local communities, with a particular impact on minority languages. Meanwhile, subgrant support to CSOs/activists will promote the uptake of awareness-raising and media literacy initiatives, ensuring effective reach, engagement and capacity building among diverse communities. Finally, the local forums and communications campaign will foster local debate and interactions between citizens and stakeholders, bringing into focus FIMI/disinformation as a local challenge and promoting cooperative responses.

1.2.2. Relevance to the particular needs and constraints of the target country/countries, region(s) and/or relevant sectors (including synergy with

other EU initiatives and avoidance of duplication)

Georgia's alignment with the Euro-Atlantic community serves as the paramount foundation for upholding democratic governance, reinforcing the rule of law, and establishing a stable platform for future socio-economic progress to benefit the Georgian people. Nevertheless, various internal and foreign entities, often influenced by Russia, oppose Georgia's integration with Euro-Atlantic institutions, and recent years have seen Georgia targeted by extensive disinformation and FIMI campaigns, aiming to undermine democratic governance, sow discord among people of diverse backgrounds, and present Russia as an alternative to Western options. A recent communication from the EU Commission highlighted the fight against disinformation and FIMI targeting EU values in Georgia as the number one priority in advancing the country's EU candidacy process.

Russian state-sponsored hybrid warfare tactics present a significant challenge with an ongoing escalation of Russia's interference in Georgia's statehood, independence, and foreign trajectory both online and offline. Notably, Russian-backed online disinformation campaigns have rapidly expanded, involving local political, media, and far-right groups communicating in Georgian and minority languages spoken by more than 10% of the population. Malicious social media tactics, such as bots on news sites and fake hashtag campaigns, along with the spread of intricate hoaxes through platforms like Facebook, have become alarmingly common. Russian-operated social networking accounts and affiliated groups amplify disinformation, contributing to public unrest amid a shrinking civil space. Common disinformation themes include portraying Western institutions negatively, spreading false narratives about the obligatory legalization of same-sex marriage for EU integration, fabricating details about the August 2008 war, and misguiding public opinion about the EU-NATO's attempts to push Georgia to get involved in a war with Ukraine against Russia. The lack of effective counter-messaging poses a significant risk to positive public opinion regarding Georgia's European integration.

The Georgian government is largely unprepared to address these hybrid information threats. While officials do acknowledge the threat, there is a lack of political will to devise effective plans against Russian-backed disinformation. Despite the establishment of strategic communications departments and media literacy programs carried out by the numerous NGOs, practical government measures have not yet been impactful. Low media literacy rates persist across the country—the 2023 Media Literacy Index ranks Georgia in last place—especially in regions where people rely on Russian informational sources, posing risks in distorting sensitive topics among ethnic minorities. Moreover, government efforts have in many cases been counterproductive with their 2023 attempts to pass the Agents of Foreign Influence law which targeted NGO/CSO organisations, threatening their existence and restricting their ability to operate freely.

Meanwhile, the media landscape in Georgia is pluralistic but highly polarised. Many outlets prioritise political interests over the public good, with leading TV stations strongly tied to political parties. The public broadcaster has struggled to fulfil its mission, and private stations, particularly critical ones, monitor state activities and report on matters of public interest. Media freedom has significantly declined in recent years, marked by state-sponsored aggressive rhetoric and disinformation campaigns that threaten the safety of journalists. Authorities have not provided a safe working environment for journalists, leading to increased cases of violence and intimidation, especially against critical voices. In some cases, authorities have themselves been perpetrators, wielding aggressive rhetoric and online disinformation campaigns to undermine the credibility of critical journalists and incite violence against them. Independent media actors, especially at the local level, face tightened resources and capacities to confront disinformation in Georgia and ensure citizens have access to reliable information.

With upcoming elections in Georgia, including local elections in 2025 where Russian-backed disinformation campaigns are likely to have significant impact, it is ever more pertinent to ensure all stakeholders are effectively equipped to identify and confront hybrid information threats. *SAFIMI* will therefore focus on strengthening these key actors with tailored support and resources, while fostering cross-sectoral communication and collaboration reinforced by national and international insights and experience. The project will complement and build upon numerous other initiatives. It will seek to engage regional, national and international efforts and coalitions to form part of the *SAFIMI* community, mobilising MDF and TIG's extensive local and national media, CSO and government networks, along with international bodies such as EEAS, UNAG, the Coalition for Euro-Atlantic Georgia, Information Integrity Coalition, Open Information Partnership, and UNESCO Media and Information Literacy Alliance. Meanwhile, the project will build upon media monitoring, minority media and media literacy projects such as the UNAG/USAID funded "Unity Through Diversity" project (MDF partner) focused on monitoring minority-related narratives in the Georgian public domain; and the EU co-funded "Quality Media and Conscious Media Consumption for Resilient Society" (MDF partner) which increases public awareness and understanding of media freedom, media and information literacy, and the harmful effects of disinformation. Added to this, synergies will be sought with a regional National Endowment for



Democracy funded project, coordinated by MAL with MDF involvement, to promote technological capacities across Georgia, Ukraine and Lithuania to monitor and counter FIMI and disinformation.

1.2.3. Describe and define the target groups and final beneficiaries, their needs and constraints, and state how the action will address these needs

Media practitioners, journalists and fact-checkers, especially in local media: A strong independent media is an essential bulwark against hybrid information threats and plays an important watchdog role; local media outlets are especially important, particularly when reaching minority populations. Recent years have seen an encroachment on media freedom in Georgia with critical journalists facing harassment and outlets falling under political influence, squeezing the role and access to information and resources for independent media actors. Meanwhile, media practitioners, especially local ones, struggle to confront the onslaught of disinformation with studies revealing over 77% of Georgian journalists encounter disinformation and propaganda in their work frequently or very frequently, while highlighting a desperate need for more knowledge and resources. Through the development of a tailored FIMI toolkit, cross-sectoral networking and training activities and subgranting support, SAFIMI will accordingly provide media actors across Georgia, particularly those operating at the local level with the knowledge, financial and material resources required to bolster their efforts to confront hybrid information threats in Georgia.

NGOs, CSOs, and civil activists: Civil society plays a vital role in tackling FIMI, disinformation and CIB in Georgia, in particular advocating for access to reliable information, promoting media literacy, and raising awareness of hybrid information threats across diverse communities. These actors regularly face resource limitations, are frequently the target of public smear campaigns, especially activists, and the recent Agents of Foreign Influence law targeting CSOs and NGOs further threatened their existence and ability to operate freely. SAFIMI will therefore ensure civil society actors are provided with information, resources and training tailored to their needs in order to more effectively equip them when facing FIMI and disinformation threats in their communities. Added to this, they will receive financial support to carry over new resources and capacities into practice, while also building on broader coalitions such as the Coalition for Euro-Atlantic Georgia to engage them in the SAFIMI community strengthening their connections with national and international actors and underscoring their sustainability.

Local government officials and public authorities, particularly in the six target regions: State officials, particularly in local communities, as influential actors, are essential stakeholders in addressing FIMI, disinformation and CIB. However, they are poorly equipped to address these hybrid information threats with limited awareness and/or resources at their disposal and often, whether intentionally or not, contributing to the propagation of false and misleading narratives within their communities. Meanwhile, those operating in areas with large minority populations struggle to compete with the influences of external actors and media channels. Accordingly, SAFIMI will provide tailored training and network support to engage government actors in the FIMI/disinformation challenge and provide them with useful resources (FIMI toolkit) and platforms (local forums) to effectively engage with their communities about this issue in collaboration with other stakeholders such as media and civil society.

General Georgian public from diverse regions incl. Samtskhe-Javakheti, Kvemo Kartli, Imereti, Adjara, Samegrelo, and Kakheti, particularly young persons and minority languages (Armenian, Azerbaijani, and Russian): The disinformation challenge makes it crucial for media consumers to develop strong critical thinking skills and access independent information grounded in facts, however a majority rarely or never verify information or source credibility with Georgia ranked last in the Media Literacy Index. Meanwhile, Georgia is a multi-ethnic country, including ethnic minorities with limited or no knowledge of Georgian language. Dependent on mostly external or Russian information sources, these communities are vulnerable to propaganda and disinformation. Meanwhile, in addition to poor critical thinking skills, surveys reveal that young people report a great deal of social distance and low tolerance of minorities. Through targeted media and CSO strengthening and multilingual content and outreach, SAFIMI will bolster awareness and access of citizens from diverse communities/languages—focused on youth—to quality information/resources relating to hybrid information threats in Georgia, bolstering resilience.

Other stakeholders in the fight against FIMI/disinformation in Georgia, including academia, relevant coalitions/networks, and donors: Large and diverse community of national and international actors from various sectors engaged in and affected by FIMI/disinformation/CIB in Georgia. These actors will equally benefit from and contribute to the SAFIMI project, particularly through the in-depth research, FIMI toolkit and crucially the SAFIMI community that will serve as a central platform for actors from across and beyond Georgia to engage across silos and borders to foster a more collaborative approach to the construction of a resilient Georgian information ecosystem. Such stakeholders will include: European coalitions such as the EEAS, particularly their FIMI-ISAC and StratCom taskforces, EDMO, and the European Fact-Checking Standards Network; plus cross-border civil society initiatives and groups such



as the Coalition for Euro-Atlantic Georgia, Information Integrity Coalition, DISARM Foundation, Open Information Partnership, and UNESCO Media and Information Literacy Alliance among others.

1.2.4. Particular added-value elements

SAFIMI adopts a whole-of-society and multi-stakeholder approach across all activities, targeting diverse stakeholder groups and bringing them into conversation with each other particularly through local forums and the SAFIMI community. Leveraging MDF, TIG and TF connections with government bodies such as the Strategic Communication units of local governments and ministries, NATO-EU Information Center and the Communication Commission, the project will employ a particular emphasis on government and state actors at national and local levels, engaging them as necessary partners in tackling hybrid information threats in Georgia. Meanwhile, extensive subgranting support to media and civil society actors will additionally strengthen multistakeholder capacities and amplify the project impact. Furthermore, SAFIMI aims to build on and bring together existing infrastructures, the establishment of the SAFIMI community is designed to reinforce currently active initiatives and coalitions. Rather than replicating, the community will facilitate connections between these different networks and actors, providing them with resources, information and capacities to strengthen their ongoing activities and foster cross-sectoral cooperation and coherence in building Georgian societal resilience to hybrid information threats.

SAFIMI also importantly incorporates wide-ranging international expertise and capacities. TF is a well-established Euroatlantic actor with extensive subgranting experience and capacities, such as through its innovative civil society trust initiatives. Meanwhile, MAL is a prominent European actor promoting collaboration, research into and countermeasures to FIMI and disinformation, such as through the establishment of the European Fact-Checking Network (EFCSN) and numerous EU-funded projects including AI4Trust, ATHENA, EU-Hybnets and Hatedemics. Added to this, TIG counts on the wide-reaching Transparency International network as well as coordination of the Coalition for Euro-Atlantic Georgia, plus extensive collaboration with national and regional media and civil society organisations in Georgia and the Georgian parliament and public authorities at both national and regional levels. Plus, MDF is a partner in international coalitions such as Information Integrity Coalition, Open Information Partnership, and UNESCO Media and Information Literacy Alliance, and maintains strong relations with UNAG. Finally, SAFIMI draws on considerable cross-border FIMI experience and expertise both MDF and MAL are engaged in numerous Europe-wide efforts to tackle FIMI including: the EEAS' StratCom and FIMI-ISAC task forces, EDMO, and the EFCSN. Meanwhile, MDF counts on cutting edge chatbot and database tools specially designed to enhance disinformation detection and monitoring, developed in collaboration with Maldita.es and with demonstrated impact in 10+ countries globally.



2 DECLARATION BY THE LEAD APPLICANT

The lead applicant, represented by the undersigned, being the authorised signatory of the lead applicant, and in the context of the present application, representing any co-applicant(s) and affiliated entity(ies) in the proposed action, hereby declares that:

- i. the lead applicant has the sources of financing and professional competence and qualifications specified in Section 2 of the guidelines for applicants;
- ii. the lead applicant undertakes to comply with the obligations foreseen in the affiliated entities' statement of the grant application form and with the principles of good partnership practice;
- iii. the lead applicant is directly responsible for the preparation, management and implementation of the action with the co-applicant(s) and affiliated entity(ies), if any, and is not acting as an intermediary;
- iv. the lead applicant is able to provide proof of the consent of the co-applicants and affiliated entities to be included in the present application;
- v. the lead applicant, the co-applicant(s) and the affiliated entity(ies) are not in any of the situations excluding them from participating in contracts which are listed in Section 2.6.10.1. of the practical guide (available from the following Internet address: <https://wikis.ec.europa.eu/display/ExactExternalWiki/2.+Basic+rules>);
- vi. the lead applicant and each co-applicant and affiliated entity are in a position to deliver immediately, upon request, the supporting documents stipulated under Section 2.4 of the guidelines for applicants;
- vii. the lead applicant and each co-applicant(s) and affiliated entity(ies) (if any) are eligible in accordance with the criteria set out under Sections 2.1.1 of the guidelines for applicants;
- viii. if recommended to be awarded a grant, the lead applicant, the co-applicant(s) and the affiliated entity(ies) accept the contractual conditions as laid down in the standard grant contract annexed to the guidelines for applicants (Annex G) (or the Contribution Agreement where the lead applicant is an organisation whose pillars have been positively assessed by the European Commission);

We acknowledge that if we participate in spite of being in any of the situations listed in Section 2.6.10.1 of the practical guide or if the declarations or information provided prove to be false we may be subject to rejection from this procedure and to administrative sanctions in the form of exclusion and financial penalties up to 10 % of the total estimated value of the grant being awarded and that this information may be published on the Commission website in accordance with the Financial Regulation in force. We are aware that, for the purposes of safeguarding the EU's financial interests, our personal data may be transferred to internal audit services, to the early detection and exclusion system, to the European Court of Auditors or to the European Anti-Fraud Office.

Signed on behalf of the lead applicant

Name	Clara Jiménez Cruz
Signature	
Position	President of Fundación Maldita.es
Date	27.02.2024

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Annex I – Description of the Action

Appendix 1 Logical framework and Activity matrix¹

NDICI-GEO-NEAR/2024/458-190

<i>R e s u l t s</i>	<i>Results chain</i>	<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Baseline (value & reference year)</i>	<i>Target (value & reference year)</i>	<i>Current value* (reference year) (* to be included in interim and final reports)</i>	<i>Sources of data</i>	<i>Assumptions</i>
<i>I m p a c t (O v e r a l l o b j e c t i v e)</i>	Build societal resilience in Georgia to mis/disinformation, FIMI and coordinated inauthentic behaviour (CIB) by strengthening multi-stakeholder—including media, civil society, government and the general public—and cross-sectoral understanding, awareness and responses.	Impact indicator 1: Total cumulative number of stakeholders engaged across all activities	Baseline: 0	Target: 540	Current value: 0	Sources: activity registration and attendance records, email communications, member records	<i>Not applicable</i>
		Impact indicator 2: Total cumulative engagement (views/impressions/media hits) across all published content	Baseline: 0	Target: 235,000	Current value:	Sources: website and social media analytics of project partners	
		Impact indicator 3: Average % of beneficiaries with improved awareness and capacities to counter FIMI, disinformation and CIB across all	Baseline: 0	Target: 80%	Current value: 0	Sources: training and forum evaluation forms	
<i>O u t c o m e</i>	Outcome 1: Strengthen the investigation, understanding of and resources to counter the FIMI, disinformation and coordinated	1.1 Total number of research and toolkit publications	1.1 Baseline: 0	1.1 Target: 14	1.1 Current value: 0	1.1 Source: website publications of partners	Benefiting citizens, media, CSO, government and other stakeholders continue

¹ (annex E3d)

<i>Results</i>	<i>Results chain</i>	<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Baseline (value & reference year)</i>	<i>Target (value & reference year)</i>	<i>Current value* (reference year) (* to be included in interim and final reports)</i>	<i>Sources of data</i>	<i>Assumptions</i>
<i>Specific objectives</i>	inauthentic behaviour (CIB) challenges in Georgia among diverse stakeholders.	1.2 Total number of views/impressions on published research and toolkit content	1.2 Baseline: 0	1.2 Target: 25,000	1.2 Current value: 0	1.2 Source: website and social media analytics of project partners	to employ and develop the knowledge and awareness provided by the research and toolkit outputs to enhance their responses to FIMI, disinformation and CIB.
		1.3 Total number of stakeholders engaged in research and toolkit outputs	1.3 Baseline: 0	1.3 Target: 300	1.3 Current value: 0	1.3 Source: email communications with stakeholders	
	Outcome 2: Foster broad-reaching, cross-sectoral multi-stakeholder collaboration and network building in Georgia in addressing the FIMI, disinformation and CIB challenges.	2.1 Total cumulative number of stakeholders engaged	2.1 Baseline: 0	2.1 Target: 300	2.1 Current value: 0	2.1 Source: memorandum of understanding on cooperation	Benefiting media, CSO, local government and other stakeholders continue to actively engage and participate in the maintenance of the SAFIMI community, and employ and develop the knowledge, awareness and capacities developed by SAFIMI community activities.
		2.2 Number of events realised	2.2 Baseline: 0	2.2 Target: 7	2.2 Current value: 0	2.2 Source: attendance records	
	Outcome 3: Enhance the capacities of media practitioners, CSO/NGOs/civil activists, and local government and public authority officials in Georgia to identify and counter FIMI/disinformation/CIB and contribute to a public dialogue grounded in facts.	3.1 Average % of satisfaction with the training to media/CSOs	3.1 Baseline: 0	3.1 Target: 80%	3.1 Current value: 0	3.1 Source: training evaluation results	Benefiting media, CSO and local government actors continue to employ and develop the knowledge, awareness and capacities developed by the training programme in
		3.2 % of media/CSO trainees with improved capacities to identify and counter FIMI, disinformation and CIB	3.2 Baseline: 0	3.2 Target: 80%	3.2 Current value: 0	3.2 Source: training assessment results	

<i>Results</i>	<i>Results chain</i>	<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Baseline (value & reference year)</i>	<i>Target (value & reference year)</i>	<i>Current value* (reference year) (* to be included in interim and final reports)</i>	<i>Sources of data</i>	<i>Assumptions</i>
	Outcome 4: Foster general public access to and engagement in evidence-based information, education, and dialogues that raise public awareness of and capacities to confront FIMI, disinformation and CIB in Georgia.	3.3 Average % of satisfaction with the training to local government officials	3.3 Baseline: 0	3.3 Target: 80%	3.3 Current value: 0	3.3 Source: training evaluation results	their local communities.
		3.4 % of local government officials trainees with improved capacities to identify and counter FIMI, disinformation and CIB	3.4 Baseline: 0	3.4 Target: 80%	3.4 Current value: 0	3.4 Source: training assessment results	
		4.1 Total online engagement (views/impressions/ media hits) in evidence-based journalistic content published	4.1 Baseline: 0	4.1 Target: 210,050	4.1 Current value: 0	4.1 Source: website and social media analytics of project partners	In their day-to-day activities in the Georgian media and information ecosystem, benefiting citizens, media, CSO and other stakeholders continue to employ and develop the knowledge, awareness and capacities developed by the content production, educational interventions, and campaigning and outreach activities.
		4.2 Total number of offline citizens engaged in training and awareness-raising activities	4.2 Baseline: 0	4.2 Target: 750	4.2 Current value: 0	4.2 Source: activity attendance and registration records	
		4.3. Total number of media content pieces countering FIMI and disinformation published	4.3. Baseline: 0	4.3 Target: 810	4.3 Current value: 0	4.3 Source: website and publication platforms of MDF and FSTP partners	
<i>Output</i>	1.1: Baseline study on FIMI, disinformation and CIB challenges in Georgia.	1.1.1. No. of baseline studies	1.1.1 Baseline: 0	1.1.1 Target: 1	1.1.1 Current value: 0	1.1.1 Source: Publication of report on project	Stakeholders in Georgia and internationally

<i>Results</i>	<i>Results chain</i>	<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Baseline (value & reference year)</i>	<i>Target (value & reference year)</i>	<i>Current value* (reference year) (* to be included in interim and final reports)</i>	<i>Sources of data</i>	<i>Assumptions</i>
<i>ut s</i>						and partner websites	actively engage with and respond to the baseline study.
		1.1.2: No. of views on baseline study publication	1.1.2 Baseline: 0	1.1.2 Target: 10,000	1.1.2 Current value: 0	1.1.2 Source: website and social media analytics	
		1.1.3: No. of stakeholders directly engaged in the baseline study	1.1.3 Baseline: 0	1.1.3 Target: 100	1.1.3 Current value: 0	1.1.3 Source: email communications and virtual launch event attendee records	
	1.2: FIMI/disinformation and CIB trends in Georgia periodic reports	1.2.1. No. of FIMI in Georgia reports	1.2.1. Baseline: 0	1.2.1. Target: 6	1.2.1. Current value: 0	1.2.1. Source: Website publications on project and partner pages	Stakeholders in Georgia and internationally actively engage with and respond to the periodic reports.
		1.2.2. Total number of views on report publications	1.2.2 Baseline: 0	1.2.2 Target: 15,000	1.2.2 Current value: 0	1.2.2 Source: website and social media analytics	
		1.2.3. Total number of stakeholders directly engaged in the reports	1.2.3 Baseline: 0	1.2.3 Target: 100	1.2.3 Current value: 0	1.2.3 Source: email communications	
	1.3: FIMI toolkit tailored to 3 primary target groups shared with at least 100 different stakeholders.	1.3.1. No. of FIMI toolkits with chapters tailored to 3 different target groups	1.3.1 Baseline: 0	1.3.1 Target: 1	1.3.1 Current value: 0	1.3.1 Source: website publication of the toolkit + toolkit resources	Media, CSO and local government stakeholders actively engage with and

<i>Results</i>	<i>Results chain</i>	<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Baseline (value & reference year)</i>	<i>Target (value & reference year)</i>	<i>Current value* (reference year) (* to be included in interim and final reports)</i>	<i>Sources of data</i>	<i>Assumptions</i>
		1.3.2 No of relevant stakeholders directly engaged in the toolkit	1.3.2 Baseline: 0	1.3.2 Target: 100	1.3.2 Current value: 0	1.3.2 Source: email communications and launch event attendees list	employ the FIMI toolkit.
	2.1 Multi-stakeholder community against FIMI and disinformation	2.1.1. No. of community members	2.1.1 Baseline: 0	2.1.1 Target: 50	2.1.1 Current value: 0	2.1.1 Source: member registration records	Stakeholders across Georgia and internationally actively contribute to and participate in the SAFIMI community establishment and its communications activities.
		2.1.2 No of email communications sent	2.1.2 Baseline: 0	2.1.2 Target: 24	2.1.2 Current value: 0	2.1.2 Source: email records	
	2.2 SAFIMI community members engaged in virtual and in-person symposiums with improved knowledge, connections and awareness about diverse information threats in Georgia	2.2.1 No. of members participating in the virtual symposiums	2.2.1 Baseline: 0	2.2.1 Target: 100	2.2.1 Current value: 0	2.2.1 Source: attendee records	Stakeholders across Georgia and internationally actively participate in the SAFIMI Symposiums.
		2.2.2 No. of members attending the 2 in-person SAFIMI conferences	2.2.2 Baseline: 0	2.2.2 Target: 50	2.2.2 Current value: 0	2.2.2 Source: attendee and registration records	
	3.1. Training programme and materials for media and CSOs to promote capacities to identify and tackle FIMI/disinfo in the Georgian media & info space.	3.1.1 No. of training programmes for media/CSOs to tackle FIMI/disinformation in Georgia	3.1.1 Baseline: 0	3.1.1 Target: 1	3.1.1 Current value: 0	3.1.1 Source: training materials and guide	Local media/CSO actors actively engage with the training materials.
	3.2. Training programme and materials for local government and authority representatives to promote capacities to identify and tackle	3.2.1 No. of training programmes for local government officials to tackle	3.2.1 Baseline: 0	3.2.1 Target: 1	3.2.1 Current value: 0	3.2.1 Source: training materials and guide	Local government actors actively engage with the training materials.

<i>Results</i>	<i>Results chain</i>	<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Baseline (value & reference year)</i>	<i>Target (value & reference year)</i>	<i>Current value* (reference year) (* to be included in interim and final reports)</i>	<i>Sources of data</i>	<i>Assumptions</i>
	FIMI/disinfo in the Georgian media & info space.	FIMI/disinformation in Georgia					
	3.3. Georgian journalists, CSOs representatives and civil activists participating in the tailored training programme equipped with information, tools, and capacities to confront FIMI/disinformation.	3.3.1 No. of training participants	3.3.1 Baseline: 0	3.3.1 Target: 120	3.3.1 Current value: 0	3.3.1 Source: training attendance records	Local media/CSO actors actively participate in the training programme.
		3.3.2 No. of training programmes implemented	3.3.2 Baseline: 0	3.3.2 Target: 6	3.3.2 Current value: 0	3.3.2 Source: venue rental records and photos from trainings	
	3.4. Georgian local government and public authority participating in the tailored training programme equipped with information, tools, and capacities to confront FIMI/disinformation.	3.4.1 No. of training participants	3.4.1 Baseline: 0	3.4.1 Target: 120	3.4.1 Current value: 0	3.4.1 Source: training attendance records	Local government actors actively participate in the training programme.
		3.4.2 No. of training programmes implemented	3.4.2 Baseline: 0	3.4.2 Target: 6	3.4.2 Current value: 0	3.4.2 Source: venue rental records and photos from trainings	
	4.1 Evidence-based content produced in 3 minority languages that fights FIMI/disinformation based on enhanced MDF chatbot service and tools.	4.1.1 No. of content pieces produced in Russian	4.1.1 Baseline: 0	4.1.1 Target: 350	4.1.1 Current value: 0	4.1.1 Source: website publications by MDF	Minority language citizens actively engage in the MDF chatbot service and the published evidence-based media content.
		4.1.2 No. of content pieces produced in Armenian	4.1.2 Baseline: 0	4.1.2 Target: 200	4.1.2 Current value: 0	4.1.2 Source: website publications by MDF	
		4.1.3 No. of content pieces produced in Azerbaijani	4.1.3 Baseline: 0	4.1.3 Target: 200	4.1.3 Current value: 0	4.1.3 Source: website publications by MDF	



<i>Results</i>	<i>Results chain</i>	<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Baseline (value & reference year)</i>	<i>Target (value & reference year)</i>	<i>Current value* (reference year) (* to be included in interim and final reports)</i>	<i>Sources of data</i>	<i>Assumptions</i>
		4.1.4 No of views/impressions on MDF published content in minority languages	4.2.1 Baseline: 0	4.2.1 Target: 100,000	4.2.1 Current value: 0	4.2.1 Source: MDF website analytics	
	4.2 High quality multi-format evidence-based media content countering FIMI & disinformation narratives reaching large and diverse audiences in Georgia	4.2.1. No. of media content pieces published by FSTP media partners	4.2.1 Baseline: 0	4.2.1. Target: 60	4.2.1 Current value: 0	4.2.1. Source: reported reach data from FSTP partners in their reports	FSTP media partners effectively produce, published and re-publish evidence-based media content.
		4.2.2 No of media hits (citations, re-publications, quotes etc.) by other media outlets on published content in minority languages	4.2.1 Baseline: 0	4.2.1 Target: 50	4.2.1 Current value: 0	4.2.1 Source: media partner website publications	Citizens and other media actively engage in the published media content.
	4.3 Georgian citizens equipped with media literacy skills to identify and counter FIMI/disinformation through CSO implemented training.	4.3.1 No. of participants in CSO trainings implemented with FSTP support	4.3.1 Baseline: 0	4.3.1 Target: 120	4.3.1 Current value: 0	4.3.1 Source: training attendance records	FSTP CSOs engage citizens and effectively implement media literacy training.
		4.3.2 No. of training sessions implemented with FSTP support	4.3.1 Baseline: 0	4.3.1 Target: 6	4.3.2 Current value: 0	4.3.2 Source: FSTP reports and training photos	Citizen participants actively participate in the CSO media literacy training interventions.
	4.4 Wide-reaching engagement of diverse Georgian communities across the country in	4.4.1 No. of local forums implemented	4.4.1 Baseline: 0	4.4.1 Target: 6	4.4.1 Current value: 0	4.4.1 Source: attendance registration	Local citizens and stakeholders attend and actively

<i>R e s u l t s</i>	<i>Results chain</i>	<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Baseline (value & reference year)</i>	<i>Target (value & reference year)</i>	<i>Current value* (reference year) (* to be included in interim and final reports)</i>	<i>Sources of data</i>	<i>Assumptions</i>
	local forum campaigns raising awareness about the challenges of FIMI, disinformation and CIB.					records and photos from the forums	participate in the public forums.
		4.4.2 No. of participants across all the local forums	4.4.2 Baseline: 0	4.4.2 Target: minimum 150	4.4.2 Current value: 0	4.4.2 Source: forum attendance records	Georgian citizens actively engage and respond to social media campaign content.
		4.4.3 No. of views/impressions on online video content	4.4.3 Baseline: 0	4.4.3 Target: 50,000	4.4.2 Current value: 0	4.4.2 Source: website and social media analytics of partner organisations	

Activity Matrix



1.1.1. Baseline study on FIMI and mis/disinformation, also coordinated inauthentic behaviour (CIB) challenges in Georgia to identify vulnerabilities exploited by malign actors attempting to sow societal divisions 1.1.2. Publication and wide-reaching dissemination of this Baseline study report to key target groups, including launch event engaging stakeholders and comprehensive communications campaign + network mobilisation. 1.2.1. Periodic reports (6 per year) on primary mis/disinformation and FIMI narratives identified in the Georgia information sphere, as well as coordinated inauthentic behaviour (CIB) activities detected. 1.2.2. Publication and dissemination of periodic FIMI and CIB reports to relevant stakeholders: media; CSOs and civil activists, local public authorities. 1.3.1. Development of a FIMI toolkit, including an overview of what FIMI is; key approaches and tools to identify and combat FIMI. The toolkit will be divided into 3 separate chapters for 3 primary target groups: media practitioners, CSOs and activists, and local government officials. 1.3.2. Publication and comprehensive dissemination campaign of FIMI toolkit. This will include a virtual launch event, plus targeted communications efforts to engage relevant target groups. 2.1.1. Establishment of a multistakeholder community against FIMI and disinformation in Georgia (SAFIMI), consisting of: Media and journalists; CSOs and NGOs; Public authorities, including local government representatives; Sectoral associations related to FIMI; International agencies and donor community. 2.1.2 The Georgian Community Against FIMI and disinformation (SAFIMI) will be cultivated and sustained through the establishment and operation of strategic communications channels and materials to engage and foster exchange between community members, consisting of: Establishment and maintenance of a website; Monthly e-newsletter. 2.2.1 Quarterly symposiums/meetings/forums of SAFIMI for community members to discuss and review the work of the community; and elaborate virtual exchanges between members to share experiences, skills, and information regarding the fight against FIMI/disinfo in their specific contexts.	<u>WP1: Investigation and Toolkit</u> Means Political: MDF, MAL, TIG, and TF collaboration; project partner stakeholder connections to disseminate reports widely among stakeholders. Technical: MDF, MAL, TIG research capacities; MDF, MAL, TF FIMI expertise and knowledge; MDF, MAL, TIG, TF communications and dissemination capacities. Human: • MDF: Project Coordinator, Research Coordinator, Fact-checking analyst, Researcher, MIL program coordinator, Community Outreach Coordinator, Social Media Manager; • MAL: Project coordinator, Project manager, Public policy coordinator, Public policy assistant, FIMI/disinformation researcher, Social media manager, • TIG: Project Coordinator, Regional Offices Manager, Regional Office Coordinator - Ajara, Regional Office Coordinator - Samegrelo, Regional Office Coordinator - Imereti, Regional Office Coordinator - Samtskhe-Javakheti, Legal Expert, Media and Data Analyst, Financial Manager, Financial Officer / Accountant, PR and Outreach coordinator, Social Media Manager • TF: Program Assistant, Senior Fellow, Fellow Material: Translation and graphic design of the investigations and toolkit; travel for field research (TIG); outsourced interviews (MDF); social media promotion • Financial: staff salaries, translation costs, graphic design costs, outsourced interviews costs, travel costs in Georgia, social media boosting costs <u>WP2: Collaboration and the SAFIMI Community</u> Means Political: TIG, MDF influential connections with stakeholders inside and outside Georgia to facilitate engagement of potential members; coordination of members and others in development and cultivation of SAFIMI community; engagement of guest speakers to participate in the symposiums Technical: TIG, MDF, MAL community establishment, communication and cultivation capacities; TIG and MDF event organisation capacities; MAL and TF training/workshop implementation capacities; TIG and MDF community engagement and mobilisation capacities. Human:	<u>Assumptions</u> External, necessary and positive conditions for implementing the intervention that are outside of its management's control. Participants engage in the data collection process comprehensively. Stakeholders in Georgia and internationally engage in the research publications and toolkit. Political climate in Georgia remains relatively amenable to international intervention and support. Stakeholders in Georgia and internationally engage in the SAFIMI community, communications and events.
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3.1.1 Develop a training programme for media practitioners, CSOs, NGOs, and civil activists to build their capacities to tackle FIMI/disinfo in their environment. 3.2.1 Develop training programme for local government and authority representatives to build their capacities to tackle FIMI/disinformation. 3.3.1 Implementation of training programmes for media/CSO actors in 6 different regions (in two rounds, 1 per year). The courses will be practical exchanges bringing together both media actors and CSOs into the same space, encouraging networking and collaboration alongside knowledge and capacity building (FSTP support provided for participation). 3.4.1. Training programmes for local government/political actors will be implemented in each of the 6 regions (in two rounds, 1 per year). The courses will be practical exchanges to promote awareness and build knowledge and capacities. 4.1.1 Enhancement and promotion of the MDF semi-automated chatbot and disinformation monitoring tools. Tools developed to cater for minority languages spoken in Georgia (Armenian and Azerbaijanees) so that users are able to report and receive information in their own language. Plus, a promotional campaign to foster engagement in the tool, particularly among minority communities. 4.1.2 MDF production of multiformat evidence-based content tackling FIMI and mis/disinformation in minority languages. The content will be published by MDF as well as disseminated through their diverse communications channels, including through the chatbot service tailored to specific minority languages. 4.2.1. SAFIMI Media collective (FSTP support): 12 trained media actors (6 per year) (from T3.3.1) will be selected to establish a media collective dedicated to combating FIMI/disinformation through coordinated media efforts (fact-checking & pre-bunking). The media organisations will be provided with FSTPs to carry out fact-checking/fighting disinformation efforts either a) producing content, and b) amplifying verified content produced by other partners. 4.3.1 Trained regional/local CSOs and activists (with a particular focus on youth) implement workshops (FSTPs): 12 (6 per year) trained CSOs will be provided with FSTPs to implement their own media literacy and awareness-raising workshops to citizens, particularly young persons.	• MDF: Project Coordinator; Community Outreach Coordinator; Social Media Manager; MIL program coordinator; Finance Manager • MAL: Project coordinator, Project Manager, Public Policy Coordinator; Public Policy Assistant; Media Literacy Trainer; Financial Assistant • TIG: Project Coordinator; PR and Outreach coordinator, Social Media Manager, Visual Media Producer, Regional Offices Manager, Regional Office Coordinator - Ajara, Regional Office Coordinator - Samegrelo, Regional Office Coordinator - Imereti, Regional Office Coordinator - Samtskhe-Javakheti, Financial Manager, Financial Officer / Accountant • TF: Program Assistant, Fellow Material: venue and catering for community launch and 2 in-person symposiums; travel and accommodation for MAL staff in the launch and symposiums and for TF staff in the symposiums, travel and accommodation for international and local guest speakers in the launch event and symposiums; simultaneous translation (incl. material equipment); social media promotion; internet connection and video conferencing for online symposiums. Financial: staff salaries, venue and catering costs; simultaneous translation costs; social media boosting costs; travel and accommodation for MAL, TF and guest speakers; honorarios for guest speakers • WP3: Capacity Building Means Political: MDF and TIG influential connections and outreach to engage participants in the media/CSO and local government training across six target regions; MDF; MAL, TIG and TF collaboration Technical: MAL, TIG, MDF, and TF media literacy and training development and implementation skills particularly for CSO, media and local government target groups; MDF and TIG outreach and participant engagement capacities Human: • MDF: Project Coordinator, Research Coordinator, MIL Program Coordinator, Community Outreach Coordinator, Social Media Manager, Financial Manager; • MAL: Project Coordinator, Project Manager, Media Literacy Coordinator, Media Literacy Trainer, Public Policy Coordinator, Public Policy Assistant; • TIG: Project Coordinator; Regional Offices Manager, Regional Office Coordinator - Ajara, Regional Office Coordinator - Samegrelo, Regional Office	<i>Environmental conditions remain amenable for cross-regional access and travel across all activities that require cross-regional travel.</i> <i>Media/CSO and local government stakeholders engage in the training programme.</i> <i>Technological infrastructure (servers etc.) of the chatbot does not fail and technical faults are resolved smoothly.</i> <i>Minority speaker engagement in chatbot service and MDF content.</i> <i>Media and CSO engagement in and commitment to FSTP support programme.</i> <i>General public and stakeholder engagement in the public forums and</i>
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4.4.1 A campaign of public forums in different local municipalities across Georgia to discuss prominent issues in Georgian society relating to and raising awareness about the challenges of mis/disinformation and FIMI. These forums will target the local population, academia, and youth, while inviting respected and influential voices plus local SAFIMI community members to participate in face-to-face meetings. 4.4.2. Multi-platform awareness-raising campaign: the in-person forums will also be accompanied by an ongoing communications campaign to raise awareness about the FIMI / disinformation challenge. This campaign will include video recordings of the public forums that will be shared on social media. Project Management <i>Kick-off Meeting in Tbilisi: 3-day meeting with 2 staff members from Maldita.es and one from TF and at least four from MDF and four from TIG. The meeting will launch the project, agree to implementation plans and timelines, and collaboratively design and establish M&E tools, while general and specific responsibilities will be defined for partners and staff.</i> <i>Quarterly Follow-up Meetings: Online meetings for rigorous project planning and control, attended by the project and financial managers of each partner plus staff members actively engaged in the ongoing activities, facilitating efficient project oversight. They will serve as a platform to identify and address challenges, plus catering for continuous risk management, and informed decision-making.</i> <i>Quarterly Activity Reports: To assess and document ongoing project progress and implementation, the partners will compile quarterly activity reports that will also be shared with the EU. The reports will document timely and impactful implementation of activities and outputs throughout the project, providing regular updates on project progress, enabling us to identify and respond to emerging risks.</i> <i>Interim Narrative and Financial Reports: Evaluating activity implementation, financial management and project impact, these reports will provide an overall midpoint assessment of the project against the defined objectives, timeline and budget while identifying key learnings to inform the future development and sustainability of the project impact. The reports will employ data from the M&E tools and the logical framework, along with results from participant and FSTP evaluations.</i>	Coordinator - Imereti, Regional Office Coordinator - Samtskhe-Javakheti, Financial Manager, Financial Officer / Accountant - TF: Program Assistant, Senior Fellow, Fellow Material: venue rental and catering in 6 different regions for the 2 different training tracks; printing and translation of the training resources; travel and accommodation for MDF staff in the 6 regions for the 2 training tracks; internet connection and video conferencing for TF and MAL training - Financial: staff salaries, venue rental and catering costs; translation and printing costs, travel, per diem and accommodation costs. WP4: Mobilisation: MDF chatbot and production, FSTP , public forums Means Political: MDF, MAL and Botalite coordination and collaboration; MDF outreach to minority communities; TF FSTP coordination and influence to coordinate with FSTP partners ; TIG connections and influence to engage participants in the forums and campaign Technical: MAL, Botalite, MDF Chatbot maintenance and linguistic upgrade capacities (including technological and translation of the conversation flow); MDF fact-checking, prebunking and media literacy content production capacities, including monitoring and identification of disinformation in minority languages; translation and social media content adaptation; TF FSTP management and monitoring capacities; TIG event organisation and community outreach capacities; TIG video production and social media campaign coordination and implementation capacities. Human: - MDF: Project Coordinator, Community Outreach Coordinator, Social Media Manager, Financial Manager, Fact-checking analyst, MIL Program Coordinator - MAL: COO, Product Manager - PR and Outreach coordinator, Regional Offices Manager, Regional Office Coordinator - Ajara, Regional Office Coordinator - Samegrelo, Regional Office Coordinator - Imereti, Regional Office Coordinator - Samtskhe-Javakheti, Financial Manager, Financial Officer / Accountant, Visual Media Producer, IT coordinator, Social Media Manager, Assistant Visual Media Producer (external hire) - TF: Program Officer, Program Coordinator, Grant Manager Material: Technological infrastructure for the multilingual chatbot enhancement; translation of the conversation workflow; social media content and promotion; fact-	<i>social media campaign content.</i> <i>Exchange rates do not fluctuate significantly during project implementation.</i>
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<i>Final Narrative and Financial Reports: Evaluating activity implementation, financial management and project impact, these reports will provide an overall end of project assessment of the project against the defined objectives, timeline and budget while identifying key learnings to inform the future development and sustainability of the project impact. The final report will include a comprehensive external evaluation that will cover areas such as the implementation of project activities, the overall progress made towards achieving project objectives, and an audit of the financial management of project resources. To ensure objectivity, we will engage an independent evaluator who will be responsible for overseeing and conducting the assessment. This external evaluation will serve as a critical step in appraising the project's outcomes, identifying areas of success and improvement, and providing valuable insights for future initiatives and decision-making processes.</i> <i>Project Review and Lessons Learned Meeting: At project end, the 4 organisations (2 staff MAL, 1 TF and at least 4 TIG and MDF) will reflect on the project implementation and results, exchange learnings and discuss future sustainability of the project and collaboration. External stakeholders will also be invited to engage with the results and impact.</i>	check/prebunk/media literacy articles published on MDF website; translation of the articles; travel and accommodation for TF staff to carry out FSTP M&E; venue rental and catering in six regions for public forums; filming and editing equipment (owned by TIG); travel and accommodation for TIG film crew, Assistant Visual Media Producer (external hire), and MDF staff; travel and accommodation for public forum guest speakers; promotional content on social media for the campaign. - Financial: staff salaries; Botalite language enhancement service costs; chatbot content translation costs; chatbot campaign social media boosting; fact-check/prebunk/media literacy content translation costs; social media boosting costs for MDF content; FSTP support costs; travel, per diem and accommodation costs for TF staff; public forum venue and catering rental costs in six regions; travel and per diem for TIG staff/film crew and Assistant Visual Media Producer; MDF travel and per diem costs; travel, per diem and honorarios for guest speakers in public forums; hire of Assistant Visual Media Producer; social media boosting costs for campaign content <u>Project management</u> <u>Means</u> Political: coordination and communication between the project partners; MAL project coordination; engagement of external review and auditors. Technical: MAL project management capacities (incl. activity and financial); all partners project management capacities; communication and collaboration capacities between consortium partners; monitoring and evaluation capacities for all project partners. Human: - MAL: Project coordinator, Financial manager, Project manager, Financial assistant, Public Policy Coordinator, COO - MDF: Project coordinator, Finance Manager, Community Outreach Coordinator, MIL Program Coordinator - TIG: Project Coordinator, Regional Offices Manager, PR and Outreach coordinator, Regional Office Coordinator - Ajara, Regional Office Coordinator - Samegrelo, Regional Office Coordinator - Imereti, Regional Office Coordinator - Samtskhe-Javakheti, Social Media Manager, Financial Manager, IT Coordinator, Financial Officer / Accountant - TF: Program coordinator, Program officer, Program assistant, Grant manager Material: travel and accommodation for MAL and TF staff; TIG Tbilisi office space for kick-off and project review meetings; catering for kick off and project review meeting; internet connection and video-conferencing materials; TIG: Tbilisi Office rent, Rent for the regional	
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	offices, Admin Cost Tbilisi and regional Offices (Utilities), Office Supplies Tbilisi and regional Offices. - Financial: staff salaries; travel and per diem costs for MAL and TF staff in Georgia; catering costs for meetings; TIG: Tbilisi Office rent, Rent for the regional offices, Admin Cost Tbilisi and regional Offices (Utilities), Office Supplies Tbilisi and regional Offices; external audit and review costs. Overall Costs Breakdown Across All Activities 1. Human Resources: 1.1 Salaries (gross salaries including social security charges and other related costs, local staff)⁴ 1.1.1 Technical - MEDIA DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION: 165.450 EUR - TRANSPARENCY INTERNATIONAL GEORGIA: 126.769 EUR 1.1.2 Administrative/ support staff - MEDIA DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION: 64.335 EUR - TRANSPARENCY INTERNATIONAL GEORGIA: 42.193 EUR 1.2 Salaries (gross salaries including social security charges and other related costs, expat/int. staff)⁵ 1.2.1 Technical - FUNDACIÓN MALDITA.ES: 93.798,18 EUR - TRANSATLANTIC FOUNDATION: 103.432,26 EUR 1.2.2 Administrative/ support staff - FUNDACIÓN MALDITA.ES: 103.080, 28 EUR - TRANSATLANTIC FOUNDATION: 62.277, 15 EUR 1.3 Per diems for missions/travel⁵ 1.3.1 Abroad (staff assigned to the Action): 15.622 EUR 1.3.2 Local (staff assigned to the Action): 51.042 EUR 1.3.3 Seminar/conference participants: 23.850 EUR Subtotal Human Resources : 851.848,87 EUR 2. Travel 2.1. International travel: 18.900 EUR 2.2 Local transportation: 17.958 EUR	
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	<i>Subtotal Travel: 36.858,00 EUR</i> 3. Equipment and supplies • 3.3 Machines, tools...: 2000 EUR Subtotal Equipment and supplies: 2000 EUR 4. Project office • 4.2 Office rent: 36.270 EUR • 4.3 Consumables - office supplies: 5.100 EUR • 4.4 Other services (tel/fax, electricity/heating, maintenance): 4.320 EUR Subtotal Project office: 45.690,00 EUR 5. Other costs, services⁸ • 5.2 Studies, research: 15.600 EUR • 5.3 Expenditure verification/Audit: 5.679,33 EUR • 5.5 Translation, interpreters: 23.530 EUR • 5.7 Costs of conferences/seminars: 70.240 EUR • 5.8. Communication activities, if applicable: 3.400 EUR Subtotal Other costs, services: 118.449,33 EUR 6. Other (e.g. activities with their related visibility costs) • 6.1. FSTP to media organisations: 42.000 EUR • 6.2. FSTP to CSOs: 42.000 EUR • 6.3. Assistant Visual Producer: 2.700 EUR Subtotal Other: 86.700,00 EUR	
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Qualified electronic signature by:
NICHOLAS ALEXANDER CENDROWICZ
Date: 2024-09-22 11:03:52 +02:00





Annex I – Description of the Action
NDICI-GEO-NEAR/2024/458-190

**SAFIMI Georgia: Georgian Society Against FIMI, disinformation
and coordinated inauthentic behaviour**

[Number & title of lot]	Lot 4: to counter disinformation and foreign interference and manipulation (FIMI)
Title of the action:	SAFIMI Georgia: Georgian Society Against FIMI, disinformation and coordinated inauthentic behaviour
Name of the lead applicant	Fundación Maldita.es contra la desinformación: periodismo, educación, investigación y datos en nuevos formatos
Nationality of the lead applicant ¹	Spanish

Dossier No	
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(for official use only)

¹ An organisation's statutes must show that it was established under the national law of the country concerned and that the head office is located in an eligible country. Any organisation established in a different country cannot be considered an eligible local organisation. See the footnotes to the guidelines for the call.

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1 General information

Reference of the call for proposals	EuropeAid/180155/DD/ACT/GE
[Lot number you are applying to:]	Lot 4: to counter disinformation and foreign interference and manipulation (FIMI)
Number of the proposal ²	<i>Number applicable for Restricted procedure only.</i>
Name of the lead applicant	Fundación Maldita.es contra la desinformación: periodismo, educación, investigación y datos en nuevos formatos
Title of the action	SAFIMI Georgia: Georgian Society Against FIMI , disinformation and coordinated inauthentic behaviour
Location of the action	Georgia
Duration of the action	30 months

2 The action³

² When the contracting authority has evaluated the concept note it informs the lead applicant of the outcome and allocates a proposal number.

³ The evaluation committee will refer to information provided in the concept note as regards objectives and the relevance of the action.



2.1. Description of the action

2.1.1. Description (max 13 pages)

Overview of Project and Implementing Partners

Georgian Society Against FIMI, disinformation and coordinated inauthentic behaviour (SAFIMI Georgia) will *build societal resilience in Georgia to mis/disinformation, FIMI and Coordinated Inauthentic Behaviour (CIB) by strengthening multi-stakeholder—including media, civil society, government and public authorities and the general public—and cross-sectoral understanding, awareness and responses (Overall objective)*. Adopting a whole-of-society approach that combines comprehensive research, cross-sectoral coalition building, and tailored multi-stakeholder capacity building programmes and financial support to third parties (FSTP), this two-and-a-half-year project will empower media practitioners—including fact-checkers and local journalists—CSOs/NGOs and civil activists, and local government representatives, among others in Georgia to contribute to the development of a Georgian society more aware, resilient and better equipped to confront mis/disinformation, FIMI and Coordinated Inauthentic Behaviour (CIB). SAFIMI relies on the international collaboration and expertise of:

Fundación Maldita.es (MAL)-project coordinator, a Spanish non-profit foundation that builds public trust by fighting disinformation and promoting transparency through journalism, education, technology, research and policy action. Its work is underscored by specialised teams, cutting edge technological tools, and an extensive community of citizens who collaborate in the battle against disinformation. It provides actors affected by mis/disinformation and FIMI globally with tools, capacities, and information to make informed decisions and foster a more resilient, accessible, and trustworthy media & information ecosystem. Maldita.es has extensive expertise tackling FIMI/disinformation across Europe engaged in research initiatives, journalistic responses and training, and policy efforts at the EU level, including a wide range of EU-funded projects.

The **Media Development Foundation** (MDF), a NGO based in Georgia that promotes: fundamental human rights and freedoms, and an open, inclusive and pluralistic society; professional and institutional development of media; the establishment of media accountability and self-regulation mechanisms; and critical thinking in a new media ecosystem and resilience building of citizens' through conscious media consumption. Counting wide-ranging project experience with diverse international donors, MDF's approach encompasses: education—promoting media literacy, facilitating the professional development of journalists, fostering cooperation with academia and educators through training sessions and educational resources; research—conducting fact-checking, investigating FIMI, hate speech and anti-Western propaganda, identifying and analysing malign actors, researching coordinated inauthentic behaviour (CIB) on social media platforms, and examining the financial transparency of media outlets; and advocacy—championing the rights of journalists and media consumers, as well as advocating on policy issues.

Transparency International Georgia (TIG), the Georgian chapter of the international association Transparency International. Its goal is to combat corruption by promoting transparency and accountability, and working towards a corruption-free society where citizens actively engage in policy making. The organisation supports the Georgian government and public in implementing reforms, strengthening institutions, and advocating for good governance to foster a transparent and vibrant democratic environment. TIG is a leading civil society organisation engaged in policy analysis and advocacy in the broad field of democracy and good governance. It acts as a watchdog, think-tank, civic engagement facilitator, and capacity-builder. TI Georgia continuously produces up-to-date and in-depth information and expert knowledge in fields, including anti-corruption policy, judicial reform, parliamentary democracy, local government, elections, political and campaign finance and media.

Transatlantic Foundation (TF) is the European and EU-registered arm of the German Marshall Fund of the United States based in Brussels. The Foundation aims to independently promote better cooperation and understanding between the United States and Europe on transatlantic issues and the world, to help Americans and Europeans to learn from each other, and from other industrialised societies, in order to best serve their economic, social, cultural and political development. TF has supported civil society, democracy, independent media and Euro-Atlantic integration for over 30 years, having refined a toolkit including direct grantmaking, targeted capacity-building, leadership development, networking opportunities, and analytical and policy initiatives. It currently operates four regional assistance programmes with multi-year, multi-donor mechanisms that support civil society through grant-making, capacity-building, networking and policy work, and has provided more than €23 million in direct grants to support civil society, democracy and regional cooperation.

Target groups and final beneficiaries

SAFIMI Georgia adopts a multi-stakeholder approach to engage a diversity of actors—particularly media practitioners and journalists, including fact-checkers, CSOs, NGOs and civil society, public authorities and the general public and other stakeholders. The project will specifically target:

- **Media practitioners**, journalists and fact-checkers, especially in local media that serve diverse communities, including minority language speakers, and operate at the local, regional, and national level as well as across different formats (TV, print, radio and digital). A strong independent media is an essential bulwark against hybrid information threats and plays an important watchdog role; local media outlets are especially important, particularly when reaching minority populations.
- **NGOs, CSOs, and civil activists** engaged in promoting media literacy, fighting FIMI/disinformation and fostering an open and inclusive media & information ecosystem, serving diverse communities across Georgia, particularly in the six target regions: Samtskhe-Javakheti, Kvemo Kartli, Imereti, Adjara, Samegrelo, and Kakheti. Civil society plays a vital role in tackling FIMI, disinformation and CIB in Georgia, in particular advocating for access to reliable information, promoting media literacy, and raising awareness of hybrid information threats across diverse communities.
- **Local government officials and public authorities**, particularly in the six target regions: Samtskhe-Javakheti, Kvemo Kartli, Imereti, Adjara, Samegrelo, and Kakheti. State officials, particularly in local communities, as influential actors, are essential stakeholders in addressing FIMI, disinformation and CIB.

SAFIMI also aims to extend its impact across the Georgian media & information ecosystem additionally benefiting as final beneficiaries:

- **General Georgian public** from diverse regions incl. **Samtskhe-Javakheti, Kvemo Kartli, Imereti, Adjara, Samegrelo, and Kakheti**, particularly young persons and minority language speakers (Armenian, Azerbaijani, and Russian).
- **Other stakeholders in the fight against FIMI/disinformation** in Georgia, including academia, relevant coalitions/networks, and donors making up the large and diverse community of national and international actors from various sectors engaged in and affected by FIMI/disinformation/CIB in Georgia.

Relevance, Needs Analysis, and Specific Objectives

Georgia's alignment with the Euro-Atlantic community serves as the paramount foundation for upholding democratic governance, reinforcing the rule of law, and establishing a stable platform for future socio-economic progress to benefit the Georgian people. Nevertheless, various internal and foreign entities, often influenced by Russia, oppose Georgia's integration with Euro-Atlantic institutions, and recent years have **seen Georgia targeted by extensive disinformation and FIMI campaigns**, aiming to undermine democratic governance, sow discord among people of diverse backgrounds, and present Russia as an alternative to Western options. A recent communication from the EU Commission highlighted the fight against disinformation and FIMI targeting EU values in Georgia as the number one priority in advancing the country's EU candidacy process. The statement highlights that, "Georgia needs to step up its actions to counter disinformation and foreign information manipulation and interference against the EU's values and to improve its alignment rate with the EU common foreign and security policy".

Russian state-sponsored hybrid warfare tactics present a significant challenge with an ongoing escalation of Russia's interference in Georgia's statehood, independence, and foreign trajectory both online and offline. Notably, Russian-backed online disinformation campaigns have rapidly expanded, involving local political, media, and far-right groups communicating in Georgian and minority languages spoken by more than 10% of the population. Malicious social media tactics, such as bots on news sites and fake hashtag campaigns, along with the spread of intricate hoaxes through platforms like Facebook, have become alarmingly common. Russian-operated social networking accounts and affiliated groups amplify disinformation, contributing to public unrest amid a shrinking civil space. Common disinformation themes include portraying Western institutions negatively, spreading false narratives about the obligatory legalization of same-sex marriage for EU integration, fabricating details about the August 2008 war, and misguiding public opinion about the EU-NATO's attempts to push Georgia to get involved in a war with Ukraine against Russia. The lack of effective counter-messaging poses a significant risk to positive public opinion regarding Georgia's European integration.

The Georgian government is largely unprepared to address these hybrid information threats. While officials do acknowledge the threats, there is a lack of political will to devise effective plans against Russian-backed disinformation. Despite the establishment of strategic communications departments and media literacy programs carried out by the numerous NGOs, practical government measures have not yet been impactful. Low media literacy rates persist across the country—the 2023 Media Literacy Index ranks Georgia in last place—especially in regions where people rely on Russian informational sources, posing risks in distorting

sensitive topics among ethnic minorities. Moreover, government efforts have in many cases been counterproductive with their attempts in 2023 and the recent advancing steps in 2024 to approve the Agents of Foreign Influence law which targets NGO/CSO organisations, threatening their existence and restricting their ability to operate freely, an echo of a similar law in Russia that has been used to crush political dissent. This supposes a very relevant litmus test of the real intentions of the government, to move closer to Western democracies or to Russia.

Meanwhile, the media landscape in Georgia is pluralistic but highly polarised. Many outlets prioritise political interests over the public good, with leading TV stations strongly tied to political parties. The public broadcaster has struggled to fulfil its mission, and private stations, particularly critical ones, monitor state activities and report on matters of public interest. Media freedom has significantly declined in recent years, marked by state-sponsored aggressive rhetoric and disinformation campaigns that threaten the safety of journalists. Authorities have not provided a safe working environment for journalists, leading to increased cases of violence and intimidation, especially against critical voices. In some cases, authorities have themselves been perpetrators, wielding aggressive rhetoric and online disinformation campaigns to undermine the credibility of critical journalists and incite violence against them. Independent media actors, especially at the local level, face tightened resources and capacities to confront disinformation in Georgia and ensure citizens have access to reliable information.

With upcoming elections in Georgia, including local elections in 2025 where Russian-backed disinformation campaigns are likely to have significant impact, especially after being granted the EU candidate status, it is ever more pertinent to ensure all stakeholders are effectively equipped to identify and confront hybrid information threats.

SAFIMI will therefore focus on strengthening these key actors with tailored support, resources and information, while fostering cross-sectoral communication and collaboration reinforced by national and international insights and experience. The project will complement and build upon numerous other initiatives launched in previous years. It will seek to engage regional, national and international efforts and coalitions to form part of the SAFIMI community, mobilising MDF and TIG's extensive local and national media, CSO and government networks, along with international bodies such as the European External Action Service (EEAS), United Nations Association of Georgia (UNAG), the Coalition for Euro-Atlantic Georgia, Information Integrity Coalition, Open Information Partnership, and UNESCO Media and Information Literacy Alliance. Meanwhile, the project will build upon media monitoring, minority media and media literacy projects such as the UNAG/USAID funded "Unity Through Diversity" project (MDF partner) focused on monitoring minority-related narratives in the Georgian public domain; and the EU co-funded "Quality Media and Conscious Media Consumption for Resilient Society" (MDF partner) which increases public awareness and understanding of media freedom, media and information literacy, and the harmful effects of disinformation. Added to this, synergies will be sought with a regional National Endowment for Democracy funded project, coordinated by Maldita.es with MDF involvement, to promote technological capacities of fact-checking and media organisations across Georgia, Ukraine and Lithuania to monitor and counter FIMI and disinformation, especially campaigns coordinated by Russia. Accordingly, the following specific objectives/outcomes for the project have been defined:

- 1. Strengthen the investigation, understanding of and resources to counter the FIMI, disinformation and coordinated inauthentic behaviour (CIB) challenges in Georgia among diverse stakeholders.**
- 2. Foster broad-reaching, cross-sectoral multi-stakeholder collaboration and network building in Georgia in addressing the FIMI, disinformation and CIB challenges.**
- 3. Enhance the capacities of media practitioners, CSO/NGOs/civil activists, and local government and public authority officials in Georgia to identify and counter FIMI/disinformation/CIB and contribute to a public dialogue grounded in facts.**
- 4. Foster general public access to and engagement in evidence-based information, education, and dialogues that raise public awareness of and capacities to confront FIMI, disinformation and CIB in Georgia.**

Intervention Logic and Activity Description

SAFIMI will be developed across **4 distinct but interconnected areas of activity** over a **30 month (2.5 year) period**. These activity areas include: 1) comprehensive and sustained investigation of the hybrid information threats and challenges in Georgia to foster improved understanding and build more effective resources for stakeholders; 2) cultivating collaboration and networking capacities among relevant local, national and international actors; 3) targeted and tailor-made capacity building interventions for media practitioners, CSOs/activists, and local government representatives; 4) mobilisation of Georgian stakeholders and the public to build societal information resilience through technological innovation, FSTP support, wide-reaching multiplatform campaigning across diverse communities.

Investigation of and resources to counter FIMI/disinformation in Georgia

SAFIMI will firstly broaden the evidence and resource base in Georgia regarding mis/disinformation, FIMI and CIB by strengthening investigation into, understanding of and resources to counter these hybrid information challenges among diverse stakeholders (SO1). Towards this objective, we will initiate the project by mobilising the research expertise of MDF, MAL and TIG to conduct a **comprehensive baseline study** (Act. 1.1.1) to assess the nature and scope of these challenges in Georgia, particularly **identifying and mapping key vulnerabilities exploited by malign actors**, analysing:

- a) prominent FIMI and mis/disinformation narratives that are circulating in the Georgian media & information sphere. This element will examine the content and form of the narratives, how they are spread (formats, platforms, themes), as well as revealing coordinated inauthentic behaviour (CIB) across platforms (Facebook, Tiktok, Telegram, etc), and mapping networks of hostile actors and analysing their modus operandi. We will adopt a contemporary and retrospective scope to be able to study the evolution of these FIMI/mis/disinformation and CIB trends.
- b) Georgian media & information consumption behaviours, particularly young audiences, providing a comprehensive and unique-in-scope national report that explores public habits, including in minority language communities. This element will particularly highlight key vulnerabilities within behaviours that can be exploited by malign actors (e.g. reliance on social media or foreign media outlets for news information).
- c) the in/effectiveness of government measures, such as the establishment and activities of strategic communications bodies, media literacy campaigns and other efforts elaborated by both local and national governments. This will provide a descriptive mapping as well as an evaluative assessment of key measures. Attention will also be paid to counter-productive measures and actions

The investigation will result in a 50-page report that will include the methodology, findings and key recommendations to key stakeholders while providing a crucial knowledge foundation for the project (Output 1.1). To contribute to increased awareness and understanding among diverse and relevant stakeholders in and beyond Georgia, we will leverage the project consortium's national and international networks to disseminate the final baseline study report through a comprehensive communications campaign (Act. 1.1.2)—securing 10.000 views and reaching at least 100 different stakeholders, providing them with in-depth, up-to-date data and analysis on prevailing hybrid information threats in Georgia.

Following this, MDF and MAL will then develop a series of **periodic reports that provide ongoing analysis of the primary mis/disinformation and FIMI narratives and cases as well as CIB activities** detected in the Georgian information sphere (Act. 1.2.1). These 6 periodic reports (Output 1.2) will provide timely and in-depth overviews of hybrid information threats detected by MDF and examine, with the support of MAL, their content, format, spread and relation to malign actors. Facilitating stakeholders with regular, punctual information and analysis on current hybrid information threats in Georgia, these reports will be disseminated widely across the project partners networks (Act. 1.2.2)—securing 100.000 views and reaching at least 30 different stakeholders.

Grounded in this research base, MDF, MAL and TF will then employ their extensive cross-border expertise tackling FIMI to develop a **multi-stakeholder FIMI toolkit** (Act 1.3.1) specially designed to equip media, CSO and local government actors with practical information, guidance and resources that improve their understanding and responses to FIMI/disinformation in their environments. Drawing on international insights and local experience, this toolkit (Output 1.3) will provide an in-depth introduction to FIMI and the challenges it poses in Georgia, equipping users with key approaches, techniques and resources to identify and combat FIMI cases. The toolkit will be divided into **three primary chapters each tailored to the specific context and needs of a target group**:

- a) Media and journalists: key journalistic tools, tips and practices to reinforce their capacities to identify and counter FIMI content in media spaces, including fact-checking and prebunking techniques, monitoring and other methodologies to identify and confront the main TTPs, including established frameworks such as DISARM.
- b) CSOs & NGOs: key information and resources relating to media literacy responses, details and access to trusted fact-check and anti-FIMI content sources, and guidance in community engagement as well as advocacy responses to FIMI and disinformation.
- c) Local government: guidance and tools to identify and address FIMI concerns in public and political spaces, and practical tips and approaches to mitigate the spread of FIMI and disinformation by political actors.

Leveraging again the project connections and networks, the toolkit will be disseminated widely (Act 1.3.2) among at least 100 relevant actors, plus shared with the SAFIMI community (see below) and employed as a central resource in the capacity building activities detailed below.

With the investigation results and FIMI toolkit rooted in the research, we will establish a solid knowledge and resource foundation for the subsequent project activities strengthening the SAFIMI Community, capacity-building and -mobilisation with comprehensive and in-depth information and well-informed practical tools and responses, ensuring key stakeholders across Georgian society, including media, civil society and local government actors are equipped with better understanding, information and resources to confront hybrid information threats.

SAFIMI Community to foster cross-sectoral and multi-stakeholder collaboration

Alongside evidence and resource development, *SAFIMI* will additionally foster broad-reaching, cross-sectoral multi-stakeholder collaboration and network building in Georgia to address FIMI, disinformation and CIB challenges (SO2) through the **establishment, cultivation and strengthening of a multistakeholder community against FIMI and other information threats**. Building on established coalitions and networks of the consortium partners both inside Georgia and internationally, TIG—with the support of MAL, MDF and TF—will establish the *SAFIMI* Community (Act 2.1.1). This community will bring together different actors affected by and engaged in tackling FIMI/disinformation/CIB in Georgia—including media, civil society, public authorities such as local government, sectoral associations, and the international community—creating a space to share knowledge, information, tools and experiences that promote understanding and collaboration in tackling hybrid information threats in Georgia. To provide a sustainable institutional foundation to the community a memorandum of cooperation for members will be developed that will outline key principles and practices plus an elected steering committee to coordinate community activities will be established along with a membership review process. These institutional foundations will be elaborated through a collaborative consultation process with diverse Georgian stakeholders and international experts. The community will be launched through a public event in Tbilisi bringing together new and potential members—including at least 5 international experts as well as covering the travel and per diem costs of at least 15 local participants from distant regions—to discuss the main challenges and future trajectory of the community.

The *SAFIMI* Community will be subsequently sustained and cultivated through the establishment and operation of strategic communications channels and materials to engage and foster exchange between members, including website pages on the project partner platforms and a monthly newsletter (Act 2.1.2). The newsletters will be designed to share best practices or key insights, requesting inputs from partners across different sectors as well as amplifying other project outputs within this community such as the periodic FIMI reports as well as the public forums and capacity building activities (see below). The elaboration of these communications will be coordinated by TIG's outreach team with support from MDF and MAL to amplify content across their own communications channels and networks. Ultimately, these efforts will result in a *SAFIMI* Community consisting of 50 members (Output 2.1), all engaged—through at least 24 informational membership emails and operational webpages—in working together and learning from each other as the foundation of more effective societal responses to hybrid information threats.

Added to this, we will leverage the *SAFIMI* community as a platform to strengthen capacities and networking between members through a series of **quarterly community symposiums** (Act 2.2.2) that will bring together members **for virtual cross-sectoral exchanges** including talks/Q&As with keynote speakers from the national and international field, capacity building activities and networking events. These symposiums will be organised by TIG with support from MDF, while both MAL and TF will deliver workshops and capacity building interventions drawing on their specific expertise, providing an international scope. Meanwhile, TIG and MDF will invite other international and local speakers to bring more diversity to the exchanges and networking, while members will also have the chance to share experiences, best practices and insights. Two (one per year) of these symposiums will be organised as in-person events in Tbilisi for all members as well as engaging international representatives. These events will also serve as a national conference for the *SAFIMI* Community to foster discussion around the progress and future development of the community. MAL and TF staff will be present for at least one of these in-person symposiums to provide in-person training and knowledge exchanges, while 4 additional international experts will be invited and travel and per diem costs for 30 local participants per event will be covered. The materials and recordings from these symposiums will be published and disseminated throughout the community. Buttressing the *SAFIMI* Community as a space to foster cross-sectoral and multi-stakeholder capacities and exchange, these symposiums will engage at least 100 participants online and more than 50 at the in-person events (Output 2.2).

Ultimately, the *SAFIMI* Community and symposiums will establish and strengthen a sustainable, locally-owned multi-stakeholder platform and space that brings together the diverse actors and efforts to counter hybrid information threats in Georgia. Fostering cross-sectoral conversation, exchange and collaboration, this community will advance holistic responses and whole-of-society approaches as a strong foundation for a more resilient Georgian media and information ecosystem.

Building capacities against hybrid information threats: media, civil society, and local government

Building on the SAFIMI Community and seeking to further strengthen the diverse actors within its membership, this project will subsequently enhance the capacities of media practitioners, CSO/NGOs/activists, and local government officials in Georgia to identify and counter FIMI/disinformation/CIB and contribute to a public dialogue grounded in facts (SO3). Based on the above research and FIMI toolkit in Act 1.1.1, 1.2.1 and 1.3.1, media literacy and training experts from MDF, MAL, TF and TIG will develop a **two-track training programme that equips participants with tailored knowledge and skills to confront hybrid information threats**. A first track, drawing on the expertise of MDF, MAL and TF supporting media and civil society in tackling FIMI/disinformation, will be tailored to media practitioners, CSOs, NGOs and civil activists (Act 3.1.1). The training will introduce them to key counter-disinformation/FIMI tools such as the DISARM framework, fact-checking and pre-bunking skills, advocacy, public policy and media literacy responses, and community engagement techniques, among others. Specifically the curriculum will address:

- *Situation awareness*: understanding new media ecosystem; FIMI: TTP(s) Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures; Information Disorder: dis- mis- malinformation; Newsgathering and Monitoring: How to spot the telltale signs of a questionable viral story. How to investigate information laundering; OSINT techniques including: photo/video/deep fakes verification; AI generated content; Domain investigations; geolocation and CIB
- *Mapping actors*: Transparency of media: ownership and funding, website tracking; Social media: fake accounts, Ads library; Politicians, state institutions, companies individuals: open data sources and their use to detect alleged signs of corruption or crimes
- *Resilience building*: Disarm framework; Fact-checking; Strategic communication; Cyber security; MIL, community building and engagement techniques
- *Advocacy*: engaging with industry; local, international & multilateral cooperation

A second track will be designed for local government representatives (Act 3.2.1), fostering their awareness of hybrid information threats and promoting skills to identify FIMI/disinformation/CIB cases and employ fact-based narrative approaches to their work. This second track will involve an adaptation of the curriculum outlined above to the specific context and needs of local government officials, covering the 4 same thematic areas but including more attention to political communications and responses. This adaptation will be coordinated by MDF with particular support from TIG who has particular experience training and engaging government actors. This will result in the curriculum, content and materials for each of the 2 target groups for a 3 day in-person training bootcamp (Output 3.1 and 3.2). To facilitate further the adaptation to the different local contexts, the training materials will also be translated into Russian, Armenian and Azerbaijani.

The MDF media literacy and training team, with support from TIG's regional office teams and specific interventions from MAL and TF, will then carry out the implementation of the 2 training tracks, (Act 3.3.1 and 3.4.1). To ensure wide-reaching engagement of participants from across diverse regions in Georgia and more effectively respond to diverse and localised needs across the country, the training courses will be implemented across six target regions in Georgia—Samtskhe-Javakheti, Kvemo Kartli, Imereti, Adjara, Samegrelo, and Kakheti—accounting for participants serving minority language as well as Georgian communities. The training will consist of a 3-day intensive bootcamp for both media/CSO and local government participants, combining primarily in-person activities led by MDF—as well as TIG for the local government training—with hybrid online interventions from MAL and TF in the media/CSO training covering policy action and FIMI responses. The bootcamp will employ engaging, practical and learn-by-doing approaches to reinforce learning and application of the skills to the real world contexts of the participants. Participants, particularly for the media/CSO track, will both be selected from the SAFIMI Community as well as through an open call to actors across Georgia, and all participants will be introduced to the SAFIMI Community and encouraged to join if they are not already members. The two training implementations across the six regions will lead to 120 Georgian journalists, CSOs representatives and civil activists as well as 120 local government representatives better equipped with information, tools, and capacities to confront FIMI/disinformation in their distinct contexts (Output 3.3 and 3.4).

These targeted, expert-informed training interventions will cultivate a localised capacity and knowledge base among key stakeholders in the fight against hybrid information threats in Georgia across diverse local communities. In this way, the project will bolster a locally grown and adapted responses to FIMI, disinformation and CIB informed by extensive international experience and expertise.

Mobilisation: Technology, Journalism, Media Literacy and Awareness-Raising Against FIMI

Lastly, SAFIMI will mobilise the knowledge, community and capacities developed in the previous activities to foster general public access to and engagement in information, education, and dialogues that raise public awareness of and capacities to confront FIMI, disinformation and CIB in Georgia (SO4). Firstly, **MDF's AI-**

powered semi-automated Telegram chatbot—which permits real-time crowdsourced monitoring of disinformation and delivery of verified information—will be **enhanced to cater for additional minority languages spoken in Georgia** (Armenian and Azerbaijani) so that users are able to report and receive information in their own language (Act 4.1.1). MDF currently operates a semi-automated natural language chatbot on Telegram based on the technology of Botalite—a tech provider owned 100% by Maldita.es—that allows citizens to flag possible disinformation and raise information queries, as well as receive evidence-based information and engaging media literacy materials in multiple formats. This chatbot is connected to an AI-powered mis-/disinformation data system—that enables non-private data around disinformation to be collected, classified, tracked and analysed through the automated matching of images, videos, audios and text, improving MDF's journalistic workflows and ability to study the spread and operation of mis-/disinformation. At present MDF's chatbot operates in Georgian and Russian, and therefore does not serve other minority language speakers (Armenian and Azerbaijani) in need of trusted information while limiting MDF capacities to monitor mis/disinformation in those languages. Accordingly, MDF will contract Botalite with support from MDF to enhance the technological infrastructure to cater for these two additional languages, further improving their technological capacities for multilingual monitoring of mis/disinformation on Telegram—the most popular messaging platform in Georgia. The MDF team will then translate the chatbot conversation flow into Armenian and Azerbaijani before launching a promotional campaign to raise awareness in these minority communities about the upgraded chatbot service.

Mobilising these technological improvements, MDF journalists will employ the chatbot and database tools to carry out ongoing monitoring and identification of reported mis/disinformation in minority languages (Russian, Armenian and Azerbaijani), **producing and disseminating evidence-based information in Georgian and the 3 minority languages that debunks and prebunks identified FIMI and disinformation content and narratives** (Act 4.1.2). The produced content will include fact-check and pre-bunk articles as well as media literacy materials published on the MDF new page as well as adapted to engaging social media formats for broader dissemination on MDF social media channels. Overall, a total of 750 pieces of evidence-based information that counters FIMI and disinformation will be produced, including 350 in Russian, 200 in Armenian and 200 in Azerbaijani (Output 4.1), ensuring these communities will have improved access to trusted information in their native language that circumvents hybrid information threats they may encounter while ultimately strengthening their resilience to FIMI/disinformation.

Furthermore, to encourage the effective carry over of capacities built in previous activities while multiplying the impact of the SAFIMI project to foster fact-based and trusted media production in diverse media and information spaces in Georgia, a SAFIMI media collective FSTP programme will be launched by TF for local media actors trained in the capacity building bootcamp (Act 4.2.1). 6 trained local media partners, one from each of the target regions, will be selected to receive FSTP support of up to €7.000 to carry out fact-checking and countering disinformation initiatives, producing and publishing between 10-20 content pieces that counter FIMI and mis/disinformation in Georgian, Russian, Armenian and/or Azerbaijani, and amplifying verified content produced by other partners (Output 4.2)—reaching 100.000 views and more than 50 re-publications. This will have a particular focus on the 2025 local elections but also work to address emerging disinformation and FIMI campaigns. This will not only reinforce the skills and knowledge developed by media partners in the training activities, but in turn improve the access of their audiences and diverse communities across Georgia to trusted, evidence-based and accurate information that counters prominent FIMI and mis/disinformation narratives in their local contexts.

Parallel to this with an eye to fostering media literacy interventions across Georgia, 6 trained CSOs and activists, one from each target region, will receive FSTP support of up to €7.000 to implement their own media literacy and awareness-raising interventions (Act 4.3.1), particularly focused on young persons, to foster resilience against hybrid information threats in their communities. The FSTP partners will be expected to employ the knowledge and resources gained during the training activities to design and implement their own interventions, tailored to the needs of their communities and local context in turn strengthening the impact and relevance of the educational interventions while multiplying their reach and diversity. Through these financially supported media literacy initiatives, at least 120 Georgian citizens will be equipped with media literacy skills to identify and counter FIMI/disinformation (Output 4.3), strengthening their resilience and capacities to make informed decisions.

Accordingly the FSTPs will be conducted in accordance with:

1. the overall objectives, the specific objective(s) and the outputs (i.e. the results) to be achieved with the financial support
 - a. Overall objective: to increase the output of evidence-based journalism and media literacy initiatives that counter mis/disinformation and FIMI in Georgia by media and civil society organisations
 - b. Specific objective 1: provide local media organisations in 6 different regions of Georgia

- with the financial resources to produce at least 10 evidence-based media content pieces that counter FIMI and mis/disinformation and re-publish the content of other financially supported organisations.
- c. Specific objective 2: provide local CSOs and civil activists in 6 different regions of Georgia with the financial resources to design and implement impactful media literacy interventions in their communities that counter mis/disinformation and FIMI reaching at least 20 participants per supported partner.
- 2. the different types of activities eligible for financial support, on the basis of a fixed list
 - a. For media partners receiving the FSTP:
 - i. FIMI and mis/disinformation monitoring
 - ii. debunking, production and publication of fact-check and prebunk content (in any format: print, radio, TV, digital or new media)
 - iii. production and publication of media literacy content (in any format: print, radio, TV, digital or new media)
 - iv. adaptation and re-publication of other financially supported media partner content on their platforms
 - b. For CSO partners receiving FSTP:
 - i. design of educational media literacy workshops (for any target audience)
 - ii. implementation of educational media literacy workshops (for any target audience)
 - iii. awareness-raising campaigns in their local communities
- 3. the types of persons or categories of persons which may receive financial support
 - a. Media organisations based in one of the 6 target regions that publish regular content in at least one format (print, radio, TV, digital or new formats) and participated in the training in Act. 3.3.1.
 - b. CSOs and civil activists based in one of the 6 target regions that are engaged in community work and activism and who participated in the training in Act 3.3.1.
- 4. the criteria for selecting these entities and giving the financial support

In order to ensure the quality and effective use of FSTP resources, prospective grantees will be requested to submit a narrative and budget proposal in English or Georgian. Drawing on their extensive FSTP experience, TF staff assess the proposals in line with a standard set of criteria, including:

- All applications must clearly demonstrate relevance to the particular call for proposal, intervention, and objective of the project.
- The project is designed to enhance the capacities of media practitioners, CSO/NGOs/civil activists, and local government and public authority officials in Georgia to identify and counter FIMI/disinformation.
- The goals, objectives and timeframe are realistic. Project activities are clear and effective and likely to lead to the accomplishment of the proposed objective(s).
- The project takes into account other activities in civil society and seeks to avoid duplication.
- Innovative approaches and lessons learnt are identified and included in the proposed approach.
- The project has an effective outreach/communication/advocacy strategy to inform stakeholders and the wider community and disseminate results and stages of project implementation.

The review and selection process will be as follows:

Budget Assessment: The project budget must be realistic, reasonable and cost-effective. A cost-benefit analysis is made in all cases to ensure that project costs do not outweigh project value (i.e. output and/or outcome). Cost-sharing is evaluated in accordance with the level of financial participation proposed and its corresponding added value. All necessary resources for effective implementation of the project must be included within the application.

Internal review: All proposals are reviewed by a minimum of two TF staff per application. Staff perform due diligence to assess the project submitter, application and budget, which includes outreach to applicants for clarification. Upon satisfactory assessment, TF staff draft a proposal summary and recommendation (approval or rejection).

Proposal review committee: Proposals are reviewed by a proposal review committee composed of TF staff and representatives of consortium partners. The committee will be convened following each individual call for proposals under the project. Summaries of all proposals are circulated ahead of the committee meeting, proposals are discussed and decided, and an action sheet summarising these decisions is prepared by TF staff. The proposal review committee typically convenes via online/phone conferencing on a monthly basis.

- 5. the criteria for determining the exact amount of financial support for each third entity, and
 - a. Based on the budget proposal presented by the prospective financially supported partners

and the review process conducted by TF, including the budget assessment (see point 6 for more details)

6. the minimum and maximum amount which may be given:
 - a. Minimum: €4.000 per financially supported partner.
 - b. Maximum: €7.000 per financially supported partner
7. the criteria for selecting these entities and giving the financial support

Following selection, the successful FSTP partners will be given a period of between 3-6 months to implement their proposed activities using the funds provided. At the close of the FSTP implementation, they will be requested to complete a final report, including both narrative and financial reporting to provide comprehensive and detailed information on the use and impact of the funds and FSTP supported activities.

Finally, in order to foster wider public awareness and engagement in the challenges and responses to hybrid information threats, **a campaign of public forums will be elaborated by TIG, with support from MDF, across at least 6 regions in Georgia**, targeting the local population, especially youth (Act 4.4.1). These forums will bring together the public, local influential cultural voices as well as local SAFIMI community members and academia for engaging community events exploring culture, history, art, music, literature with a focus on anti-disinformation and FIMI/CIB awareness. Conducted in politically neutral spaces, such as libraries, community centres and universities, these forums will foster local debate around the hybrid information challenges faced in their communities, facilitating dynamic exchanges between local citizens and stakeholders as well as national actors (the costs for 6 guest speakers, one for each forum, are covered). Promoting local debate and conversation, these 6 forums will engage at least 150 participants across diverse regions and communities in Georgia. Fomenting additional public engagement and awareness, the forums will be accompanied by an **ongoing national communications campaign to raise awareness about hybrid information threats and key resources** to confront them (Act 4.4.2) coordinated by TIG. Leveraging the communications capacities of TIG and MDF, as well as the wider SAFIMI Community, the campaign will include professional and engaging video recordings of the public forums that will be edited and shared on social media. This campaign will be designed to amplify the local discussions around the challenges of FIMI, disinformation and CIB elaborated in the forums into the national sphere, raising Georgian public awareness of local issues and responses to these shared national challenges reaching at least 50.000 views/impressions on published content (Output 4.2).

Ultimately, technological innovation and the capacities, reach and engagement of media, CSO and other stakeholders will be leveraged to provide the Georgia public across diverse communities with wide-ranging opportunities to engage with the challenges of and effective responses to FIMI, disinformation and CIB in Georgia. Increasing their access to multilingual, trusted, evidence-based information, engagement in innovative locally-tailored educational opportunities, and participation in local conversations about hybrid information challenges in their community, SAFIMI will enhance public-stakeholder collaboration for a better informed and more resilient Georgian society.

In terms of external factors, there is risk of poor engagement from diverse stakeholder groups, **particularly state, government and political actors** given the uncooperative political context in Georgia especially as some partners are watchdog organisations. However, both TF and TIG have extensive experience working with state actors in Georgia, and the international Euroatlantic reputation of TF is expected to further improve the credibility. Sustained engagement of media and civil society actors can prove challenging due to resource limitations of smaller organisations; SAFIMI FSTP and tailored resource support is specifically designed to foster more sustainable project participation. Further risks relate to the integrity of media partners which could undermine the project approach, however SAFIMI specifically focuses on building media capacity and trust and all partners are well equipped in this area. Meanwhile, the linguistic diversity of Georgia means that accessing some minority language communities might be difficult, hence a particular emphasis on multilingual content production in SAFIMI (see Sustainability section below for full risk assessment).

SAFIMI will mainstream the cross-cutting issues of democracy and good governance by directly tackling hybrid information threats such as FIMI which directly undermine democratic values and governance. SAFIMI will strengthen civil society and independent media as key pillars of democratic society, while ensuring diverse actors including citizens have access to quality information to make informed decisions and foster their democratic and civic participation. Moreover, support to youth is prioritised throughout the project particularly via CSO engagement and the local forums. Meanwhile, we address minority language and community rights in Georgia with training for civil society and media adapted to local contexts and multilingual content produced in Russian, Armenian and Azerbaijani.

Overall Impact and Beneficiaries

SAFIMI firstly builds societal resilience and strengthens the whole-of- society approach to disinformation. The project will carry out ongoing and comprehensive research into disinformation, FIMI and CIB cases and trends in Georgia, building a strong evidence base to act upon while contributing to in-depth, well-informed counter measures. Meanwhile, ongoing monitoring of the Georgian information space will be conducted, primarily under the operations of MDF supported by their semi-automated multilingual Telegram chatbot and disinformation database system—which permits crowdsourced monitoring of disinformation on hard-to-reach private messaging platforms like Telegram—and local media partners receiving FSTP. Added to this, primary target stakeholders will be equipped with a comprehensive FIMI toolkit and resources along with tailored capacity building for: media, civil society, and local government officials. Finally, the establishment of the SAFIMI community will be rooted in a whole-of-society approach facilitating multi-stakeholder partnerships and cooperation across different sectors and regions, supported by international insights while grounded in local needs. Rather than replicating already existing efforts, SAFIMI will seek to bring them into a shared space to collectively exchange and build more effective responses to the disinformation threat in Georgia.

Secondly, SAFIMI will raise awareness amongst the general public about hybrid information threats, including disinformation, FIMI and CIB. The project will involve multilingual evidence-based media content production by both MDF and financially supported media partners. An innovative media FSTP approach will foster efforts to improve the reach of and public access to quality, independent information that directly tackles disinformation and FIMI in local communities, with a particular impact on minority languages. Meanwhile, FSTP support to CSOs/activists will promote the uptake of awareness-raising and media literacy initiatives, ensuring effective reach, engagement and capacity building among diverse communities. Finally, the local forums and communications campaign will foster local debate and interactions between citizens and stakeholders, bringing into focus FIMI/disinformation as a local challenge and promoting cooperative responses.

Target beneficiaries

Media practitioners, journalists and fact-checkers, especially in local media: A strong independent media is an essential bulwark against hybrid information threats and plays an important watchdog role. Local media outlets are especially important, particularly when reaching minority populations. Recent years have seen an encroachment on media freedom in Georgia with critical journalists facing harassment and outlets falling under political influence, squeezing the role and access to information and resources for independent media actors. Meanwhile, media practitioners, especially local ones, struggle to confront the onslaught of disinformation with studies revealing over 77% of Georgian journalists encounter disinformation and propaganda in their work frequently or very frequently, while highlighting a desperate need for more knowledge and resources. Through the development of a tailored FIMI toolkit, cross-sectoral networking and training activities and FSTP support, SAFIMI will provide +100 media actors across Georgia, particularly those operating at the local level with the knowledge, financial and material resources required to bolster their efforts to confront hybrid information threats in Georgia. Media practitioners will gain practical resources and improved capacities to better leverage their role as trusted information providers and watchdogs in the fight against FIMI, disinformation and CIB, while a select group of local actors will benefit from financial support to put these skills and resources into practice, producing content that counters hybrid information threats, ultimately contributing to a more fact-based media & information ecosystem. Meanwhile, Georgian media actors will additionally count on a large community of actors in the SAFIMI Community, as an institutional multi-stakeholder support to the sustainable development of their capacities, connections and knowledge.

NGOs, CSOs, and civil activists: Civil society plays a vital role in tackling FIMI, disinformation and CIB in Georgia, in particular advocating for access to reliable information, promoting media literacy, and raising awareness of hybrid information threats across diverse communities. These actors regularly face resource limitations, are frequently the target of public smear campaigns, especially activists, and the recently revived Agents of Foreign Influence law targeting CSOs and NGOs further poses a threat to their existence and ability to operate freely. SAFIMI will therefore ensure +100 civil society actors are provided with information, resources and training tailored to their needs in order to more effectively equip them when facing FIMI and disinformation threats in their communities. The training programme and FIMI toolkit will provide them with tailored guidance and techniques to promote their role as educators and advocates for public information resilience in their communities. Added to this, they will receive financial support to carry over new resources and capacities into practice, while also building on broader coalitions such as the Coalition for Euro-Atlantic Georgia to engage them in the SAFIMI community strengthening their connections with national and international actors and underscoring their sustainability.

Local government officials, particularly in the six target regions: State officials, particularly in local communities, as influential actors, are essential stakeholders in addressing FIMI, disinformation and CIB.



However, they are poorly equipped to address these hybrid information threats with limited awareness and/or resources at their disposal and often, whether intentionally or not, contributing to the propagation of false and misleading narratives within their communities, particularly under the current government and in areas with strong Russian or foreign influence. Those operating in areas with large minority populations face acute challenges to compete with the influences of external actors and media channels. Accordingly, SAFIMI will provide tailored training and network support to engage +120 government actors in the FIMI/disinformation challenge and provide them with useful resources (FIMI toolkit), knowledge building (training programme) and platforms (local forums) to effectively engage with their communities about this issue in collaboration with other stakeholders such as media and civil society. This will establish an important step in promoting awareness and resilience in the Georgian political sphere, which typically can be a source or exacerbator of FIMI, disinformation and CIB threats. Targeting local political actors, we will foster bottom-up political will and capacities to engage with relevant stakeholders and promote information resilience within their communities.

Final beneficiaries

General Georgian public from diverse regions incl. Samtskhe-Javakheti, Kvemo Kartli, Imereti, Adjara, Samegrelo, and Kakheti, particularly young persons and minority language speakers (Armenian, Azerbaijani, and Russian): The disinformation and FIMI challenge makes it crucial for media consumers to develop strong critical thinking skills and access independent information grounded in facts, however a majority rarely or never verify information or source credibility with Georgia ranked last in the Media Literacy Index 2023. Meanwhile, Georgia is a multi-ethnic country, including ethnic minorities with limited or no knowledge of Georgian language. Dependent on mostly external or Russian information sources, these communities are vulnerable to propaganda and disinformation. Meanwhile, in addition to poor critical thinking skills, surveys reveal that young people report a great deal of social distance and low tolerance of minorities. Through targeted media and CSO strengthening and multilingual content and outreach, SAFIMI will bolster awareness and access of citizens from diverse communities/languages—focused on youth—to quality information/resources relating to hybrid information threats in Georgia, bolstering resilience.

Other stakeholders in the fight against FIMI/disinformation in Georgia, including academia, relevant coalitions/networks, and donors: Large and diverse community of national and international actors from various sectors engaged in and affected by FIMI/disinformation/CIB in Georgia. These actors will equally benefit from and contribute to the SAFIMI project, particularly through the in-depth research, FIMI toolkit and crucially the SAFIMI community that will serve as a central platform for actors from across and beyond Georgia to engage across silos and borders to foster a more collaborative approach to the construction of a resilient Georgian information ecosystem. Such stakeholders will include: European coalitions such as the EEAS, particularly their FIMI-ISAC and StratCom task forces, EDMO, and the European Fact-Checking Standards Network; plus cross-border civil society initiatives and groups such as the Coalition for Euro-Atlantic Georgia, Information Integrity Coalition, DISARM Foundation, Open Information Partnership, and UNESCO Media and Information Literacy Alliance among others.

2.1.2. Methodology (max 5 pages)

SAFIMI will be developed over a two and a half year period under the coordination of [Maldita.es](https://maldita.es) in cooperation with Media Development Foundation, Transparency International Georgia and Transatlantic Foundation. As project leader, **Maldita.es (MAL)** will draw on its extensive experience leading cross-border and international EU-funded projects and proven track record strengthening independent media and training hundreds of journalists, media practitioners or CSOs, among others, each year nationally and internationally. Maldita.es has extensive experience building strong networks and fostering professional journalistic integrity having coordinated the initiative to establish the [European Fact-Checking Standards Network](https://factcheckingstandards.eu). The organisation is part of multiple cross-border projects tackling FIMI: leading a National Endowment for Democracy [funded project](#), focused on fighting Russian disinformation narratives and campaigns in Ukraine, Georgia, and Lithuania; [FIMI-ISAC](#), funded by the European External Action Service; and coordinates the EU-funded project [MigraVoice](#), while participating others such as [ATHENA](#), [EU-Hybnets](#), and [AI4Trust](#). Leveraging its FIMI and disinformation research expertise, MAL will contribute to the investigation activities and FIMI toolkit development, and mobilise its ownership of chatbot tech provider **Botalite** (awarded the 2021 [European Press Prize](#)) to contribute to the enhancement of MDF's chatbot. It's experienced policy team—having participated in high-level EU policy discussions, including the Strengthened Code of Practice on Disinformation—and expert media literacy team—with extensive experience building media and CSO capacities globally—will contribute to training and capacity building exercises in the SAFIMI Symposiums plus the Media/CSO training programme.

Media Development Foundation (MDF) with its local experience monitoring and tackling disinformation and FIMI narratives in Georgia will lead the development of the baseline study and periodic reports. They will leverage their extensive local, national and international connections to support the SAFIMI multistakeholder community, based on previous experiences as a member of the [Coalition for Euro-Atlantic Georgia](#) and the [Information Integrity Coalition](#), as well as its rich record collaborating with: state institutions incl Strategic Communication units of government and ministries, NATO-EU Information Center, and Communication Commission (ComCom), plus professional association of teachers, public schools and academia/Universities in Tbilisi and regions (Ilia State University, Tbilisi State University, Gori State University, Kutaisi State University, GIPA, University of Georgia, Caucasus University, Black Sea International University); along with international cooperation such as: the International Steering Committee (ISC) of the [UNESCO Media and Information Literacy Alliance](#), and member of the [Deutsche Welle Akademie Media and Information Literacy Network \(MILEN\)](#), a member of the [Open Information Partnership \(OIP\)](#), and a partner of [EUvsDisinfo](#), a flagship project of the European External Action Service's East StratCom Task Force. Added to this, MDF's media literacy and media/CSO/government capacity building experience will be employed in its contribution to the SAFIMI symposiums and public forums, along with its coordination of the media/CSO and local government training programmes. Through its fact-checking project "Myth Detector" it will deploy the enhanced linguistic capacities of its chatbot to monitor disinformation and produce fact-check content in minority languages.

Transparency International Georgia (TIG), will leverage its strategic presence in Georgia through a central Tbilisi office and regional offices in Akhaltsikhe, Kutaisi, Zugdidi, and Ajara to promote the wide-reaching and diverse engagement of actors across Georgia in the project. The organisation's experience monitoring and working with government actors will inform their support to the Baseline study, while the extensive communications outreach will support project communications across all activities. TIG will leverage its extensive partnerships with media, CSOs and government actors to coordinate the establishment and cultivation of the SAFIMI community as well as the public forums, building upon current coalitions such as the [Coalition for Euro-Atlantic Georgia](#) which it coordinates. TIG communications capacities will also be employed to coordinate the social media campaign alongside the public forums, while their regional outreach and government training experience will be mobilised to support the local government training activities.

Transatlantic Foundation (TF), the European arm of the German Marshall Fund of the U.S, will bring its extensive FSTP experience to coordinate the two FSTP initiatives to media and CSO partners. It has four regional assistance programmes: the [Balkan Trust for Democracy](#), the [Fund for Belarus Democracy](#), the [Black Sea Trust for Regional Cooperation](#), and the [Engaging Central Europe](#) initiative. All four programmes are multi-year, multi-donor mechanisms that support civil society through grant-making, capacity-building, networking and policy work. Over the last four years, TF civil society programs have operated a combined budget of over €30 million and provided more than more than €23 million in direct grants to support civil society, democracy and regional cooperation in Europe. TF capacity building experience will also be essential in targeted FIMI training interventions as part of the SAFIMI Symposiums and the media/CSO training programme.

Project team profiles



	MAL	MDF	TIG	TF
T e c h	• Public Policy Coordinator • Public Policy Assistant • Disinformation/FIMI researcher • Media Literacy Coordinator • Media Literacy Trainer • Community Coordinator • Social Media Manager • Product Manager	• Research Coordinator • Fact-checking analyst • Researcher • Community outreach coordinator • MIL program coordinator • Social media manager	• Regional Offices Manager • Regional Office Coordinator - Ajara • Regional Office Coordinator - Samegrelo • Regional Office Coordinator - Imereti • Regional Office Coordinator - Samtskhe-Javakheti • PR and Outreach coordinator • Media and Data Analyst • Social Media Manager • Visual Media Producer • Legal Expert	• Grant manager • Senior Fellow • Fellow
A d m in	• Project Coordinator • Project Manager • Financial Manager • Financial Assistant • COO	• Project Coordinator • Financial manager	• Project Coordinator • Financial Manager • IT coordinator	• Program coordinator • Program officer • Program assistant

Means and Methods of Implementation

In terms of the practical implementation approach, we will primarily draw on the internal staff capacities of the four applicant partner organisations. For the baseline study (1.1.1), the FIMI and media research expertise of MDF, MAL and TIG will be drawn on. MDF's Research Coordinator with support from the Project Coordinator will oversee the research elaboration, with technical inputs from their Fact-checking analyst and Researcher, as well as their MIL program coordinator for MIL insights. MAL's Public policy coordinator and Public policy assistant will provide FIMI policy insights along with the FIMI/disinformation researcher supporting MDF's research, plus the MAL Project Coordinator and Manager will provide administrative support. TIG's Legal Expert and Media and Data Analyst will lead the TIG research, with support from the Regional Offices Manager and Regional Office Coordinators for the field research plus admin support from the Project Coordinator and Financial Manager and Officer. MDF will outsource the field data collection for the media consumption habits part of the study to ensure breadth and quality of the data collection which will combine in-person and phone interviews as well as focus groups. Added to this, TIG will conduct their own field research to enrich data collected regarding government measures. MDF, MAL and TIG will mobilise their communications teams and channels to disseminate the report widely (1.1.2), including social media boosting by MDF and TIG. The periodic reports will be elaborated by MDF's research team—specifically Research Coordinator, Fact-checking analyst, and Researcher—with support from MAL—Public policy coordinator, Public policy assistant and FIMI/disinformation researcher. Meanwhile, both organisations along with TIG will employ their communications and network resources to disseminate each report broadly, including paid social media boosting for MDF and TIG. All research will be produced in Georgian and English to reach both national and international stakeholders. The FIMI toolkit development (1.3.1) will be coordinated by MAL, drawing on their team's FIMI expertise—Public policy coordinator, Public policy assistant, and FIMI/disinformation researcher, plus admin support from Project Coordinator and Manager—with expert inputs from MDF—Project Coordinator, Research Coordinator, MIL program coordinator—and TF which has developed similar toolkits—Program Assistant, Senior Fellow, and Fellow. The organisations will collaborate virtually developing the toolkit in English before translation into Georgian. These 3 organisations along with TIG will mobilise their communications and network connections to disseminate the toolkit widely among the key target groups (1.3.2).

For SAFIMI Community establishment (2.1.1), TIG's outreach and regional teams will coordinate the establishment of the community, including: Project Coordinator, PR and Outreach coordinator, Regional Offices Manager and Regional Office Coordinators, along with Social Media Manager and Visual Media Producer to produce and disseminate promotional content while the Financial Manager and Financial Officer / Accountant provide admin and purchasing support. They will be supported by MDF's Project Coordinator and Community Outreach Coordinator to engage MDF's extensive Georgian networks, as well

as MAL's Project Coordinator, Project Manager, Public Policy Coordinator and Public Policy Assistant, who have experience establishing similar communities. TIG will hire venue and catering for the community launch event in Tbilisi, as well as providing travel and per diem support to local participants. MDF will engage and cover travel, per diem and honoraria costs for 5 international experts, while one MAL staff will travel to Tbilisi for the event. SAFIMI Communications (2.1.2) will be coordinated by TIG's communications and outreach team—PR and Outreach coordinator, Social Media Manager and Visual Media Producer, with admin support from the Project Coordinator and Financial team—using their experience to engage current and new community members, with support from MDF's comms team—Project Coordinator, Social Media Manager, Community Outreach Coordinator—to amplify content in Georgia, as well as MAL's Project Coordinator and Public Policy Assistant to enhance international impact. Additional paid social media boosting will be conducted by MDF and TIG.

TIG and MDF will collaboratively coordinate the 7 SAFIMI symposiums, including the 2 in-person events (2.2.1). TIG's outreach team—Project Coordinator, PR and Outreach coordinator, Regional Offices Manager and Regional Office Coordinators, along with Social Media Manager and Visual Media Producer to produce and disseminate promotional content while the Financial Manager and Financial Officer / Accountant provide admin and purchasing support—will collaborate with MDF's team—Project Coordinator and Community Outreach Coordinator, Social Media Manager to promote the events, MIL program coordinator for educational interventions, and Finance Manager to support admin and purchasing—to design and implement the events as well as engage participants. MAL's policy and media literacy team—Public Policy Coordinator, Public Policy Assistant and Media Literacy Trainer, with admin support from Project Coordinator, Manager and Financial Officer—will be engaged to deliver trainings at the symposiums, including 1 staff member travelling from Madrid to each of the in-person events to deliver a workshop. TF's team—Program Assistant and Senior Fellow—will travel from Washington D.C. to 1 of the in-person symposiums to deliver a training session to members. Venue and catering will be secured for each of the in-person events, along with simultaneous translation for English language activities at all symposiums (plus material interpretation equipment like headphones, at the two in-person events). TIG will cover travel and per diem costs for at least 20 (10 per event) local participants in the in-person symposiums, while MDF will engage and cover the travel, per diem and honoraria costs of 4 (2 per event) international experts/guest speakers. TIG and MDF will both conduct paid social media boosting to promote engagement in the symposiums.

For the media/CSO training development (3.1.1), MDF will leverage their extensive expertise fostering media and civil society capacities against hybrid information threats to coordinate the programme design and elaboration. This will include their: Project Coordinator, Research Coordinator, and MIL Program Coordinator. MAL's educational and policy teams—Project Coordinator, Project Manager, Media Literacy Coordinator, Media Literacy Trainer, Public Policy Coordinator, Public Policy Assistant—will provide support, particularly in the design of advocacy and EU policy training. TF's team—Program Assistant, Senior Fellow and Fellow—will also provide inputs particularly regarding responses to FIMI. Meanwhile, the local government training development (3.2.1) will again be coordinated by MDF's training team, with support from TIG to adapt the content to the target group. All training content will be translated into Russian, Armenian, and Azerbaijani to improve inclusion and engagement of minorities. Regarding the implementation of media/CSO training (3.3.1), MDF will coordinate the round of 6 trainings (one in each target region) via their experienced outreach and training team—Project Coordinator, MIL Program Coordinator, Community Outreach Coordinator—along with their Social Media Manager providing support to engage participants, while the Financial Manager will support admin and purchasing. An open call in each region for participants will be elaborated and shared through online and offline channels, with a review and selection of candidates carried out by MDF based on criteria of diversity, relevance and capacity of prospective participants. MDF will acquire a venue and catering for 20 participants for 3 days in each region, as well as the need for 5 staff to travel to each region for course implementation. MAL's training team—Project Coordinator, Public Policy Coordinator, Public Policy Assistant, Media Literacy Coordinator, and Media Literacy Trainer—and TF's team—Program Assistant, Senior Fellow, and Fellow—will deliver their inputs to the training in a virtual hybrid format to facilitate cost-effectiveness and reduce long-distance travel costs. Similarly in the local government training implementation (3.4.1), MDF's training team will coordinate implementation, including venue and catering rental and the travel of 3 staff to each regional training. In outreach to participants as well as course implementation, they will be supported by TIG's Regional Offices Manager and Regional Office Coordinators who have training experience and extensive connections with local government actors.

For the multilingual chatbot enhancement (4.1.1), MDF's outreach and communication team—Project Coordinator, Community Outreach Coordinator, and Social Media Manager—will collaborate with MAL's COO and Product Manager to coordinate the Botalite service provision to develop the technological infrastructure for two additional languages. MAL is 100% owner of Botalite and all development costs are

included in the service cost to MDF, dealt with by their Finance Manager. MDF will acquire translation of their current chatbot conversation flow into the 2 additional languages, as well as developing a promotional campaign, with paid social media content, to promote the new linguistic reach. For the multilingual content production (4.1.2), MDF's fact-checking, outreach and media literacy teams—Project Coordinator, Fact-checking analyst, Community Outreach Coordinator, MIL Program Coordinator, and Social Media Manager—will leverage their journalistic and content production experience to employ the enhanced chatbot tools to monitor, produce and publish content which will be translated into Russian, Armenian and Azerbaijani. Regarding the FSTP programmes for media and civil society actors (4.2.1 and 4.3.1), TF will take sole responsibility through their well-experienced FSTP team—Program Officer, Program Coordinator, and Grant Manager—designing the call for proposals, review and selection of the applicants and management of the FSTPs along with monitoring and final evaluation. Each financially supported partner will be between €4.000 and €7.000 to implement their supported activities.

Finally, for the public forums (4.4.1), TIG will leverage their extensive regional outreach capacities through their regional office teams—PR and Outreach coordinator, Regional Offices Manager, and Regional Office Coordinators, with admin and purchasing support from Financial Manager and Financial Officer—to design, organise and implement the six public forums, one in each target region. This will include logistical preparation such as rental and catering hire for 25 participants per forum, as well as covering the travel, per diem and honoraria costs for 6 local guest speakers (one per forum). TIG will also coordinate outreach promotion and outreach of participants. They will be supported by MDF's team—Project Coordinator, Community Outreach Coordinator to support participant engagement, and MIL Program Coordinator to provide media literacy interventions. Meanwhile, TIG's communications team—Visual Media Producer, IT coordinator, and Social Media Manager along with purchasing support from the financial team—will elaborate the social media campaign (4.4.2) drawing on extensive communications and video production experience. This will include the hiring of an Assistant Visual Producer to support the recording team along with the travel and per diem costs for the recording team to five of the six forums which are in distant regions from Tbilisi. TIG will be supported by the MDF communication and outreach teams to share and amplify the campaign content on their platforms. TIG will conduct paid social media promotion to amplify the campaign content.

Project Management, Monitoring and Evaluation

Coordination will be carried out by MAL as an organisation with wide-ranging experience leading large-scale, cross-border, EU-funded projects supported by an experienced project management and financial team tasked with the general project coordination, monitoring and evaluation; the coordination team will consist of a Project Coordinator, Project Manager, Financial Manager, Financial Officer, Project Assistant and COO. Each organisation will assign a Project Manager and Financial Manager from their organisation who will be responsible for ensuring quality and timely activity and financial implementation as well as leading monitoring and evaluation contributions from their respective organisations. These teams will carry out on-the-ground monitoring and evaluation of the project implementation and impact, including TF's rigorous monitoring of the FSTP activities and expenses. Under the coordination of Maldita.es, all the partners will participate in the following project management activities:

- Kick-off Meeting in TIG Tbilisi Office: 3-day meeting with 2 staff members from Maldita.es and one from TF and at least four from MDF and four from TIG. The meeting will launch the project, agree to implementation plans and timelines, and collaboratively design and establish M&E tools, while general and specific responsibilities will be defined for partners and staff.
- Quarterly Follow-up Meetings: Online meetings for rigorous project planning and control, attended by the project and financial managers of each partner plus staff members actively engaged in the ongoing activities, facilitating efficient project oversight. They will serve as a platform to identify and address challenges, plus catering for continuous risk management, and informed decision-making.
- Quarterly Activity Reports: To assess and document ongoing project progress and implementation, the partners will compile quarterly activity reports that will also be shared with the EU. The reports will document timely and impactful implementation of activities and outputs throughout the project, providing regular updates on project progress, enabling us to identify and respond to emerging risks.
- Participant Satisfaction and Impact Evaluations: These evaluations will be conducted after the completion of all training and capacity building activities, including SAFIMI Symposiums. The assessments will be delivered to journalists and media practitioners, CSOs and activists who participate to: a) gauge satisfaction with various aspects of the training, including the content, format, approach, and materials provided; and b) assess the training's impact on enhancing the capacities and skills of the participants. These evaluations will determine the effectiveness of the training interventions and shape future improvements to ensure continued impact on participants.

- Monitoring and evaluation of FSTP: All FSTP supported organisations will provide narrative and financial reports on the implementation of their supported activities to monitor and assess the results and outcomes achieved through the execution of their activities. TF will develop reporting templates and be responsible for ensuring the receipt and productive management of the FSTPs.
- Interim and final financial and narrative reports: Evaluating activity implementation, financial management and project impact, these reports will provide an overall midpoint and end of project assessment of the project against the defined objectives, timeline and budget while identifying key learnings to inform the future development and sustainability of the project impact. The reports will employ data from the M&E tools and the logical framework, along with results from participant and FSTP evaluations. The final report will include a comprehensive external evaluation that will cover areas such as the implementation of project activities, the overall progress made towards achieving project objectives, and an audit of the financial management of project resources. To ensure objectivity, we will engage an independent evaluator who will be responsible for overseeing and conducting the assessment. This external evaluation will serve as a critical step in appraising the project's outcomes, identifying areas of success and improvement, and providing valuable insights for future initiatives and decision-making processes.
- Final project review/lessons learned meeting in TIG Tbilisi Office: At project end, the 4 organisations (2 staff MAL, 1 TF and at least 4 TIG and MDF) will reflect on the project implementation and results, exchange learnings and discuss future sustainability of the project and collaboration. External stakeholders will also be invited to engage with the results and impact.

Complementarity with other actions

SAFIMI will build on actions fighting FIMI and disinformation narratives in Georgia and empowering the media, CSOs, NGOs, journalists and public institutions. We will leverage MAL and MDF connections with the [FIMI-ISAC](#) and [East StratCom](#) communities, along with the [ATHENA](#) and [EU-Hybnat](#) projects to share knowledge and learnings, and promote engagement in the SAFIMI community and project results. [EUvsDisinfo](#) and its [East Stratcom Task Force](#) will be of particular pertinence due to its activities monitoring the Georgian information space. Meanwhile, through multilingual enhancements in Act. 4.1.1, this project will build on MDF chatbot capacities developed in the MAL coordinated project [Technological Capacity Building for Eastern Europe, Eurasia and Latin America Fact-Checking Organisations](#) to fight disinformation on private messaging apps and the narratives detected through the project. Added to this, other initiatives will be engaged, including the [European Digital Media Observatory \(EDMO\)](#) and its different hubs (MAL is a partner), the [European Fact-Checking Standards Network](#) (MAL and MDF are members), and the [International Fact-Checking Network](#) (MAL and MDF are signatories) will be also including their FIMI and disinformation repositories, such as [#UkraineFacts](#) and the [EDMO repository of fact-checking articles](#), consulted to identify narratives, Tactics, Techniques and Procedures (TTPs) or Coordinated Inauthentic Behaviour (CIB) in SAFIMI research activities.

Specifically within Georgia, SAFIMI will complement and build on various initiatives that work towards a more resilient Georgian information ecosystem. TIG's projects: "[Training the Media and Empowering Ethnic Minorities' Access to Quality Journalism in Georgia](#)", which addressed the shortage of technically skilled media professionals for investigative journalism in densely populated areas of Georgia with ethnic minority groups; and "[Reducing Corruption Through Resilient Institutions, Rule of Law and Citizen Participation in Anti-Corruption Efforts](#)", which promotes media independence, pluralism, and protection against undue influences, with a focus on political/financial meddling in media ownership, will be built upon on and inform the tailored training against FIMI for local media actors as well as engaging members for the SAFIMI Community. Added to this, SAFIMI will build on and learn from MDF's project "[Quality Media and Conscious Media Consumption for Resilient Society –ConMeCo](#)" which mobilises Georgian activists to increase public awareness and understanding of media freedom, media and information literacy, and the harmful effects of disinformation. Also, our engagement with minorities and response to minority disinformation and FIMI will be informed and strengthened by MDF's "[Unity Through Diversity](#)" project which monitors minority-related narratives in the Georgian public domain and messages spread via minority language media outlets. Furthermore, the EU-funded project elaborated by MDF "[EU-Georgia relations and Georgia's European aspirations to dispel EU-related mis- and disinformation](#)" will be strengthened and expanded upon by SAFIMI. Finally, the sub granting activities will build on TF's rich experience and impact coordinating its four regional assistance programmes (discussed above).

Communications & EU funding visibility

Communications efforts will run as cross-cutting activities throughout the project, mobilising the wide-reaching digital communications platforms, including social media, and audience bases of the project partners across Georgia and Europe—MDF has over 100.000 followers on Facebook and X/Twitter; Maldita.es has 1.5 million followers across diverse social media and 2 million monthly website visitors; TIG

also reaches around 20.000 of Georgian citizens through website and various social media platforms and TF has more than 100.000 followers on Instagram, Facebook and X/Twitter. The main activities to promote project results will include: press releases published at the launch of the project by each partner to communicate the project kick-off and objectives, which will then be promoted on respective social media platforms; regular website and social media content produced by all the partners throughout the project promoting activities and results; the website and newsletter of the *SAFIMI* community (2.1.2) which will serve as key platforms to communicate the project results to a broad diversity of stakeholders on and offline. Regarding the visibility of EU funding, EU funding will be clearly acknowledged and made visible on all project publications and communications, including the baseline study (1.1.1), the periodic reports (1.2.1), *SAFIMI* Community web pages (2.1.2), all training materials (3.1.1 and 3.2.1), as well as promotional materials for and at project events.



2.1.3. Indicative action plan for implementing the action (max 4 pages)

The action plan will be drawn up using the following format:



Year 1													
	Half-year 1						Half-year 2						
Activity	Month 1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Implementing body
0.1.1 Kick-off meeting													MAL, MDF, TIG AND TF
0.2.1 Quarterly follow-up meetings													MAL, MDF, TIG, TF
0.3.1 Quarterly activity reports													MAL, MDF, TIG, TF
1.1.1 FIMI, mis/disinfo and CIB baseline study													MDF, MAL, TIG
1.1.2 Baseline study dissemination													MDF, MAL, TIG
1.2.1 Periodic FIMI, mis/disinfo and CIB reports													MDF, MAL
1.2.2 Periodic FIMI, mis/disinfo and CIB reports dissemination													MDF, MAL, TIG
1.3.1 FIMI toolkit development													MAL, MDF, TF
1.3.2 FIMI toolkit dissemination													MAL, MDF, TIG,TF
2.1.1 SAFIMI Community establishment													MAL, MDF, TIG
2.1.2 SAFIMI Community communications													TIG, MDF
2.2.1 SAFIMI Community symposiums													TIG, MDF, TF, MAL
3.3.1 Development: Media/CSO/activist fighting FIMI/disinfo training													MDF, MAL, TF
3.2.1 Development: Local government fighting FIMI/disinfo training													TIG, MDF

CPZ

Year 2													
	Half-year 1						Half-year 2						
Activity	Month 13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	Implementing body
0.2.1 Quarterly follow-up meetings													MAL, MDF, TIG,TF
0.3.1 Quarterly activity reports													MAL, MDF, TIG,TF
0.4.1 Interim financial and narrative reports													MAL, MDF, TIG,TF
1.2.1 Periodic FIMI, mis/disinfo and CIB reports													MDF, MAL
1.2.2 Periodic FIMI, mis/disinfo and CIB reports dissemination													MDF, MAL, TIG
2.1.2 SAFIMI Community communications													TIG, MDF
2.2.1 SAFIMI Community symposiums													TIG, MAL, MDF,
3.3.1 Implementation: Media/CSO/activist fighting FIMI/disinfo training													MDF, MAL, TF
3.4.1 Implementation: Local government fighting FIMI/disinfo training													TIG, MDF
4.1.2 MDF minority language content production													MDF
4.2.1 SAFIMI media collective (FSTP)													TF
4.3.1 Media Literacy trainings (FSTPs)													TF
4.4.1 SAFIMI public forums													TIG, MAL, MDF

QTC

4.4.2 Multi-platform awareness raising social media campaign												TIG, MAL, MDF
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CSL

Year 3							
	Half-year 1						
Activity	Month 25	26	27	28	29	30	Implementing body
0.2.1 Quarterly follow-up meetings							MAL, MDF, TIG AND TF
0.3.1 Quarterly activity reports							MAL, MDF, TIG AND TF
0.4.2 Final financial and narrative reports							MAL, MDF, TIG AND TF
0.5.1 Final project review and lessons learned meeting							MAL, MDF, TIG AND TF
1.2.1 Periodic FIMI, mis/disinfo and CIB reports							MDF, MAL
1.2.2 Periodic FIMI, mis/disinfo and CIB reports dissemination							MDF, MAL, TIG
2.1.2 SAFIMI Community communications							TIG, MDF
2.2.1 SAFIMI Community symposiums							TIG, MAL, MDF
4.1.2 MDF minority language content production							MDF
4.2.1 SAFIMI media collective (FSTP)							TF, MDF, TIG
4.3.1 Media Literacy trainings (FSTPs)							TF, MDF, TIG
4.4.1 SAFIMI public forums							TIG, MAL, MDF
4.4.2 Multi-platform awareness raising social media campaign							TIG, MAL, MDF

QTC

2.1.4. Sustainability of the action (max 3 pages)

SAFIMI: SAFIMI Georgia: Georgian Society Against FIMI, disinformation and coordinated inauthentic behaviour will build societal resilience in Georgia to mis/disinformation, FIMI and coordinated inauthentic behaviour (CIB) by strengthening the understanding, awareness and responses of multi-stakeholder community of more than 540 (cumulatively across all activities) different actors across media, civil society, government and the broader Georgian and international community, with an average of 80% of trained beneficiaries demonstrating improved capacities. Added to this, *SAFIMI* will promote broader Georgian public awareness of and resilience to hybrid information reaching more than 270 citizens offline and securing +235,000 views/impressions on published evidence-based journalism and awareness-raising content throughout the project duration.

Through the in-depth baseline study and ongoing periodic reports, *SAFIMI* will broaden and deepen the evidence base on FIMI, disinformation, CIB and vulnerabilities in the Georgian information ecosystem that will enhance diverse stakeholder understanding of the challenges and contribute to better informed responses. The publications, combined with the FIMI toolkit will reach more than 300 stakeholders and over 25,000 views/impressions on digital platforms. Added to this, the FIMI toolkit will provide media, civil society and local government actors with expert informed and practical guidance and resources tailored to their needs that will have a direct impact on their technical capacities to counter FIMI and disinformation in their specific contexts and operations. Specifically, media beneficiaries will gain insights and tools to improve their efforts to identify and counter FIMI and disinformation, such as fact-checking and prebunking approaches, and best practices and international frameworks that they can apply in their work such as the DISARM framework. Meanwhile, CSO partners will broaden their understanding of the impact of hybrid information threats on their field of work and communities, equipping them with innovative inoculation approaches and techniques. Finally, local government representatives will have improved understanding of their role in countering FIMI and disinformation, provided with key guidance to identify and counter it in their work.

Meanwhile, the *SAFIMI* Community establishment will result in an institutionally secure space to foster broad-reaching, cross-sectoral multi-stakeholder collaboration and network building in Georgia in addressing the FIMI, disinformation and CIB challenges. The Community will engage more than 50 stakeholders, both Georgian and international, in dynamic knowledge and capacity exchanges as well as networking that will cultivate more collaborative and cross-sectoral responses to hybrid information threats. Members, including media, civil society and government actors, will benefit from diverse insights and connections from across Georgia and internationally, sustained by regular communications. Added to this, the seven symposiums will build the technical and networking capacities of more than 150 participants across all the events, offering them access to practical training and networking opportunities, as well as local, regional, national and international expertise and perspectives. All the while fostering the sense of community and collaboration within the *SAFIMI* community in the fight against FIMI, disinformation and CIB in Georgia, and promoting the cooperative resilience of the Georgian multi-stakeholder in the face hybrid disinformation threats by bringing them together for national in-person symposiums.

Furthermore, over 240 media, CSO, and local government representatives from across six distinct regions of Georgia will benefit from improved capacities to identify and counter FIMI/disinformation/CIB and contribute to a public dialogue grounded in facts through the targeted and tailored training programmes. At a technical level, at least 80% of trainees will demonstrate both improved capacities and at least 80% satisfaction with the training activities, reflecting the value and impact of the training interventions. The trained media actors will in turn be able to strengthen their evidence-based journalism and fact-checking operations and contribute to increased citizen access to trusted and fact-based information, while the CSO actors will be equipped to counter disinformation in their communities, particularly through educational and awareness-raising initiatives that build community resilience. Finally, the local government actors will be able to contribute to a better informed public and political debate in Georgia that is grounded in fact.

Through the MDF chatbot enhancement and subsequent multilingual content production, MDF will increase the access to trusted, evidence-based information in minority languages that counters FIMI and disinformation in communities disproportionately affected. This will be enriched by the evidence-based media content produced by media FSTP partners, who will promote more localised access to reliable information tailored to the specific communities they serve. As a result, more than 810 evidence-based media content pieces will be produced throughout the project duration, contributing to a healthier media and information sphere. Added to this, the educational and awareness-raising initiatives elaborated by the CSO FSTP partners will ensure that more than 120 Georgian citizens across diverse communities will benefit from improved understanding of and skills to counter the dangers of FIMI, disinformation and CIB in their local communities. Meanwhile, the FSTP support more generally will provide media and CSO partners a unique opportunity to apply and reinforce the skills developed in training activities, optimising their impact and the durability of the learning outcomes. Finally, the *SAFIMI* public forums and accompanying social media campaign will increase local public awareness, debate



and responses to hybrid information challenges within diverse Georgian communities. The 6 forums will benefit at least 150 participants, while an additional 15,000 views through social media outreach amplifying local concerns and discussions at the national level. These efforts will ultimately foster general public access to and engagement in evidence-based information, education, and dialogues that raise public awareness of and capacities to confront FIMI, disinformation and CIB in Georgia.

Risk Type	Details of risk	Like-lihood	Mitigation Measures
Technical	Internet shut-downs or fluctuation in some regions.	Low	VPN use will facilitate tasks in internet-reachable areas. All digital activities will be recorded and shared with participants along with offline supporting materials.
	Technical issues or failures in establishing or maintaining the chatbot / disinformation database.	Low	Ongoing periodic reviews and monitoring of the chatbot will be carried out to identify any problems, which will be fixed by the MAL engineers.
	Difficulty accessing minority language communities due to linguistic diversity in Georgia may result in reduced reach and impact of interventions.	Medium	Prioritise multilingual content production to reach minority language communities. Enhance the capabilities of communication tools, such as the Telegram chatbot, to support multiple languages and collaborate with local translators and community leaders to ensure cultural sensitivity and effective communication.
Social	Harassment on social media	High	Employ organisational protocols to act when journalists, CSOs are harassed. Avoid unnecessary public exposure.
	Target audiences, especially in remote regions, may not engage in the training sessions.	Medium	Collaborate with local NGOs, grassroots organisations and activists familiar with the local context to encourage participation and utilise social media channels that are popular and accessible in the target regions.
	Political tensions and destabilisation during the pre-election period in Georgia may disrupt project activities and undermine the project's objectives.	Medium	Monitor political developments closely and adjust project plans accordingly to minimise disruptions. Engage with relevant stakeholders to promote stability and mitigate potential conflicts and develop contingency plans to address security concerns and ensure safety.
	Poor engagement from the state, government and political actors.	Medium	TF and TIG have extensive experience working with state actors in Georgia, and the international Euroatlantic reputation of TF will improve credibility.
	Target beneficiaries, especially the ruling party representatives, may not engage in the training sessions.	High	Continue dialogue with local government officials; Collaborate with representatives from both the ruling party and opposition separately; Utilise social media
Political			

			channels that are popular and accessible in the regions.
	Political legislation implemented that inhibits foreign financial intervention and support access, especially FSTPing.	High	Close monitoring of the political legislation, adjust project plans accordingly. TF experience in providing FSTPs in politically unfriendly contexts.
E c o n o m i c	Finances funded by donors may become subject to strict regulations determined by government decisions, which may impact the timely and effective implementation.	Medium	Regular communication and coordination among the project partners; Regular revision of the project work plans; Direct and frequent communication with the donor.
	Exchange rate fluctuation may decrease financial resources allocated.	High	Follow the grant guidelines and support the activity implementation with the partners own human resources and allocated contributions; Effective use of the monitoring tools; Regular revision and analysis of the project budget.
E n v i r.	Natural Disasters or Environmental Hazards: Georgia is prone to various natural disasters and environmental hazards, such as floods, landslides, and earthquakes, which could disrupt project activities, damage infrastructure, and affect the well-being of local communities.	Low to Med (on region/season)	Conduct environmental assessments and hazard mapping to identify areas prone to natural disasters and environmental risks.

SAFIMI is designed to ensure the impact and scope extends beyond the project timeline. In the realm of institutional sustainability, the establishment of the *SAFIMI* community is specifically designed to provide a durable institutional framework from multi-stakeholder and cross-sectoral collaboration in efforts to counter hybrid information threats in Georgia. The Community will have a memorandum of cooperation and governance structures that will guide the continued operation and development of the community beyond the project timeline, serving as a platform to build upon the wider project results after the funding period. In particular, TIG will continue to coordinate the *SAFIMI* community network, drawing on the connections developed for future interventions and operations, as well as maintaining its engagement with beneficiaries to spearhead the cross-sectoral collaborative responses to hybrid information threats in Georgia. Added to this, *SAFIMI* will build capacities through media/CSO and local government training as well as the *SAFIMI* Symposiums specifically designed to strengthen knowledge and skills of participants that will last beyond the project itself fostering sustainable and more impactful media, civil society and local government responses to FIMI, disinformation and CIB across Georgian society. These trained actors will also be able to count on the *SAFIMI* Community as a sustainable space through which they can continue to develop their skills, connections and knowledge.

Furthermore, by establishing and capacitating the *SAFIMI* Community, we will specifically foster locally grown collaboration and ownership as a pillar of sustainable responses to hybrid information threats. The key role of *SAFIMI* community establishes a sustainable on-the-ground presence to serve as a strong reference for project outputs and impacts beyond the project cycle. Moreover, the FSTP support outputs will be 100% owned by the local partners, while TIG and MDF as Georgia-based partners will represent the pillar of local Georgian ownership of the project results throughout the project, particularly in the multilingual content production and public forums, but also in the investigation outputs. Added to this, the investigation reports and FIMI toolkit will serve as practical informational resources that beneficiaries will be able to draw on long after the project closes, to sustain the reinforcement of the knowledge and tools they count on to counter FIMI, disinformation and CIB.

At the policy level, we will increase awareness of and empower media, CSOs and activists to more effectively engage with and implement internationally recognised frameworks, methods and approaches to counter FIMI, disinformation and CIB in their work. Training interventions, particularly the media/CSO and local government programmes, but also the symposiums, will introduce trainees to the DISARM framework and provide guidance

in its application to their work, as well as media monitoring and fact-checking methods, media literacy approaches plus national and European policies and policy frameworks relating to FIMI and disinformation. Through these practical training interventions, participants across media, civil society and local government will be able to integrate established frameworks and approaches into their own operations to strengthen their resilience to hybrid information threats during and beyond the project timeline.

Regarding financial sustainability, each of the partner organisations have their own resources and impactful business models that will guarantee their continued functioning and operation beyond the project timeline. The investment in intensive training and awareness-raising are designed to promote sustainable knowledge and skills among beneficiaries that will last beyond the timeline once funding support finishes. Meanwhile, specific interventions including the chatbot enhancement will be sustained (as it already is) by MDF with their own resources and continue to be employed by their journalistic team to monitor and counter disinformation in minority languages beyond the SAFIMI project.

Finally, in terms of environmental sustainability, environmentally-damaging activities have been kept to a minimum. In the case of the training programmes, we have opted to implement them in the 6 regions to limit travel to only the project staff rather than all participants travelling to Tbilisi. Meanwhile, international travel has been kept to a minimum and included only where it is most valuable and virtual alternatives would damage project results. Where possible, we have included virtual training interventions delivered by TF and MAL in the media/CSO and local government training programmes to still take advantage of the transfer of their international knowledge and skills to the Georgian context while limiting the need for costly and environmentally damaging travel.

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