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# PRESS RELEASE

## **USAID and bp Join Forces to Advance Development in Georgia's Communities**

**Tbilisi, Georgia – July 27, 2021** – USAID/Georgia Mission Director Peter Wiebler and bp Georgia head of country Aytan Hajieva signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) affirming USAID/Georgia and bp Georgia's commitment to strengthening community resilience across Georgia. Under the MOU, USAID will partner with bp to advance economic growth in rural communities. USAID/Georgia and bp Georgia also committed to exploring opportunities to jointly address climate change and promote regional cooperation.

### **USAID's Growing Emphasis on Private Sector Engagement**

The MOU reflects USAID's strategy to expand and deepen engagement with the private sector to advance sustainable development in Georgia. The Agency's growing list of private sector partnerships are focused on helping Georgia strengthen resilience against malign influence, build citizen-responsive institutions, and achieve inclusive economic growth. USAID looks forward to partnering with bp to strengthen resilience in rural communities and taking action to mitigate climate change.

"This partnership with bp Georgia strengthens USAID's ability to support resilience in Georgia's rural communities, which is one of the top priorities of the development strategy we launched in 2020," said USAID/Georgia Mission Director Peter Wiebler. "bp and USAID have collaborated for years to support resilience and inclusive economic growth in Georgian communities, including vulnerable communities near Georgia's Administrative Boundary Lines. We look forward to creating and co-financing new initiatives that benefit more people across Georgia."

Aytan Hajieva, bp Georgia head of country, commented that "improving people's lives is one of the core values of bp's sustainability strategy. It advances our purpose of reimagining energy for people and for the planet. We intend to combine our efforts with USAID, sharing experience and resources to advance sustainable development in the communities where we work. This collaboration will help Georgia's communities to build greater resilience, and it will lead to more sustainable livelihoods for Georgian workers and families."

### **Building on an Existing Partnership**

The MOU builds on an existing successful partnership between USAID/Georgia and bp Georgia. Between 2018 and 2020, USAID, through the USAID Zrda Activity in Georgia, partnered with bp Georgia to implement joint development projects in 41 villages adjacent to the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan (BTC) and South Caucasus Pipeline (SCP) pipelines in Shida Kartli, Samtskhe-Javakheti, and Kvemo Kartli. USAID/Georgia and bp Georgia co-financed \$685,000 in initiatives to provide local residents with grants, training, and technical assistance to support the growth of micro-, small-, and medium-sized enterprises.

**About USAID in Georgia:** As the leading development agency of the U.S. Government, USAID supports Georgia to build the capacity to plan, finance, and implement its own solutions to development challenges. USAID has worked in Georgia since 1992, supporting the country's transformation into a democracy that is increasingly integrated into Western political, security, and economic institutions. More than 35 USAID programs strengthen Georgia's resilience to malign influence, consolidate democratic gains through enhanced citizen responsive governance, and enable high-value

employment through increased economic growth. For more information, please visit:  
<https://www.usaid.gov/georgia>.

**About bp Georgia:** bp on behalf of its partners has been working on major oil and gas projects for 25 years in Georgia. Baku-Supsa and Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan oil pipelines as well as South Caucasus gas pipeline and expansion project in Georgia contribute to the energy security of the country. We are one of the biggest investors in the country and we have invested more than USD 4bn in energy infrastructure including USD 100 million spent and committed in the sustainable development projects. Together with our oil and gas partners, donors and business partners we support local communities and wider society with access to energy and energy efficiency, business start-up and agriculture, education and Paralympic sports. bp and its oil and gas partners initiated Community Development Initiative in 2003 and over the 18 years have invested USD 27 million in the local community development. [www.bpgeorgia.ge](http://www.bpgeorgia.ge)

**For More Information:**

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