



# Georgia: COVID-19 Emergency Response Project

Project Name	COVID-19 Emergency Response Project	
Project Number	54457-001	
Country	Georgia	
Project Status	Approved	
Project Type / Modality of Assistance	Grant	
Source of Funding / Amount	Grant 0773-GEO: COVID-19 Emergency Response Project	
	Asia Pacific Disaster Response Fund	US\$ 2.50 million
Strategic Agendas	Environmentally sustainable growth Inclusive economic growth	
Drivers of Change	Governance and capacity development Knowledge solutions Partnerships Private sector development	
Sector / Subsector	Health - Health care finance	
Gender Equity and Mainstreaming	No gender elements	
Description	<p>Despite significant improvements in recent years, Georgia's public health system remains vulnerable to the health burden posed by the COVID-19 pandemic and crisis. The health sector capacity is limited, physical health infrastructure is inadequate, and there is a lack of trained medical personnel to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. Out-of-pocket spending has been declining after the introduction of the Universal Healthcare Program in 2013, but still accounted for 54.8% of total health spending in 2017. This points to an underlying vulnerability for low income groups, which are particularly at risk as COVID-19 unfolds. About 17.5% of Georgia's population is older than 60 years, while 3.3% of the population is older than 80 years. This poses additional challenges in dealing with the COVID-19 emergency since evidence from other countries suggests that the older populations, especially those with pre-existing health conditions, are at higher risk of contracting the disease and, if infected, often require more intensive care.</p> <p>According to the Global Health Security Index, Georgia's health capacity in clinics, hospitals and community care centers scores low: 18.3 out of 100. This is largely due to the deficit of nursing staff and low hospital bed density. Georgia has only 47.3 nurses per 10,000 population and 26 hospital beds per 10,000 population compared with neighboring countries such as Armenia which has 42 beds per 10,000 population. Critical skills gaps exist in Georgia's healthcare sector and a number of health workers and laboratory staff have to be trained to be able to respond to COVID-19. Some 62% of frontline medical doctors, who are higher risk of infection, are women.</p> <p>With the acceleration of virus transmission rate since September 2020, Georgia's health system is increasingly overwhelmed. According to MoLHSA, as of the second week of November, about 4,500 beds in more than 30 hospitals were already occupied by COVID-19 patients, while only 250 beds were available. The Ministry is working to increase the number of beds available for COVID-19 patients to 8,500 by early December. Health workers are increasingly contracting the disease. The number of infected health workers surpassed 1,700 or 5% of total number of infected as of end October 2020. More resources are needed for management of severe cases, prevention of onward virus transmission and alleviation of strains on health-care services. The government needs support to augment its capacity and constrained financial and human resources to ensure effective and timely lifesaving efforts and respond to the impact of COVID-19.</p> <p>The proposed support from the APDRF will help finance immediate needs and deliver appropriate medical services where required. The government has indicated ADB's support would be used for improvement of laboratory diagnostic and testing capacity, procurement of personal protective equipment and other medical equipment to help the government meet its most urgent needs. Recognizing the unpredictable nature of the situation and the concurrent inflow of support from other sources, flexibility is required, along with close coordination with various sources and partners. Any supplies funded from APDRF grant will be coordinated with other support from development partners to avoid duplication.</p> <p>The APDRF grant will complement ADB's comprehensive package of support to Georgia designed to contain COVID-19 impact. The package includes a \$100 million loan approved in May 2020 and a \$200 million loan approved in October 2020 to respond to Georgia's immediate health and socioeconomic needs and support a return to inclusive economic growth by addressing the longstanding institutional fragilities in social protection, fiscal and debt management that were exacerbated by the pandemic. ADB has also provided grant support to Georgia in August 2020 to procure PCR equipment for the COVID-19 health response, funded under the regional technical assistance project. The new equipment will augment Georgia's PCR testing capacity and help the authorities to better trace and contain the spread of the virus.</p>	
Project Rationale and Linkage to Country/Regional Strategy	<p>Considering the substantial impact of COVID-19 and the government's constrained resources, it is recommended that an amount of \$2.5 million is provided to the government as a grant financed by the APDRF, and up to 30% of the grant amount can be used retroactively for eligible expenditures incurred prior to grant effectiveness, but not earlier than 22 October 2020.</p> <p>The Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management Division (SDCD), Sustainable Development and Climate Change Department (SDCC) has been consulted and, in consultation with the Health Sector Group, SDCC confirmed that the conditions for assistance have been met and that there are sufficient balances available under the APDRF to meet the proposed grant (attachments 5 and 6).</p>	
Impact		
Project Outcome		
Description of Outcome		
Progress Toward Outcome		
Implementation Progress		
Description of Project Outputs		
Status of Implementation Progress (Outputs, Activities, and Issues)		
Geographical Location	Nation-wide	
Safeguard Categories		

Environment	C
Involuntary Resettlement	C
Indigenous Peoples	C

#### Summary of Environmental and Social Aspects

Environmental Aspects
Involuntary Resettlement
Indigenous Peoples
Stakeholder Communication, Participation, and Consultation
During Project Design
During Project Implementation

Responsible ADB Officer	Kiziria, George
Responsible ADB Department	Central and West Asia Department
Responsible ADB Division	Georgia Resident Mission
Executing Agencies	Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons 144, Ak. Tsereteli Ave, Tbilisi 0119

Timetable	
Concept Clearance	-
Fact Finding	-
MRM	-
Approval	03 Dec 2020
Last Review Mission	-
Last PDS Update	03 Dec 2020

## Grant 0773-GEO

Financing Plan		Grant Utilization			
	Total (Amount in US\$ million)	Date	ADB	Others	Net Percentage
Project Cost	2.50	Cumulative Contract Awards			
ADB	2.50	-	0.00	0.00	%
Counterpart	0.00	Cumulative Disbursements			
Cofinancing	0.00	-	0.00	0.00	%

Project Page	<a href="https://www.adb.org/projects/54457-001/main">https://www.adb.org/projects/54457-001/main</a>
Request for Information	<a href="http://www.adb.org/forms/request-information-form?subject=54457-001">http://www.adb.org/forms/request-information-form?subject=54457-001</a>
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