

SBF Project Implementation Monitoring Report

Georgia: Georgia Emergency COVID-19 Response Project

1. Project Information

Project ID:	000388	Investment Number:	L0388A
Member:	Georgia	Region:	Western asia
Sector:	Public Health	Sub-sector:	
AIB Financing Type:	Loan: 91.34 EUR million	Co-financier(s):	World Bank
E&S category:	B	Borrower:	Georgia
Red Flags Assigned:	0 (Q1: 0)	Monitoring Regime:	Regular Monitoring
Implementing Agency:	Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Labour, Health and Social Affairs of Georgia		
Project Team Leader:	Mehek Marwaha		
Project Team Members:	Yogesh Malla, Financial Management Specialist Gerardo Pio Parco, Senior Environmental Specialist Georgi Dzhartov, Social Safeguards Specialist Giacomo Ottolini, Procurement Consultant Bernardita Saez, Senior Counsel		
Completed Site Visits by AIB:	So far, no site visits have been conducted due to ongoing travel restrictions.		
Planned Site Visits by AIB:	Jan, 2022 The first visit is proposed along with the team members from the WB, in January/ February 2022, subject to travel restrictions getting eased.		

2. Project Summary and Objectives

Objective: To prevent, detect, and respond to the threat posed by the COVID-19 pandemic and strengthen national systems for public health preparedness in Georgia.

The project has three components:

- 1) Emergency COVID-19 Response, including COVID-19 Case Detection and Confirmation, and Health System Strengthening for Case Management
- 2) Enabling health measures to contain the COVID-19 outbreak through temporary income support for poor households and vulnerable individuals through cash transfers and temporary unemployment assistance for individuals who lost their job because of COVID-19
- 3) Project Management and Monitoring

The project beneficiaries include the population at large given the nature of the disease, but importantly the infected people and at-risk populations, particularly the elderly and people with chronic conditions, medical and emergency personnel, medical and testing facilities, and public health agencies engaged in the response. In addition, the beneficiaries of social protection measures are the poor and vulnerable households, including those with informal workers as identified through the existing government administrative systems, formal private sector workers who were unemployed due to the lockdown or due to the restrictions adopted by the Government of Georgia to contain the spread of the COVID-19.

Project Cost is USD 180 million in Euro equivalent, being funded by the WB (USD 80 million) and AIIB (USD 100 million).

3. Key Dates

Approval:	May. 20, 2020	Signing:	May. 21, 2020
Effective:	Jun. 17, 2020	Restructured (if any):	
Orig. Closing:	Apr. 30, 2022	Rev. Closing (if any):	Apr. 30, 2023

4. Disbursement Summary (million)

Currency:	EUR		
a) Committed:	91.34	b) Cancellation (if any):	
c) Disbursed:	80.9	d) Most recent disbursement: (amount / date)	0.29, Sep. 28, 2021

e) Undisbursed:	10.44	f) Disbursement Ratio(%) ¹ :	88.6
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¹ Disbursement Ratio is defined as the volume (i.e. the dollar amount) of total disbursed amount as a percentage of the net committed volume, i.e., $f = c / (a - b)$

5. Project Implementation Update

The project provides support for the procurement of essential equipment and supplies, intensive care unit (ICU) equipment (e.g. ventilators, patient monitors, bronchoscopes), drugs, and medical supplies to strengthen the capacity of public health facilities designated for COVID-19. The project also provides support to public and private facilities that are designated to receive COVID-19 patients to compensate them for idle capacity and ensure standby readiness to provide COVID-19 care. In addition, the Project introduces mitigation measures in the form of financial support for poor and vulnerable households to enable them to comply with social distancing and COVID-19 containment measures and lockdown orders.

AIIB's project loan was declared effective on June 17, 2020. Project implementation is currently underway. The Procurement Plan has been prepared, other key documents including Project Operations Manual, the Global Budget and Reimbursements Manual, and the Environment and Social Management Framework (ESMF) have also been finalized.

Satisfactory progress has been made in the implementation activities till date. Two out of three PDO indicators and eight out of ten intermediate indicators have already been achieved. The Project Operations Manual (POM) has been finalized and approved in October 2020, and further updated to reflect the changes in the legislation related to social benefits, and the additional financing for vaccines.

Thirty-two tranches of debt disbursements have taken place so far, and the overall disbursement level has touched 88.6% of the approved loan amount.

MoLHSA has signed contracts for COVID-19 Diagnostic Kits, and they have been working with UNOPS to procure Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and critical medical equipment for key identified hospitals in Batumi, Kutaisi, Tbilisi, and Rukhi.

The ESMF has been completed as of November 2020 and properly disclosed. The PIU has staff in place, in charge of implementing the requirements of the ESMF. There have been no complaints registered through the GRM. The Project Operations Manual (POM) adequately references the ESMF and includes the required safeguards for screening and management of potential impacts. The E&S implementation progress is in compliance with AIIB requirements.

Components	Physical Progress	Environmental & Social Compliance	Procurement
Component 1: Emergency Response Measures (Case Detection and Case Management)	Implementation is proceeding smoothly.	In compliance. WB's ESF applies to this project instead of the Bank's ESP. Pursuant to the Bank's agreement with the WB, the Bank will rely on the WB's corporate Grievance Redress Service (GRS) and its Inspection Panel (IP) to handle complaints relating to ES issues that may arise under the Project. Consequently, in accordance with the Bank's policy on the Project affected People's Mechanism (PPM), submissions to the PPM under this project will not be eligible for consideration by the PPM.	In compliance. No issues identified at this stage.
Component 2: Enabling Health Measures and Social Protection	Over 88% of the committed amount has been disbursed.		During the reporting period, medical equipment such as portable pulmonary ventilators, pulse oximeters, patient monitors, syringe pumps, flow meters, high pressure suction pumps and infusion pumps were delivered. Relevant medical personnel of four hospitals received training on the safe and effective use of the delivered equipment.
Component: Project Management			

Financial Management:

The prior agreed actions such as hiring of qualified FM staff, finalization of the external audit ToR and manuals have been completed, albeit with some delays. The external auditor for the project has been hired.

The first semi-annual project internal audit report has been shared and no major issues have been noted. The project implementation unit needs to share the next semi-annual internal audit report as per schedule. The IUFR for quarter ending March 31, 2021, has been received with some delay and no issues noted. The next IUFR for quarter ending June 30, 2021 has also been received on August 15, 2021 and is being analysed by the WB team.

In AIIB loan amount, there is a difference of EUR 228350 (under reported) in the financial statements. This difference relates to AIIB's capitalized Front End fee. This needs to be reflected in the financial statements to account for the correct loan amount in the project books.

The audited project financial statement for FY2020, due on June 30, 2021, has been submitted within the due date. The auditor has given an unmodified audit opinion and no major internal control weaknesses have been noted except for deviation on the recognition of the foreign exchange transactions based on IPSAS Cash.

6. Status of the Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM)

A functioning project level GRM has been formally established and disclosed publicly. No grievances have been received so far by the social service agency.

57 letters/complaints were received by the State Employment Support Agency (SESA), mostly related to changing of the bank accounts or challenges with ID card statuses. Responses have been given to all of them. No continuation of these claims to the Court has been recorded.

7. Results Monitoring

The three key project results indicators identified were:

1. Number of people tested for COVID-19 identification per MoLHSA protocol
2. Number of COVID-19 patients treated per SSA reimbursement guidelines
3. Share of the population in the poorest quintile who are receiving the COVID-19 pandemic related social assistance programs

The Project has commenced implementation in July 2020 after the PIU was set up.

In June 2021, IBRD has signed another Additional Financing (AF) Loan Agreement for this project, with an amount of EUR 28.7 million for vaccine financing. The original closing date of the parent project was April 30, 2022. Considering the time involved for deployment of vaccines, the closing date for the AF (and consequently for the parent project) has now been changed to April 30, 2023. Although AIIB did not participate in this additional financing, based on a request from the Ministry of Finance, the closing date for AIIB's loan was also extended by 12 months to April 30, 2023, to be in line with our co-financier.

Although the end targets in the results framework were determined with the Government in 2020, some of the targets which have already been achieved may be raised upwards, as the Government ramps up its efforts.

The most recent information regarding achievement of targeted results is listed below.

Baseline Year: Apr. 30, 2020 End Target Year: Apr. 30, 2023

Project Objective Indicators #1

Number of people tested for COVID-19 identification per MoLHSA protocol

Year	Target	Actual	Others, if any
Apr. 30, 2023	100,000	8,097,000	Baseline: 9,699

Project Objective Indicators #2

Number of COVID-19 patients treated per SSA reimbursement guidelines

Year	Target	Actual	Others, if any
Apr. 30, 2023	2000	32357	Baseline: 431

Project Objective Indicators #3

Share of the population in the poorest quintile who are receiving the COVID-19 pandemic related social assistance programs

Year	Target	Actual	Others, if any
Apr. 30, 2023	45	36	Baseline: 36% This indicator would be updated by the end of 2021 based on availability of the latest HIES 2021 and GEOSTAT data

Intermediate Result Indicators #1

Number of designated laboratories with COVID-19 diagnostic equipment, test kits, and reagents per MOILHSA guidelines

Year	Target	Actual	Others, if any
Apr. 30, 2023	32	49	Although the end targets in the results framework were determined with the Government, some of the targets, including this indicator, have already been achieved as the Government has ramped up its efforts to control the surge in the number of cases.

Intermediate Result Indicators #2

Number of personal protection equipment (PPE) purchased

Year	Target	Actual	Others, if any
Apr. 30, 2023	12,000,000	12,224,000	This indicator has also been fully achieved with the help of IBRD and AIIB funds.

Intermediate Result Indicators #3

Number of designated public hospitals with fully equipped and functional intensive care units (ICUs)

Year	Target	Actual	Others, if any
Apr. 30, 2023	4	4	This target has been achieved. Names of the hospitals with fully equipped ICUs as per the MoILHSA guidelines are: N. Kipshidze Central University Clinic (Tbilisi); Rukhi Republican Hospital, The First University Clinic, and Batumi Republican Clinical Hospital

Intermediate Result Indicators #4

Number of designated public hospitals with isolation capacity

Year	Target	Actual	Others, if any
Apr. 30, 2023	4	4	Same hospitals as mentioned above, having operational isolation rooms and isolation wards in designated departments.

Intermediate Result Indicators #5

Enabling health measures (Temporary Income Support) - Vulnerable Households receiving temporary cash benefit

Year	Target	Actual	Others, if any
Apr. 30, 2023	70,000	108,577	"Vulnerable" households are defined as those households without formal labor income, households with children; households with at least one member with a disability. The indicator tracked is the following: Registered households in the database with a score between 65 000 – 100 001 and households with a score less than 100001 with 3 or more children. Values disaggregated by type of benefit: 76,850 vulnerable households (TSA score between 65,001 and 100,000) and 24,655 households of families with three children or more. The value of indicators reported refers to the use of funds covered by the project, which is jointly financed by IBRD (45% of the loan) and AIIB (55% of the loan).

Intermediate Result Indicators #6

Number of formal private sector workers laid off because of COVID-related lock down restrictions who receive a temporary unemployment benefit, by gender

Year	Target	Actual	Others, if any
Apr. 30, 2023	135,000	320,526	320,526 individuals have received unemployment benefits, out of which, women beneficiaries were 174,972 (i.e. 54.59% of total)

Intermediate Result Indicators #7

Number of TSA beneficiary households

Year	Target	Actual	Others, if any
Apr. 30, 2023	114,000	121,955	Baseline: 118,100 Out of 121,955 beneficiary households, 51% were female headed households.

Intermediate Result Indicators #8

Complaints received related to COVID related social assistance programs

Year	Target	Actual	Others, if any
Apr. 30, 2023	5	57	In January and February 2021, overall 57 queries / clarifications (colloquially translated as complaints in Georgian) were received, out of which 40 were related to the request to change bank account details; 4 were related to request for proof of compensation receipts; 2 requests related to compensations canceled due to death; and 11 requests for compensations received from ineligible individuals, thus no compensation was made and responses were given to all of them. No continuation of these claims to the Court has been recorded.

Intermediate Result Indicators #9

Number of informal workers who receive the one-off benefit, by gender

Year	Target	Actual	Others, if any
Apr. 30, 2023	340,000	369,912	369,912 of which, 104,680 were women

Intermediate Result Indicators #10

Percentage of beneficiaries reporting that community engagement and outreach meet their needs

Year	Target	Actual	Others, if any
Apr. 30, 2023	70 percent	80 percent	As advised by the PIU, over 80% of the clarifications sought by the community have been satisfactorily resolved. This indicator will be evaluated further during the next monitoring cycle.

Remarks: The value of indicators reported refers to the use of funds covered by the project, which is jointly financed by IBRD (45% of the loan) and AIIB (55% of the loan).