

## **AMENDMENT TO RESETTLEMENT POLICY FRAMEWORK (RPF) FOR THE FIRST EAST-WEST HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT**

**Background:** This is an amendment to the RPF written for the First East-West Highway which was disclosed on September 28, 2006. In 2009 the Government of Georgia requested additional financing (AF) in the amount of US\$28 million to mainly finance the rehabilitation of Rikoti Tunnel on the East West Highway west of Gori as well as the Tunnel bypass. The AF has two components: the Rehabilitation of the Rikoti Tunnel, and its associated 4.2 km bypass road, and the Road Sector Institutional Capacity building. This amendment applies only to the first component. The first component would rehabilitate the Rikoti tunnel to: (i) restore its structural integrity; (ii) improve the ventilation system; (iii) improve the lighting system; (iv) provide appropriate traffic safety facilities; and (v) rehabilitate the Rikoti tunnel bypass road. Tunnel is 1.7 km long and the bypass is about 4.2 km long. Both tunnel and the bypass are two lane roads with current widths of 11.5 meters and 7 meters respectively.

**Possible impact:** Land acquisition may impact the two civil works components differently.

- **Rikoti Tunnel:** At the time of appraisal, the design for the tunnel was not finalized. However, the preliminary design and the EIA indicate that no land is required. The only land requirements are for temporary workshops, equipment and material storage. It is anticipated that these will be met by the existing tunnel access areas.
- **Bypass Road:** The Roads Department (RD) has indicated that the bypass road runs through forest land that belongs to the state. There are no residential structures built along the bypass nor are there any farming activities or any other structures along the road. There are two restaurants, however, on the top of the bypass, one a temporarily structure built in anticipation of business which could be generated during tunnel rehabilitation and one, a more permanent structure, which has been there for a while. The final design for the rehabilitation includes widening of the curves and provision of truck crawl lanes. These activities are apparently within the current right of way so no acquisition of private land is anticipated.

Although the current designs do not call for the acquisition of private land and the triggering of OP 4.12, it is considered prudent to trigger the policy in the event that (i) additional land is required for the temporary facilities with the rehabilitation of the Rikoti tunnel or, (ii) further widening of the bypass road is required to cater for higher traffic flows and a different traffic management plan.

**Procedures and policies to be followed by the RD in the case of impact:** In the case of any impact requiring the acquisition of private land under the AF, all policies and procedures described in the RPF, which was prepared for the main project (First East-West Highway) and to which this note is attached, will apply.