

# Georgia

Marina Topuridze, MD, MS

COVID-19 vaccine communication team lead

National Centre for Disease Control and Public Health, Georgia

# Main factors influencing vaccine hesitancy in Georgia

## 1. Vaccine safety concerns both in population and HCWs

Elevated after nurse death case in the hospital in few weeks after initiation of the vaccination with less than 1000 people to be vaccinated against COVID-19 at that point and fueled by Antivaxx disinformation campaign.

## 2. Management of expectations vs. pandemic fatigue

Low COVID-19 disease risk perceptions and high vaccine efficacy concerns particularly after spread of Omicron variant.

## 3. Infodemic, uncoordinated and conflicting messages

Decisionmakers, "Health experts", influential doctors and other influencers.

# The most effective ways to support SBCC activities

1. Increasing knowledge and Strengthening HCWs vaccine confidence, communication capacity and involvement in the vaccination process.
2. Targeted communication campaigns based on behavioral insight data.
3. Strengthen communication coordination and collaboration mechanisms.
4. Working directly (personal meetings) with communities with involvement of local stakeholders, leaders and influencers.
5. Regulatory mechanisms and incentives (i.e. vaccine certificates, incentives for vaccination first and booster doses, etc.).

# Success stories counteracting vaccine hesitancy

## “Vaccination Marathon Campaign in Regions”



# Support from ADB projects required to support in country SBCC activities

- **HCWs capacity building** short-term and long-term solutions
- **Policies, strategies and mechanisms to enhance coordination and collaboration** of communication with general population
- **Social listening platforms and behavioural insight data** collection resource.
- **Initiatives to engage wider group of stakeholders and science community** in discussions and joint search for solutions.