1. **Project and Activity Description**

1.1. Purpose and Scope of RCE

The purpose of this RCE is to cover the Task Order on the Georgia Conflict Assessment. The Task Order will be implemented in Georgia beginning in September 2019 for a six-month period. The activities under this Conflict Assessment Task Order (research and training) do not have any impact on the natural and physical environment. Therefore, USAID/Caucasus requests a categorical exclusion for the activity.

1.2. Activity Overview

The Task Order has the following objectives:

- To perform a conflict assessment in Georgia with a focus on Abkhazia, former South Ossetia/Tskhinvali Region, the administrative boundary line (ABL) and surrounding communities in order to understand the drivers for conflict in and around these parts of Georgia currently occupied by Russia;
To identify constraints and opportunities for expanding or initiating conflict-sensitive development programming for reconciliation of conflicting sides, the protection of Human Rights, building community resiliency and improved livelihoods along the ABL;

To cross-test these constraints and opportunities around Abkhazia and former South Ossetia conflicts with the situation around other vulnerable ethnic or religious minority regions in Georgia (Samskhe-Javakheti, Kvemo Kartli and/or Adjara);

To identify constraints and opportunities for expanding or initiating conflict programming or conflict sensitive programming in other sectors in these areas by providing recommendations for improving the existing and designing new USAID programs;

To better inform CDCS processes, including ways to integrate conflict sensitive approaches; and

To recommend specific tools and mechanisms for mainstreaming conflict mitigation and prevention measures into the broader USAID portfolio.

2. Project Description and Climate Risk Screening

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Defined or illustrative activities under Georgia Conflict Assessment</th>
<th>Potential Climate Risk</th>
<th>Climate Risk Rating*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Conduct a desk study and prepare for the fieldwork:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. The desk study will gather facts on Georgia and identify knowledge gaps about the conflict dynamics in Georgia. This initial analysis shall be verified by the team at the next stage of the assessment, i.e. fieldwork. The desk study shall cover the ‘frozen’ conflicts in Abkhazia and South Ossetia, as well as tensions and grievances around ethnic and/or religious minority areas and issues along the ABLs and surrounding regions of Samegrelo and Shida Kartli / Mtskheta-Mtianeti.</td>
<td>No adverse impacts are likely</td>
<td>low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. In consultation with the Mission and prior to arriving in the country, the contractor will devise a fieldwork plan for the assessment team. The plan will include a detailed field itinerary, logistics preparations and a draft interview protocol.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Carry out the fieldwork, which will include:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. An in-brief with the USAID/Georgia Mission leadership;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Planning the logistics and training of the assessment team in the assessment methodology and data collection;</td>
<td>No adverse impacts are likely</td>
<td>low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Field data collection in Tbilisi, the regions adjacent to Abkhazia and South Ossetia, and selected ethnic or religious minority regions will constitute the primary geographical focus of this assessment. The methods used for the data collection will include key informant interviews, focused group discussions, expert roundtables,</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Defined or illustrative activities under Georgia Conflict Assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Potential Climate Risk</th>
<th>Climate Risk Rating*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>content analysis of publications, direct observations. The assessment team will identify alternative ways for grasping Abkhaz and Ossetian perspectives about the conflict trajectories and reconciliation opportunities. These may include, but are not limited to the review of the Abkhaz and Ossetian online resources, consultations with Tbilisi based stakeholders (local and international), or other alternatives.</td>
<td>No adverse impacts are likely</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

d. Initial synthesis and out-brief for the Mission leadership.

3. Synthesize and analyze the data collected, including:
   a. Submission of the first draft of the conflict assessment report to the mission.
   b. Once the Mission and the Office of Conflict Management and Mitigation (CMM) in Washington have provided combined comments and edits, the contractor will submit a final report.

2. Justification for Categorical Exclusion Determination
   The activities under the Georgia Conflict Assessment will not have an effect on the natural or physical environment and are among the classes of activities listed in 22 CFR 216.2(c)(2). Therefore, under §216.2(c)(1), neither an IEE nor an EA will be required for these activities. Instead, a categorical exclusion threshold determination is recommended for the following identified activities under 22 CFR 216.2(c)(2):
   - Activity 2b §216.2(c)(2)(i) Education, technical assistance, or training programs except to the extent such programs include activities directly affecting the environment (such as construction of facilities, etc.);
   - Activities 1a, 1b, 2a, 2b, 2c, 2d, 3a, and 3b under §216.2(c)(2) (iii)Analyses, studies, academic or research workshops and meetings.

3. Limitations of the Categorical Exclusion Determination:
   This categorical exclusion does not cover classes of actions normally having a significant effect on the environment under §216.2(d):
   i. Programs of river basin development;
   ii. Irrigation and water management;
   iii. Agricultural land leveling;
   iv. Drainage projects;
   v. Large scale agricultural mechanization;
   vi. Resettlement projects;
   vii. New land development;
   viii. Penetration road building and road improvement;
   ix. Powerplants;
   x. Industrial plants; and
xi. Potable water and sewerage projects

In addition, this categorical exclusion does not cover activities that:

- Support project preparation, project feasibility studies, engineering design for activities listed in §216.2(d)(1);
- Affect endangered species;
- Provide support to extractive industries (e.g. mining and quarrying);
- Promote timber harvesting;
- Lead to construction, reconstruction, rehabilitation, or renovation work;
- Support agro-processing or industrial enterprises;
- Provide support for regulatory permitting;
- Lead to privatization of industrial facilities or infrastructure with heavily polluted property;
- Assist the procurement (including payment in kind, donations, guarantees of credit) or use (including handling, transport, fuel for transport, storage, mixing, loading, application, clean-up of spray equipment, and disposal) of pesticides or activities involving procurement, transport, use, storage, or disposal of toxic materials--pesticides cover all insecticides, fungicides, rodenticides, etc. covered under the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act; and/or
- Procure or use genetically modified organisms.

Any of these actions would require a Europe and Eurasia Bureau Environmental Officer (BEO) approved amendment to the categorical exclusion.

4. Mandatory Inclusion of Environmental Compliance Requirements in Solicitations, Awards, Budgets, and Work Plans

- Appropriate environmental compliance language, including limitations defined in Section 4, shall be incorporated into solicitations and awards for categorical exclusions.
- The implementing partner shall ensure annual work plans do not prescribe activities that are defined as limitations in Section 4.

5. Revisions

Under §216.3(a)(9), if new information becomes available that indicates that activities covered by the categorical exclusion might be considered major and their effect significant, or if additional activities are proposed that might be considered major and their effect significant, this categorical exclusion determination will be reviewed and, if necessary, revised by the Mission Environmental Officer (MEO) with concurrence by the BEO. It is the responsibility of the USAID Contract Officer’s Representative (COR)/Agreement Officer’s Representative (AOR) to keep the MEO and BEO informed of any new information or changes in the activity that might require revision of this determination.
6. **Recommended Determination for Categorical Exclusion:**

**Approval:**
PW – by email
Peter Wiebler, Mission Director
08/01/2019

**Clearance:**
GL – by email
Gocha Lobzhanidze, Mission Environmental Officer
07/26/2019

Clearance:
GK – by email
George Khechinashvili, Activity Manager
07/29/2019

**Concurrence:**
Mark Kamiya
E&E Bureau Environmental Officer

**Distribution:**
IEE File
MEO (to also provide a copy to AOR/COR)
# Climate Risk Screening and Management Tool for Activity Design

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1.1: Defined or Anticipated Tasks or Interventions*</th>
<th>1.2: Time-frame</th>
<th>1.3: Geography</th>
<th>2: Climate Risks*</th>
<th>3: Adaptive Capacity</th>
<th>4: Climate Risk Rating* [Enter rating for each risk: High, Moderate, or Low]</th>
<th>5: Opportunities*</th>
<th>6.1: Climate Risk Management Options</th>
<th>6.2: How Climate Risks Are Addressed in the Activity*</th>
<th>7: Next Steps for Activity Implementation</th>
<th>8: Accepted Climate Risks*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Georgia Conflict Assessment September 2019 – February 2020</td>
<td>The project will be implemented in Tbilisi, Pankisi Valley, Upper Adjara and Upper Kvemo Kartli</td>
<td>In 2017-2050: The average annual air temperature throughout Georgia will increase by 1.3 C to 1.6 C, the number of summer days (above 25°C) will increase; the absolute minimum air temperature by 1 C is probable in the mountain zone, the overall tendency is for an increase. The number of frost days is decreasing throughout Georgia. The annual number of hot days will increase about 2.5 times. The</td>
<td>The climate is likely changing in the way that it may have low-level effect on professionals to conduct/participate in the research and training activities under the P/CVE project.</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>The Ministry of Health, Labor, and Social Affairs (MoLSHA) will take on the responsibility for monitoring standard safe operations of the researchers, training providers and training participants. Thus, it is necessary for the MoLSHA to consider</td>
<td>Support facilities that maintain air conditioning and evacuation plans (in case of disaster)</td>
<td>Inform the MoLSHA about potential low-level climate risk.</td>
<td>None</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The percentage change of annual total precipitation is within a range from an 11% decrease to an 8% increase. A number of days of heavy rain will increase by 2 to 5 days; a decrease is more observable in the southeast, also in Adjara and a large part of Imereti; and an increase will take place in mountain regions, mostly within the Greater Caucasus. Adaptation of the project participants to climate change.