



## Georgia: The power of a pipeline

The successful emergency repair to Georgia's North-South Gas Pipeline in the village of Gldani, near the capital Tbilisi could not have been timelier. Some 141 meters of the pipeline lay exposed over the Gldanula River. Every spring, when rains flooded the river, the pipeline took a beating. Its already corroded state would be hammered further by rocks and boulders sliding down from the mountains and high water levels would scour the pipeline. The North-South Gas Pipeline at the Gldanula River crossing was in urgent need of repairs before another spring flooding season. Without repairs, the pipeline's failure would cause severe safety and environmental hazards and disrupt gas supply to Tbilisi and Georgia's one gas-fired electricity power plant.

Repairing the North-South Gas Pipeline became a priority for the Georgian government and was incorporated in the Millennium Challenge Georgia's Energy Infrastructure Rehabilitation Project, one component in Georgia's overall \$295.3 million MCC compact. Repairing the pipeline at the Gldanula River crossing is one of six high risk priority sections identified for replacement to protect against corrosion, landslide, and floodwaters.

The solution in Gldani was to safely bury the exposed pipeline under the riverbed before the spring floods.

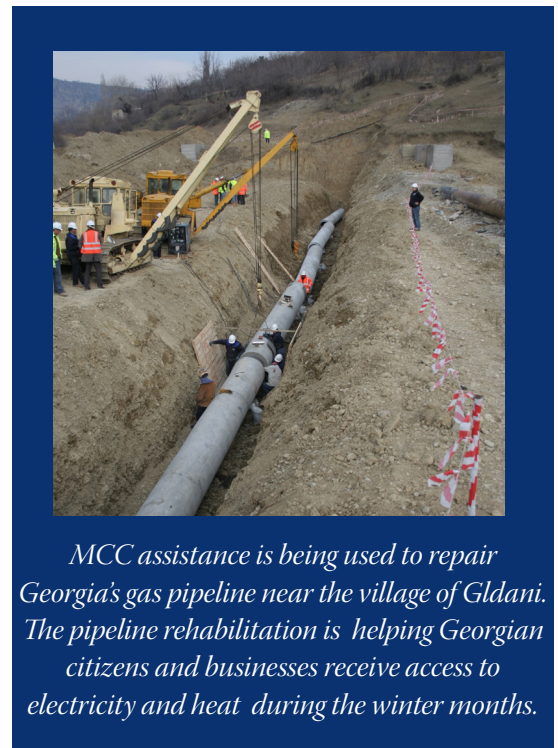
Throughout the winter, a consortium of local Georgian firms tackled the project. GeoEngineering raced against time to divert the river deep underground so they could repair the pipeline. The new pipe was lowered into a trench, given a protective concrete coating, and then covered. The day after the new pipe was connected, melting snows and torrential rains flooded the Gldanula River, but the pipe lay securely buried and undisturbed beneath the raging torrent.

True to MCC's commitment to countries owning and implementing their own MCC compacts, the Georgian Oil and Gas Corporation, which operates the pipeline on the government's behalf, designed and supervised repairs. In preparing for the project, BP, an oil and gas corporation with extensive experience in the region, independently provided the Georgian Oil and Gas Corporation with technical assistance and on-the-job training in project, health, safety, and environmental management.

As a result, the Georgian Oil and Gas Corporation and the local Georgian contractor managed to complete the pipeline repair in full compliance with international environmental, safety, and health standards for the very first time. The technical skills and expertise gained from working to these standards set a new bar for engineering achievement in Georgia and strengthened local capacity to ensure the pipeline's sustainability well into the future.

With such experience in hand, the Georgian Oil and Gas Corporation is planning to implement new operating standards and is now supervising additional rehabilitations funded by the Georgian government.

Most important, by repairing priority sections of the North-South Gas Pipeline, the rehabilitation project improves the long term security and diversification of Georgia's natural gas supply, and Georgian citizens and businesses are already benefiting from the power of the repaired pipeline, with access to electricity and heating as temperatures drop.



*MCC assistance is being used to repair Georgia's gas pipeline near the village of Gldani. The pipeline rehabilitation is helping Georgian citizens and businesses receive access to electricity and heat during the winter months.*