



Concept Environmental and Social Review Summary

Concept Stage

(ESRS Concept Stage)

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The World Bank

Georgia: Enhancing Early Warning Systems By Using Genomic Surveillance And One Health Approach (P511731)

I. BASIC INFORMATION

A. Basic Operation Data

Operation ID	Product	Operation Acronym	Approval Fiscal Year
P511731	Investment Project Financing (IPF)	GEO: EWSS	2026
Operation Name	Georgia: Enhancing Early Warning Systems by using Genomic Surveillance and One Health Approach		
Country/Region Code	Beneficiary country/countries (borrower, recipient)	Region	Practice Area (Lead)
Georgia	Georgia	EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA	Health, Nutrition & Population
Borrower(s)	Implementing Agency(ies)	Estimated Board Date	
Georgia	Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Labor, Health and Social Affairs	14-Aug-2026	
Estimated Concept Review Date	Total Project Cost		
16-Mar-2026	1,340,500.00		

Proposed Development Objective

To strengthen Georgia's laboratory and operational capacity for early warning system (EWS) and antimicrobial resistance (AMR) surveillance in human and animal health using the One Health approach

B. Is the operation being prepared in a Situation of Urgent Need of Assistance or Capacity Constraints, as per Bank IPF Policy, para. 12?

No

C. Summary Description of Proposed Project Activities

Georgia secured US\$6.5 million in Grant funding from the Pandemic Fund, with US\$1.34 million to be managed by the World Bank (WB). The WB-administered activities will complement Pandemic Fund related activities (USD\$5.1 million) that will be managed by the World Health Organization (WHO). The WB supported activities, the funds (US\$1.34 M) will be channeled through this Project, with implementation expected to start in the third quarter of 2026. This Project, in



line with the approved proposal, aims to strengthen Georgia's early warning and surveillance capacity in through the implementation of a One Health approach. The Project will support the efforts of the Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Labor, Health and Social Affairs (MoILHSA), and the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture (MEPA) to strengthen both their laboratory and surveillance capacity. Specifically, it will equip the laboratories of the National Center of Disease Control (NCDC) of MoILHSA and the State Laboratory of Agriculture (SLA) of MEPA and provide both institutions plus the National Food Agency under MEPA with vehicles to facilitate surveillance work. The proposed Project will have two main components: a. Component 1: Strengthening Laboratory and Operational Capacity for EWS and AMR surveillance based on the One Health Approach. This component will finance laboratory equipment to strengthen NCDC's capacity for microbial testing, genomic sequencing, and wastewater monitoring; as well as portable refrigerated wastewater samplers and two pickup vehicles for disease surveillance for the timely collection and transportation of biological samples from the field to laboratories ensuring that surveillance data is generated quickly and accurately. It will also fund laboratory equipment to enhance SLA's capacity for quantitative and qualitative analysis of antibiotics in wastewater samples with the application of a Solid Phase Extraction system. Finally, it will also support the SLA's and NFA's disease surveillance activities by providing each agency with one pick-up vehicle. b. Component 2: Project Management. This component will mainly finance personnel to support the Project Implementation Unit (PIU) in MoILHSA in overall coordination and monitoring fiduciary, environmental and social risks managed-related activities and Project results in collaboration with implementing Ministries, development partners, and financial audits.

D. Environmental and Social Overview

D.1 Overview of Environmental and Social Project Settings

Georgia remains exposed and vulnerable to epidemic and pandemic risks. Its vulnerability to disease threats is due to several factors, including its status as a transit hub, and its proximity to countries with ongoing wars, conflicts, and humanitarian crises. Georgia needs to take steps to address its current pandemic risks and close remaining capacity gaps in pandemic preparedness and response that have been exposed by the COVID-19 pandemic and recent external evaluations. The Project will enhance capacity of two State laboratories with headquarters in the capital city of Tbilisi and a country-wide mandate.

D.2 Overview of Borrower's Institutional Capacity for Managing Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts

The Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Labor, Health and Social Affairs (MoILHSA), through the National Center of Disease Control (NCDC), will lead Project implementation with the involvement of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture (MEPA) and in collaboration with the Ministry of Finance. MoILHSA and MEPA will sign a memorandum of understanding that outlines their main responsibilities and obligations under the Project. A Project Implementation Unit (PIU) that exists in MoILHSA will undertake day-to-day administration of the Project. The PIU currently has limited staff and is managing only one project financed by the European Investment Bank. Earlier, MoILHSA acted as an implementing agency for the Emergency COVID-19 Response Project co-financed by the World Bank and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank that used the World Bank's Environmental and Social Framework (ESF) in the common approach to E&S risk management for this operation. For the purposes of the present Project, the MoILHSA will hire a procurement, a financial management, and an environmental and social management consultants for enhancing PIU's capacity to implement it in compliance with the Bank's fiduciary requirements and in material consistency with the ESF.



II. SCREENING OF POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL RISKS AND IMPACTS

A. Environmental and Social Risk Classification (ESRC)

Low

A.1 Environmental Risk Rating

Low

The Project will not finance any type of civil works. Project proceeds will be used for supplying goods - laboratory testing equipment and vehicles - to NCDC and the State laboratory of Agriculture (SLA) under MEPA and for enhancing institutional capacity of the PIU under MoIHLSA for contract management, procurement, financial management, E&S risk management, and monitoring and evaluation. The Project is not expected to have any measurable negative environmental impacts, while its outcomes for community health and safety are expected to be positive. Minor risks associated with the installation and use of laboratory equipment and with operation, maintenance, and disposal of the vehicles to be provided by the Project could be easily mitigated by the application of conventional laboratory protocols and vehicle maintenance rules already being practiced by NCDC and SLA. These include worksite safety rules, protocols for laboratory waste separation and handling various streams of hazardous and non-hazardous waste, Extended Producer Responsibility schemes for electric and electronic waste, vehicle fuel standards and mandatory emission checks. Both MoIHLSA and MEPA are generally experienced in applying E&S requirements of international financing institutions and bilateral development agencies, including those of the Bank. Hence, the environmental risk of the proposed Project is rated as Low.

A.2 Social Risk Rating

Low

The Project's social risk is rated Low in line with the ES Directive and the ESF Screening/Risk Classification Technical Note because the type, scale, and footprint of activities are limited and largely confined to existing government facilities in Tbilisi, consisting mainly of procurement of laboratory equipment for genomic sequencing/microbial testing/wastewater monitoring and purchase of four vehicles, plus project management support - with no civil works, no land acquisition or resettlement, and no expected livelihood impacts. The Project will not create new risks or increase the existing risks. The risks are manageable through the existing standard procedures on Worker Occupational Health and Safety/biosafety; training for lab operations and sample handling; community health and safety measures for safe sample transport and road safety for surveillance vehicles; and proportionate stakeholder engagement and grievance handling. The implementation arrangements include PIU support and capacity-building for E&S risk management commensurate with the limited scope.

B. Relevance of Standards and Policies at Concept Stage

B.1 Relevance of Environmental and Social Standards

ESS1 - Assessment and Management of Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts

Relevant

While no environmental and social risks are associated with the delivery of laboratory equipment and vehicles to Project beneficiary entities, their operation and maintenance may cause some negative impacts, such as generation of hazardous waste from laboratories and vehicle operation and health damage to laboratory staff and vehicle drivers. These potential occupational health and safety and environmental impacts may be easily mitigated by adherence to conventional laboratory protocols already well-established and practiced in NCDC and SLA as well as



labor safety and vehicle operation and maintenance requirements of the national legislation. The Recipient will be required to follow these regulations through including relevant provisions in the ESCP.

ESS10 - Stakeholder Engagement and Information Disclosure

Relevant

For ESS10, the Project will rely on the existing mechanisms and practices of the MoILHSA and MEPA, which includes multiple intake channels such as in-person submissions, written letters, post and email, and the ministry-wide hotline serving the ministries and their subordinated agencies, with defined procedures for the receipt, registration, tracking, response, disclosure, database management, and reporting. The PIU will continue to ensure the system is accessible and inclusive for vulnerable and disadvantaged groups, and maintain accessible entry points, including through publication of GRM procedures and related information in Georgian and minority languages. Given the Project's low risk and limited footprint, the proportional stakeholder engagement approach, GRM arrangements, and reporting commitments will be set out in the Project's ESCP rather than through a standalone Stakeholder Engagement Plan, consistent with ESF practice for low-risk operations.

ESS2 - Labor and Working Conditions

Relevant

Safe operation of laboratory equipment to be supplied by the Project will require its due installation and calibration, use of personal protection gear by operators, and observance of safe handling rules provided by producer. Safe operation of vehicles to be provided by the Project implies allocation of parking space, regular maintenance, training of drivers, their regular health checks, observance of resting intervals between working hours, and relevant insurance. NCDC and SLA are well established institutions that have received considerable foreign aid for capacity building and exercising conventional laboratory practice consistent with good international standards. Also, Georgia has adopted and enforces mandatory technical inspection of vehicles, regulations on vehicle age and emission control, and has an extensive network of car service providers. The requirements of ESS2 for the category of risks associated with this Project will be met by the existing systems of the Recipient.

ESS3 - Resource Efficiency and Pollution Prevention and Management

Relevant

Technical specifications for vehicles and equipment to be procured on Project proceeds will include relevant aspects of energy efficiency. The Recipient will commit to apply requirements of the Law of Georgia on Waste Management Code of Georgia pertaining medical waste management and dispose used batteries, lubricants, and tires of vehicles through the currently available schemes of Extended Producer Responsibility.

ESS4 - Community Health and Safety

Not Currently Relevant

The Project will have positive impact on community health and safety by enhancing national capacity to monitor microbial and antibiotic contents in wastewater and generating early warning signals on the expected outbreaks of transmittable disease. No risks or potential negative impacts on community wellbeing are expected.

ESS5 - Land Acquisition, Restrictions on Land Use and Involuntary Resettlement

Not Currently Relevant

Project implementation will not require land acquisition, will not restrict land use, and will not cause involuntary resettlement.



ESS6 - Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Management of Living Natural Resources

Not Currently Relevant

Project implementation will not affect biodiversity and/or living natural resources.

ESS7 - Indigenous Peoples/Sub-Saharan African Historically Underserved Traditional Local Communities

Not Currently Relevant

No indigenous peoples as defined by ESS7 reside in Georgia.

ESS8 - Cultural Heritage

Not Currently Relevant

Project implementation will not affect neither tangible nor intangible cultural heritage.

ESS9 - Financial Intermediaries

Not Currently Relevant

FIs are not part of the Project implementation arrangements.

B.2 Legal Operational Policies that Apply

OP 7.50 Operations on International Waterways

No

OP 7.60 Operations in Disputed Areas

No

B.3 Other Salient Features

Use of Borrower Framework

In Whole

Adherence to the national legislation currently in force and laboratory protocols already adopted and practiced by Project beneficiary entities is sufficient for avoiding or minimizing operational risks of equipment and vehicles to be supplied under the Project and used beyond its closing date. Therefore, implementation of this low E&S risk Project will rely on the Recipient framework for aligning with all relevant ESSs, and commitment to strictly adhere to the applicable national regulations will be confirmed by including relevant provisions in the Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP). Namely, the Recipient will commit to update laboratory safety protocols to cover new equipment hazards and to maintain vehicle logs to ensure regular maintenance. MoLHSA will disclose the ESCP for consultations prior to appraisal. Material consistency with the Bank's ESF will thus be achieved and no other ESF instruments will be required for this operation.

Use of Common Approach

No

No financing partners are expected to be involved in the Project.



C. Overview of Required Environmental and Social Risk Management Activities

C.1 What Borrower environmental and social analyses, instruments, plans and/or frameworks are planned or required by Appraisal?

The Recipient prepared, disclosed, offered a communication channel to stakeholders for receiving their feedback on the ESCP. Stakeholder engagement will rely on the Recipient framework, and no dedicated Stakeholder Engagement Plan will be developed.

III. CONTACT POINT

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IV. FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT

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V. APPROVAL

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