



პროფესიული განათლება
მკონომიკის განვითარებისთვის
INDUSTRY-LED SKILLS AND
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT



MCA Georgia

Industry-led Skills and Workforce Development Project

Request for Proposals for Small Grants Scheme

GOOD PRACTICES IN TVET IN GEORGIA

Strengthening TVET Provider Practice

Prepared by:

PEM GmbH, Germany

In association with:

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And

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Request for Proposals (RFP)

RFP No: MCA-GEORGIA-STPP-2016-01-29-01

MILLENNIUM CHALLENGE ACCOUNT- GEORGIA

on Behalf of:

THE GOVERNMENT OF GEORGIA

funded by

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

through

THE MILLENNIUM CHALLENGE CORPORATION

STRENGTHENING TVET PROVIDER PRACTICE

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CV	Curriculum Vitae
ISWD	Industry-Led Skills and Workforce Development (project)
MCA-Georgia	Millennium Challenge Account – Georgia
MCC	Millennium Challenge Corporation
MES	Ministry of Education and Science
RFP	Request for Proposals
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics
STPP	Strengthening TVET Provider Practice
TEP	Technical Evaluation Panel
ToR	Terms of Reference
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training

1 THE PURPOSE OF THIS REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

The ISWD Project of MCA-Georgia will award Small Grants of USD 5,000 – USD 10,000 to fund projects to support the strengthening of provider practice in the TVET sector.

This Request for proposals (RFP) sets out the objectives of the Small Grants Scheme together with eligibility conditions and other requirements that should be met by organisations submitting applications.

Eligible organisations are invited to submit grant applications to the ISWD project by 29 January 2016.

2 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Millennium Challenge Compact between the USA and Georgia supports strategic investments in general education, TVET and higher education with an emphasis on strengthening the quality of provision – particularly in the areas of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) – and on skills development. The Government of Georgia has created the Millennium Challenge Account - Georgia (MCA-Georgia) to oversee, manage, and implement the Compact.

The Industry-led Skills and Workforce Development (ISWD) Project is a \$16 million project under the Compact, which aims to improve the linkage between labour market needs and the supply of skilled and qualified citizens with competences relevant to the local economy. The project has four components:

- Improvement Competitive Grants to support development of industry relevant programmes;
- Strengthening of TVET Provider Practice (STPP);
- Strengthening of TVET Sector Policy;
- Annual TVET Conferences, communications and outreach.

The Request for Proposals (RFP) concerns only the Strengthening of TVET Provider Practice (STPP) component and is aimed at strengthening provider practices in both formal and non-formal TVET provision.

The RFP should be read in conjunction with the Good Practices Capacity Building Guidelines attached as Annex 1 to this RFP.

It is hoped that the guidance provided in the Capacity Building Guidelines will assist prospective bidders for Small Grants to develop high quality proposals that will develop or improve TVET provider practice in Georgia in a way that matches the best international practices to the benefit of all clients and users of Georgia's TVET system.

3 OBJECTIVES, PRIORITIES AND EXPECTED RESULTS

The STPP Small Grants Scheme is open to TVET providers and other institutions actively involved in either formal or non-formal TVET or related activities.

These include public and private TVET colleges, universities, secondary schools, companies, business or social partner organisations, professional associations, non-governmental organizations (NGO) or any other legal entities active or planning to be active in Georgia in the area of TVET.

The Purpose of the Small Grants Scheme is to fund projects that lead to the identification, development, documentation dissemination and promotion of the uptake of good practices across the TVET sector. The projects that will be funded should:

- Increase providers' capacities to deliver high quality industry-relevant TVET programmes;
- Ensure a greater focus of TVET provision on labour market and industry needs;
- Improve the quality and delivery of TVET programmes.

Good Practice projects should normally involve identifying a specific aspect of provider practice that could be improved, developing and piloting an initiative that leads to tangible improvement of the practice in question, and documenting the improved practice as a case study to support its replication by others.

Small Grants will not be awarded simply for the preparation of a document or report.

Projects supported by Small Grants funding should lead to the following Results:

- Development of proposed good practice examples or strengthening of existing ones;
- Capacity building to support good practice development or strengthening, drawing on international examples;
- Documentation of developed or strengthened good practices (case studies);
- Dissemination of developed / strengthened good practices;
- Replication of identified good practices within other TVET providers in Georgia.

The expected results, outcomes and outputs of each Small Grants project should be clearly specified in grant applications and will be required to be delivered in full during the timeframe of each grant contact.

Good practices are those that contribute to the improvement or strengthening of TVET provision. Thus they may build on and improve already existing practices or they may be entirely new and innovative. They may be original or they may be adapted from practices elsewhere.

Whatever the source of the practices or whatever they involve, they should be intended to lead to tangible benefits in the way TVET is provided or delivered. The outcomes and results should also be capable of replication by other providers.

To help grant applicants to identify practices that may be developed or improved with the support of Small Grants, the ISWD Project has defined five "Good Practice Principles". It is expected that good practices developed through the Small Grants Scheme will take account of and will normally reflect at some or all of these principles.

Good Practice Principle 1: They should normally be firmly based on a partnership approach between business and TVET institutions;

Good Practice Principle 2: They should normally represent a significant advance towards the implementation of competence-based training and assessment to meet business needs;

Good Practice Principle 3: They should reflect modern teaching and learning practices;

Good Practice Principle 4: They may also provide an increased focus on the needs of students;

Good Practice Principle 5: They should normally provide an innovative approach to finding tangible or concrete solutions to a defined problem or issue.

The Principles are discussed in detail with relevant examples in the Good Practices Capacity Building Guidelines at Annex 1.

TVET system priorities addressed by the Small Grants Scheme may include:

- Fostering and strengthening relationships between industry and TVET providers;
- Enhanced student employment outcomes;
- Enhanced gender and social inclusion;
- Improved TVET programme delivery, optimising the benefits of modular programme and qualification structures and enhancing progression opportunities into further education and training;
- Embedding active learning styles and learner-focused approaches in teaching and training delivery practices;
- Supporting the professional development of teachers and trainers.

Please note that this is an indicative rather than a comprehensive list, which is provided to help applicants to focus on issues that are considered strategically important to the development and modernisation of TVET in Georgia. Above all it is important that Small Grant applications address the important needs of the TVET system rather than issues affecting only the applicant organisation.

In deciding what Good Practices to propose, Grant Applicants may find it helpful to refer to a list of examples provided in the Good Practices Capacity Building Guidelines at Annex 1.

They include examples of:

Capacity building measures aimed at strengthening and documenting existing industry-oriented best practices among TVET providers, including knowledge management and organizational learning, workshops and training, staff development and training activities, information sharing and networking between providers, and knowledge transfer between Georgian providers and those in other countries;

Measures to ensure a greater focus on labour market and industry needs, including local skill needs surveys, increased local employer involvement TVET programme planning and delivery, education-business partnerships, improved systems of student support including career education and advice, transition and tracer studies, measures to support participation of female students and persons

from disadvantaged backgrounds and activities aimed at raising the profile of TVET among employers, potential students and parents and other stakeholders;

Measures to improving the quality and delivery of TVET provision including quality management, modern teaching styles including active learning, work-based learning/ internships, e-learning, computer based assessment, distance learning, development of training and learning materials, assessment instruments, textbooks, workbooks, etc., strengthening of assessment and quality assurance practices, development of programme content and materials relating to occupational health and safety, environment and social protection and gender and social integration;

It is intended that good practices developed with ISWD support will be presented to and disseminated at the Annual TVET Conferences that will be sponsored by the ISWD Project as well as on the ISWD.

4 ELIGIBILITY

In order to be eligible, Grant applications should:

- Identify, develop or strengthen, describe and disseminate a Good Practice in the priority areas relevant to the needs of the industry and labour market in Georgia;
- Result in the embedding of the Good Practice into a TVET provider;
- Demonstrate clear arrangements for the uptake and introduction of the Good Practice by the project promoter (if they are not authorized TVET provider in Georgia);
-

All projects must be implemented primarily in Georgia. The duration of Small Grants projects cannot be more than 6 months.

A single proposal may include the identification and introduction of more than one Good Practice.

Justification is required for proposed good practice on the basis of demonstrated relevance and the benefits of the Good Practice to the TVET sector in the context of the country's TVET reform policies and labour market and industry needs. The results should be sustainable beyond the life of the Compact and the likelihood of long-term sustainability will be a key criterion used in the evaluation of grant applications.

Good Practice activities (such as those related to networking and dissemination) that are linked with projects already funded through the main Programme of Improvement Competitive Grants (PICG) are ineligible for funding under the STPP Small Grants Scheme.

Institutions already awarded grants under PICG or which have submitted PICG applications are reminded that they may only apply for a STPP Small Grant if the Good Practice project is different and unrelated to activities funded, or proposed to be funded, through the PICG.

Applicants for Small Grants:

- May only submit one application for a project to be financed in each round of the STPP Small Grants scheme;

- Are directly responsible for the preparation, management and implementation of the project;
- Should be established and registered for at least one year as legal entities (profit or non-profit) or sole proprietorship in accordance with the relevant Georgian legislation;
- Shall submit applications either on their own or in partnership with appropriate partners such as employers (no partnerships are required under this small grant scheme but, if proposed, the roles and responsibilities of each partner should be clearly defined and justified). A partnership established for the purpose of this Grant scheme is not required to be registered in the court, however, support letters from partners should be provided stating their role in the project. Cost-sharing contributions between partners are encouraged, though not obligatory;
- May engage subcontractors to carry out defined activities such as web site development, printing or the hire of consulting services. Subcontractors are not beneficiaries or partners and are subject to MCA-Georgia's applicable procurement rules¹.
- Must ensure that the relevant procurement and financial rules of MCA-Georgia are fully observed in their applications and in project implementation².

The following organisations/persons are ineligible to apply for Small Grants:

- Political parties, groups or institutions, or their subsidiaries and affiliates;
- Organizations that advocate, promote or espouse anti-democratic policies or illegal activities;
- Any person or entity that has been blacklisted in participation in procurements funded with World Bank assistance, debarred or suspended from participating in procurements funded by the US Federal Government, or otherwise prohibited by applicable United States law, Executive Order or United States policies including under any then-existing anti-terrorist policies;
- MCA-Georgia and PEM GmbH Board members, employees and their immediate family members.

5 BUDGET AND FINANCIAL CONDITIONS

The overall indicative total grant fund amount available for the Small Grants Scheme is provisionally US \$250,000. Depending on the number and quality of grant applications and the available grant money, up to three rounds of requests for proposals will be announced during the Compact term. It is expected that around 10 grants will be awarded in each round of 2015/16, 2016/17 and 2017/18. However the actual number of grants awarded in each year might be more or less than 10,

¹ <https://assets.mcc.gov/guidance/mcc-guidelines-programprocurement.pdf>

² <https://assets.mcc.gov/guidance/mcc-guidelines-programprocurement.pdf>

depending on the quality of the applications received and the size of the remaining budget allocation. Depending on the availability of funds the number of rounds may vary as well.

The minimum grant amount per project is \$5,000 and the maximum grant amount may be up to \$10,000.

Cost-sharing contributions are welcome and will be encouraged although there are no formal requirements for co-financing of the STPP project proposals.

The grant to the project is awarded on a fixed price basis. There is no provision for reimbursement of specific items. All costs must be included in the amount requested in the grant application.

Payment will be made in three stages upon acceptance of specified deliverables:

- Inception report with detailed implementation plan – to be submitted within 10 days of contract start-up: 20% of the overall approved grant amount.
- Interim progress and financial report half way through the period of project implementation (normally after 3 months): 40% of the overall approved grant amount.
- Final report with final outputs of the project and final financial report: upon completion of the project at least two weeks prior to the expiry of the grant agreement: 40% of the overall approved grant amount.

In reviewing financial reports, ISWD TAT determines exactly which costs are allowable for payments and applications including non-allowable costs will result in a lower payment than the Grant Beneficiary may have expected, and in certain circumstances can lead to the recovery of the pre-financing payment by the grantee.

Allowable costs must be included in the project budget and must be reasonable, necessary for carrying out the Project, clearly linked with the achievement of project results (as described in Annex 1 of the Grant Agreement) and incurred within period of the Grant Agreement.

Small Grants funding cannot be used for the purposes of:

- Purchase of equipment and furniture;
- General or specific infrastructural improvements;
- Scholarships and stipends;
- Salaries not directly related to implementation of the project;
- Operating (overhead) costs of the organisation (office rent, heating, electricity etc.);
- Any activities or purchases that would be ineligible under the MCC/Government of Georgia Compact agreement³.

³ See Section 2.7 at <http://www.mcc.gov/documents/agreements/compact-georgia-ii.pdf>

A summary of MCC / MCA-Georgia requirements including a detailed list of allowable and non-allowable costs is set out at [Annex 2: Cost principles for STPP Small Grants](#).

The award of a grant may be subject to a requirement to amend the budget prior to contract signing. It is therefore in the applicant's interest to provide a realistic and cost-effective budget.

6 GRANT APPLICATION PROCESS

Information, Orientation and Training Sessions

With the launching of the Small Grants Scheme:

- A help desk will be available at the ISWD project office to respond to prospective candidates and applicants to inquiries relating to the application process and results at the different stages;
- One-day information sessions will be held in 3-4 major cities to provide detailed information about the programme and how to apply;
- Training workshops will also be held in the context of the project's Good Practice Activity to orient potential applicants on good practice definitions and expectations.

All interested providers and other potential grant applicants will be invited to attend an Information Session for STPP. The information sessions will be organized after the launching of the request for proposals with an announcement in the national media. They will be open to all interested parties to attend. All the information about the information sessions will also be made available to all interested applicants via the project's following web-site: www.iswd.ge.

Detailed information on the exact venue places of the information sessions will be given on the following internet address: www.iswd.ge or inquired at: iswd@pem-consult.de.

Requests for clarification

Prospective applicants may send questions for clarification by e-mail no later than prior to 10 business days before the deadline for submission of applications by e-mail to iswd@pem-consult.de, indicating the reference code for this Request for Proposals: **MCA-GEORGIA-STPP-2016-01-29-01**

The ISWD Project will provide clarifications and respond to questions no later than 5 business days before the deadline for submission of applications. All questions and answers (without disclosing names/organizations that submitted them) will be published on the web-pages www.iswd.ge and www.mcageorgia.ge.

To ensure the equal treatment of applicants, the ISWD Project cannot give a prior opinion on any matter concerning the substantive content of a prospective project or on the eligibility of a particular applicant or partner.

Application Submission

The application process under this Request for Proposals will take place in one stage: the development and submission of an Application, based on a template, which has to be used by all applicants (please see below in Annex 3).

The application form must be filled in carefully and clearly and should be submitted in a sealed envelope according to the procedures defined below.

Applicants must provide applications in English with a translation into the Georgian language. In case of discrepancies, the English language version will take precedence over the Georgian language version.

Applications must be in both hard copy format (signed original in English with 5 copies of the English version of the application form and one signed copy of the Georgian language translation) and in electronic format (CD-ROM, DVD or Flash memory). The proposal must be in Word format (Times New Roman 12 point). The electronic format must contain exactly the same proposal as the paper version. The application, declaration and checklist must each be submitted as separate single files. Hand-written and/or incomplete applications will not be accepted.

Applications must be received in a sealed envelope delivered by registered mail, private courier service or by hand-delivery at the address, given below:

Grant Management Officer, STPP, ISWD Office
27 Alexander Griboedov Street, 0108 Tbilisi
Programme Improvement Competitive Grants
Request for Proposals № MCA-GEORGIA-STPP -2016-01-29-01

Full name of the applicant:

Full address of the applicant: "Not to be opened before the opening session" and "არ გაიხსნას პროექტების განხილვამდე"

Applications sent by any other means (e.g. by fax or by e-mail) or delivered to other addresses will not be considered. Any application received after the deadline will automatically be rejected even if the postmark indicates a date preceding the deadline or if the delay is due to the private courier service.

The deadline for the receipt of applications is Friday 29th January 2016 at 18.00 local time.

A signed and dated certificate of receipt will be given to the deliverer.

Submission of an application implies acceptance by the applicant of the terms set out in this RfP.

7 EVALUATION OF APPLICATIONS

STEP 1: Opening and Administrative Check

Following the opening of the applications, representatives of the ISWD project will check the compliance of the application against the eligibility criteria. If any of the requested information is missing or is incorrect, the application **may** be rejected.

Following the administrative check, the ISWD project will send an email⁴ to all applicants, confirming whether their application meets the eligibility criteria and informing them of the application reference that should be quoted in all correspondence.

General statistical information relating to the Applications received will be published on the MCA-Georgia and ISWD webpages and a list of the projects awarded grants will also be published following completion of the selection and contracting process.

STEP 2: Evaluation of the Application

An evaluation of the quality of the proposals, including the proposed budget, and of the capacity of the applicant and partners, will be carried out by an independent Technical Evaluation Panel (TEP) in accordance with evaluation criteria set out in the evaluation grid below:

Evaluation Category	Maximum Points
Compliance with basic Small Grant Scheme principles and objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the proposal meet the objectives of the Grant Scheme and sufficiently take account of the five Good Practice principles stipulated in Section 3 of the RFP? 	15
Content and relevance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is there evidence that the proposal addresses a defined need either of the TVET system or of its clients and users including industry and business? Does the proposal sufficiently aim at either introducing a new and innovative Good Practice or strengthening an already existing Good Practice? Will a significant number of learners and/or TVET students benefit from the introduction of the proposed Good Practice? Does the proposed project address the needs of women, minorities and socially vulnerable groups in an appropriate way? 	30
Project management and implementation capacity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the proposal sufficiently demonstrate the capacity of the Applicant to successfully manage and implement the project? Has the Applicant organisation taken potential risks sufficiently into account and is there sufficient evidence that risks can be managed? Do the proposed implementation methods and activities provide a realistic means of achieving the anticipated results? Are the timeframes and resources reasonable and realistic? 	20
Impact and sustainability: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can the Good Practice potentially be replicated within other organisations elsewhere in similar or other contexts? Is the idea potentially interesting for others to copy? Does it address systemic change? Does the impact of the project have the potential to continue after the initial implementation period? 	20

⁴ Please, note that the length of time between the opening session and the sending of the email will depend on the number of proposals that need to be checked.

Evaluation Category	Maximum Points
Budget and cost-effectiveness: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the ratio between the estimated costs and the expected results satisfactory? Is the proposed expenditure necessary (and/or sufficient) for the implementation of the project? 	15
Total	100

Note: A minimum of 70 points will be required for consideration for award of a grant. Grants will be awarded to the highest scoring proposals within the limits of the funding available in each year of the Small Grants Scheme.

8 NOTIFICATION PROCEDURE, GRANT AGREEMENT AND SIGNING

Based on the TEP's recommendations and the result of any required Due Diligence check, the ISWD Project will submit a report to the MCA-Georgia with a list of the projects recommended for funding.

After completion of the selection process, the ISWD Project will notify successful applicants, start contract negotiations with each of them and prepare the draft Grant Agreement for signing.

Prior to the signing of any contract, the applicants whose projects have been selected and proposed for Grant Award will be asked to supply official documents that may be used to verify their eligibility and status which should include:

- Document of Establishment;
- Current Legal Standing Certificate (original or notarised copy issued not later than 90 days prior to the full proposal deadline);
- Details of the qualifications and relevant experience of key staff, and information about the number of employees including those with specific TVET background;
- Document confirming the applicant is not in procedure of bankruptcy;
- Proof of at least 1-year of operation in the local or international market including a copy of the applicant's latest audited balance sheets;
- Copies of any contracts and/or project references proving the institution's TVET related experience;
- In the case of a partnership, additional documents relating to the partner(s).

Failure to provide satisfactory supporting documents may lead to rejection of the project.

Upon the preparation and the finalization of the grant agreement package in three originals (one for the MCA-Georgia, one for PEM GmbH and one for the grantee), the originals will be signed by the grant beneficiaries, PEM GmbH and MCA-Georgia.

9 INDICATIVE TIME TABLE

The following schedule indicates the deadlines for the different activities for the first round of the Request for Proposals:

ACTION	Tentative Timing
Media Announcement and Launch Event	December, 2015
STPP Information Sessions / Training Workshops	December 2015
Deadline for submission of the proposals	29 January 2016
Proposal Evaluation	February 2016
Grant Correction Negotiations	February 2016
Grant Award Decision	29 February 2016
Grant Agreements preparation	March 2016
Signing of Grant Agreements	March 2016

10 GRANT IMPLEMENTATION CONDITIONS

The Grant Agreement

MCA-Georgia is the contracting authority for Small Grants contracts and the scheme is administered by PEM GmbH. Contracted grant recipients are the direct beneficiaries of the PICG financial support. Grant beneficiaries will receive capacity building support by PEM GmbH through consultations, training, advice and monitoring support to help them perform the specific activities of their projects.

Grants will be awarded on a fixed price basis with the release of grant funding conditional on the acceptance of deliverables specified in Grant Agreement. The implementation of each project will be subject to rigorous monitoring and evaluation by PEM and MCA-Georgia and payments will be tied to the acceptance of the specified deliverables. The deliverables, for which appropriate templates will be provided by the PEM GmbH, will include:

- Detailed work plan (prepared by the grantee using the template supplied) within 2 weeks of commencement;
- Interim report (prepared by the grantee using the template supplied) mid-way through project implementation;
- Final report (prepared by the grantee using the template supplied) within 2 weeks of project completion.

Grant beneficiaries will be solely responsible for the execution of their contracts and will have obligations in relation to the following project management functions and activities:

- Co-operating with and assisting PEM, MCA-Georgia and MES in conducting the risk assessments activities throughout the project;
- Co-operating with and assisting PEM, MCA-Georgia and MES regarding monitoring visits, checks and reports throughout the project;
- Preparation of technical and financial reports;
- Cooperation with the grant scheme evaluation and the preparation of the good practices and implemented projects compendium;
- Project activity documenting and archiving;
- Modifications requests;
- Grant agreement addenda.

Visibility and Branding

High visibility of project results is essential to ensure that project achievements are effectively disseminated and to provide a basis for replication of the Good Practices developed. Grantees have to present a project dissemination plan together with their detailed work plan within 2 weeks of project commencement. Branding guidelines will be provided to all grant beneficiaries and these have to be strictly followed. Non-compliance may lead to non-acceptance of related expenditures. Before initiating production and dissemination to the public of information, communication or visibility materials, the grant beneficiary should seek specific approval of the PEM GmbH to ensure compliance with MCA-Georgia requirements.

A workshop should be held towards the end of each Small Grant period as part of the evaluation process, at which each of the grantees will present the good practices developed through their projects for wider discussion among the whole group of grantees together with representatives of key TVET stakeholders. Attendance at the seminar will not be restricted to grantees only and it will be open to other providers and stakeholders who wish to attend. The outcomes will include conclusions regarding lessons learned, the possibilities for wider replication (including the need for policy decisions or regulations), and the strengthening of good practice networks between TVET providers and the need for capacity building to support the development and replication of good practices. The grantees will be asked by PEM GmbH and MCA-Georgia to participate in other relevant events.

ANNEX 1: GOOD PRACTICES CAPACITY BUILDING GUIDELINES

1. Introduction

The identification, development and replication of good – or best – provider practices is central to the objective of improving the quality and attractiveness of TVET provision in order to meet the needs of the economy for skilled technicians and to provide improved career opportunities for young people in Georgia.

The project ToR envisages an interactive process in Good Practice activities between the Project and providers that will be based on:

- Identification and development of existing or proposed good practice examples;
- Capacity building within identified provider institutions to strengthen the identified good practices, drawing on international best practice;
- Documentation of the identified and strengthened good practices through a written case study;
- Dissemination of the identified and strengthened good practices;
- Replication of the identified good practices within other provider institutions.

These guidelines are intended to guide and assist providers in identifying, developing and replicating good practices.

Every TVET provider should have the objective of identifying, developing and implementing good practices. The objective should be thoroughly embedded in their strategies, work plans and daily activities. The need to develop and embed good practices should be an integral part of their operational planning, course development, student recruitment, programme delivery, student assessment and all other aspects of their provision. Above all, there is a need for constant improvement - the importance of the identified practices is the contribution that they can make to that improvement process.

Within the context of the ISWD project, it is expected that the good practice examples to be identified, developed and replicated will emanate from various sources including:

- Already existing good practices;
- International good practice examples⁵;
- Good practices developed in response to specific TVET policy initiatives;
- Good Practices developed through grant-funded projects.

⁵ Many good practice examples from other countries have been documented by international institutions, for example:

- the European Training Foundation (ETF) (<http://www.etf.europa.eu/>);
 - the European Centre for Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP) (<http://www.cedefop.eu.int/>);
 - Asian Development Bank (ADB) (<http://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/publication/28624/good-practice-education-training.pdf>);
 - UNESCO–UNEVOC (<http://www.unevoc.unesco.org/>).
-

Grant projects should provide a laboratory for the development of new and innovative initiatives and approaches. They should also be a primary source of Good Practice examples that can be replicated elsewhere.

This document can thus serve as a general guide for provider institutions and other organisations involved in Georgian TVET reform, especially those applying for grants under the Small Grants Scheme for Good Practices, by helping them to identify relevant good practices and develop strategies and approaches for embedding them in their TVET provision.

The general advice set out in the manual should be used in conjunction with information about specific identified examples of good provider practice that will be posted (and periodically updated) on the ISWD project and MCA-Georgia webpages.

2. What do we mean by ‘Good Practices’?

‘Good practices’ may variously be defined as:

“Practices that are accepted or prescribed as being correct or the most effective”;

“A method or technique that is the most effective and efficient way of achieving an objective”; or

“A procedure or method that consistently produces results superior to those achieved by other means”.

To help TVET providers to focus on TVET system reform needs when considering the issue of Good Practices, the ISWD Project has formulated the following Good Practice principles and it is suggested that Good Practice projects or initiatives should normally reflect some or all of the following principles:

Good Practice Principle 1: They should normally be firmly based on a partnership approach between business and TVET institutions which, for example:

- Targets a defined business or industry need by agreement with relevant business organisations or employers;
- Increases the extent of joint collaboration between TVET institutions and business, e.g. how TVET college advisory boards are used to ensure real and active involvement of employers in course planning, design or delivery;
- Provides a means of more accurately identifying/quantifying skill needs of local employers;
- Leads to demonstrable evidence of employer satisfaction, e.g. survey evidence or a stated commitment to employ TVET graduates;
- Utilises business facilities and workplaces for training and assessment;
- Utilises business senior workers and staff in upgrading TVET teachers’ knowledge and skills and in provision of training and guidance to TVET trainees.

Good Practice Principle 2: They should normally represent a significant advance towards implementation of competence-based training and assessment to meet business needs which, for example:

- Targets identified skill needs in key STEM-related economic development sectors identified from the analysis of available labour market information;

- Includes the application/use of competence-based training and assessment methods
- Provides innovative ways of effectively integrating theoretical/practical learning through the design and organisation of learning activities;
- Includes skills sets or clusters of competences that have value in employment in their own right, including self-employment and entrepreneurial skills to support SME development;

Good Practice Principle 3: They should reflect modern teaching and learning practices, for example by:

- Embedding a student-centred approach based on active learning styles;
- Focusing on the attainment of learning outcomes defined as occupational competences;
- Embedding competence based learning and assessment methodology;
- Including work-based learning through the organisation of placements and/or internships in companies;
- Making effective use of information technology in course delivery;
- Providing a tangible increase in the quality of course delivery and/or student assessment;
- Ensuring that TVET teachers are provided with industry experience and professional updating about changing technological and occupational requirements in the sector;
- Encouraging the use of industry practitioners as part time trainers and assessors;
- Encouraging the introduction of inclusive learning practices and ensuring equal accessibility;

Good Practice Principle 4: They may also provide an increased focus on the needs of students, for example by:

- Increasing levels of student satisfaction;
- Increasing student knowledge and expectations about career opportunities related to TVET pathways;
- Integrating key competences into the development of practical competences and/or linking them with practical personal and career planning preparation;
- Providing a basis for progression to higher levels of TVET qualification linked with career development within the NQF or to other vocations in higher demand;
- Providing increased opportunities for female and disadvantaged students to train for STEM-related occupations, through the provision of an adequate and friendly learning environment and innovative approaches to overcome stereotyping;

Good Practice Principle 5: They should normally provide an innovative approach to finding tangible or concrete solutions to a defined problem or issue, for example by:

- Building on and extending already started improvements;
- Adapting an identified international best practice example to the particular circumstances of TVET in Georgia;
- Providing a more effective and efficient use of available resources and ensuring a measurable added value from the investment;
- Attracting private sector co-financing;
- Strengthening the human capacity of provider's staff or of industry partners;

- Being capable of replication by others and supported by effective dissemination/marketing to provide long-term sustainability.

3. Uses of Good practice Examples

Mutual Learning and knowledge transfer

TVET reform represents a transformational process in which many new ideas and approaches are introduced. Even though many of the methods and tools introduced to the TVET system are often not very new and indeed may have been used extensively elsewhere, adapting them for use in Georgia will inevitably create new challenges which will be faced by each institution which will each have to find innovative, creative and inventive solutions. Peer learning and knowledge transfer are thus an essential requirement for successful TVET reform.

Different institutions facing common problems should find ways of cooperating and sharing their experiences in order that approaches that are found by an institution to have been successful can be replicated within other institutions. The development of information sharing networks involving knowledge transfer between TVET providers will be actively promoted by the ISWD Project and are an implicit part of ISWD Task 2: Improving Provider Practice.

Adapting and Replicating Good Practices in Different Contexts

The Good Practices Activity should aim to provide examples that can help providers to develop their strategies and approaches based on learning from the experiences of others. Georgia needs a coherent TVET system based on a clearly defined policy and using common approaches, methodologies and procedures, many of which will be new and outside the experience of most providers. Although guidance and support will be given, it is not possible to provide answers to everything at a systemic level. TVET providers are faced with the challenging and often difficult problem of how to apply national policies and approaches within their specific institutional contexts, some of which will be unique to the institution.

Good Practices examples will help TVET providers to understand how others have found solutions to common issues and problems. However, every provider should approach the replication of good practices developed elsewhere with an element of flexibility in order to adapt what they have learned from others to their own circumstances. What works in one place may not work so well elsewhere. This means that Good Practices should not only be adopted, but their replication may require some adaptation to meet particular circumstances. This is particularly important in the case of practices developed by TVET providers operating in very different contexts or, indeed, where the good practices in question are practices imported from abroad.

Documenting Good Practices

The Good Practice Activity is expected to lead to the identification and/or development of a large number of 'good practices'. These will be developed by – and within – particular organisations, but will have little impact outside those organisations unless they are widely shared with others. For this reason the documentation (and subsequent dissemination) of identified good practices will be a vitally important factor in ensuring their sustainability. Identified good practices will therefore be documented in the form of written case studies

that will describe them in detail including an analysis of any necessary pre-conditions and of the factors contributing to their success. The descriptions will include specific reference to all aspects considered to be relevant to their replication.

It is intended that the ISWD Project web page will provide the primary medium for the publication of fully documented good practices. The full set of documented good practices will be published by the end of the Project in a Compendium of Good TVET Practices. However it is also recognised that abbreviated summaries of selected good practices will be important as 'success stories' for publicity and awareness raising purposes and will therefore be included in ISWD Project publicity materials.

Using Good Practices as a Tool for Institutional and Organisational Improvement

The concept of good practice lies at the heart of the approach to improving the quality, relevance and attractiveness of TVET. Some good practices will explicitly reflect improvements in the way TVET provider institutions are managed. However the ISWD Project Good Practices Activity is intended to have the general effect of increasing the effectiveness of all TVET provider institutions by improving their efficiency and their capacity to deliver improved TVET provision by providing them with replicable solutions to identified problems and exemplars that can be emulated in order to improve their performance and TVET provision more generally.

A provider introducing and improving specific new practices to meet a particular goal will normally go through a process that includes conceptualisation, design, planning, implementation, evaluation and improvement. Reflection and self-evaluation should be part of that process. Institutional learning and development are implicit in the approach. A learning organisation is one that continuously transforms itself by absorbing new ideas and thinking and using them to improve institutional performance. This will often involve challenging beliefs, attitudes and values. As a result, the ability of the organization to react to challenges and opportunities and manage change is increased.

Ensuring systemic level impact

Good practice examples have limited impact unless policy decisions are made and necessary actions taken to ensure their replication and their incorporation into TVET policy at a systemic level. They should thus typically benefit the entire training institution as a whole, not only a single subject or vocation within it, and should be capable of replication in other institutions. There should not only be a list of published Good Practice examples but also an explicit aim of ensuring that:

- The examples are taken up and used by as many TVET providers as possible in order to raise the general quality of TVET provision in Georgia;
- The examples are used to inform TVET policy development and, where appropriate, followed through in the design and implementation of TVET reforms at a systemic level.

Using Good Practices as a Basis for Benchmarking and Comparison

Benchmarking is a useful management tool widely used in business that involves comparing own practices against externally defined identified Good Practices as part of an on-going improvement exercise - with the goal of always keeping abreast of the most effective

approaches and solutions. The benchmarking approach aims to understand and evaluate the current position of an organisation in relation to an identified Good Practice and to identify areas and means of improvement. In this way, Good Practices may be regarded as providing a sort of standard against which other practices may be measured.

Benchmarking thus involves looking outward to examine how others achieve their performance levels and understand the processes they use. When the lessons learnt from a benchmarking exercise are applied appropriately, they can lead to improved performance or results. Benchmarking typically involves four main steps:

- Understanding the practice selected for benchmarking;
- Analysing other practices selected as a basis for comparison;
- Comparing own practices with those that have been analysed;
- Identifying and implement measures to close that gap.

Typical tools used in carrying out benchmarking include an information gathering questionnaire, a criterion-based appraisal form and a scoring sheet. Benchmarking is thus an important self-evaluation tool but it can also be used as a basis for external evaluation carried out by others. It is thus a potentially important part of the quality management system for TVET as well as an instrument for facilitating continuous improvement.

4. Good Practices to support of TVET policy development and implementation

The ISWD project has a particular interest in encouraging the development of Good Practice examples that relate to the particular TVET policy areas for which the MES and its agencies have requested technical assistance from the project, in order to inform the implementation of relevant policies and procedures. The TVET Sector Policy areas targeted at the current time include:

- Developing models of TVET governance that align TVET policy to the needs of workforce development and workforce productivity: Good practices in this area could for example include innovative ways of motivating industry representatives to play a greater part in college affairs, for example by further developing the role of business representatives on college supervisory boards to involve them more deeply in specific activities, using targeted outreach activities to incentivise local employers to collaborate in joint initiatives and optimising the use of placements and internships to involve work-based learning and assessment opportunities for students.
- Developing processes to source and analyse labour needs data to inform the development of TVET programmes and student enrolment: These may involve use of tracer and transition studies, surveys, focus groups, structured interviews to identify skill and recruitment needs of local employers and the good practices developed could include information materials aimed at soliciting cooperation from businesses, innovative consultation mechanisms, survey materials such as

questionnaire templates for gathering particular information, and examples of the successful use of focus groups.

- Completing development of a quality assurance framework for TVET: Good practices needed in this area include improved measures to coordinate quality assurance within colleges, concrete steps to ensure continuous improvement at college level taking account of feedback from self-assessment processes, increased support to individual teachers and assessors, development of assessment instruments and procedures for validating non-formal learning and measures to involve industry representatives in quality assurance processes such as external verification of assessments, and so on.
- Supporting development of an emplaced system of career advice in schools and colleges: Good practices in this area might include integrating career education with different curriculum subjects to reinforce their relevance, preparation of high quality information materials about career opportunities, involvement of role models and local employers in career education sessions for students, dedicated careers resource rooms in schools, development of local education/business partnerships and so on.
- Supporting the modernization of TVET teacher training and development in line with workforce development needs: There are many possible good practice examples related to teacher training and development that might be developed, but possible examples are likely to include ways of optimising work placement and internship opportunities to develop and assess occupational competencies, involvement of representatives of enterprises as instructors or assessors, the effective use of information and communication technologies in the delivery of learning and assessment, the increased integration of theoretical and practical learning, and so on.

5. Examples of Good Practice activities related to Strengthening Provider Practice

The following is an indicative list of activities which is intended to help potential Small Grants Scheme applicants to develop ideas for possible Good Practice grant-funded projects. It is neither comprehensive nor prescriptive and is not intended to steer potential applicants towards particular project ideas. Every Grant Application will be considered on its own merits, whether or not it includes any of the activities listed below.

Capacity building measures for strengthening and documenting existing industry-oriented best practices among TVET providers may include:

- Workshops and trainings related to the introduction or adaptation of specific good practice models (national or international);
- Staff development and training activities to increase the institutions' capacity to develop and implement good practices

- Information sharing and networking between providers about good practices, including dissemination materials and information systems;
- Knowledge transfer between Georgian TVET providers and providers in other countries (e.g. study visit or work shadowing);

Measures to ensure an increased focus of TVET provision on identified labour market and industry needs may include:

- Surveys by providers to identify skill needs of local employers;
- Increased local employer participation in TVET programme development/ planning;
- Development of new models of business/employer involvement in TVET activities at provider level such as those aimed at increasing the effectiveness of college supervisory boards or the development of public-private partnership proposals;
- Improved systems of student support, and improved career education and advice for students;
- Transition and tracer studies, and alumni tracking systems;
- Measures to support participation of female students and persons from disadvantaged backgrounds in relevant programmes (particularly in STEM-related areas) and increase their employability;
- Stakeholder engagement strategies at provider level including marketing, PR and promotion activities and materials aimed at raising the profile of TVET among employers, potential students and parents;

Measures to improve quality and the delivery of modular TVET provision may include:

- Presenting and adapting effective teaching approaches, such as active learning styles, work-based learning/internships, e-learning, computer based assessment, distance learning;
 - Development of training and learning materials, assessment instruments, textbooks, workbooks etc.;
 - Development of programme content, learning materials etc. related to occupational health and safety and environment and social protection and to gender and social integration;
 - Introduction/extension of student-centred and active learning styles within the provider;
 - Competence-based training and assessment, especially optimising opportunities arising during work placements/internships;
 - Aspects of quality management, such as the introduction of quality control mechanisms or benchmarking.
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ANNEX 2: COST PRINCIPLES FOR STPP SMALL GRANTS

Full details of what costs are allowable and what are non-allowable are set out in the document Cost Principles for Government Affiliates Involved in MCC Compact Implementation, downloadable at:

<http://www.mcanamibia.org/files/files/PDFs/Grantee%20Orientation%20presentation%20May%202011/MCC%20COST%20PRINCIPLES-%20summarized.pdf>

The following paragraphs set out a brief summary of the information to help grant applicants in the preparation of their proposals. However applicants should bear in mind that the information below is a summary and is not definitive. If in doubt, please refer to the full document.

Allowable costs are those that are necessary for Grant administration, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, or oversight and are not otherwise defined as “unallowable”. Any income or credits (discounts, rebates, refunds, outside rentals, etc.) must be applied in determining the total allowable cost under the Grant. They must be:

- Allocable, which normally means that they are incurred for work directly related to the Grant;
- Reasonable, which means that they are generally recognized as necessary for the performance of the Grant, in line with such factors as generally accepted sound business and labour practices, laws and regulations and the terms of the Grant and prudent in terms of the organisation’s responsibilities;
- Accounted for in a manner that is consistent with accepted international accounting practices or of Georgia, with accounts and records adequate to demonstrate the allowability and allocability of costs charged to the Grant. An accounting system is acceptable if it is both adequate and suitable for the accumulation and billing of costs;
- Documented;
- Not otherwise excluded as an unallowable cost;
- Incurred within the Grant period.

In negotiating Grant contracts, PEM GmbH and MCA-Georgia must be satisfied as to the adequacy and reasonableness (including the realism) of the costs proposed. Cost analysis is a primary means of accomplishing this end.

Please note the following limitations on what might be regarded as allowable:

- Communication costs incurred for telephone services (mobile and land lines), local and long distance telephone calls, internet connections, telegrams, courier service, postage and the like, are allowable.
- Payments to employees should be in line with the compensation level and benefits (including expenses) paid to employees of comparable rank, in accordance with the existing established law, regulations or policy. MCC financing may only be used to compensate the additional staff or additional time of current staff needed to accomplish the purposes of the Grant.
- Lodging and subsistence costs (including meals and incidental expenses) shall be allowable to the extent they conform with uniform written standards and procedures approved by MCC.

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- The cost of any consultants contracted to perform Grant activities should be reasonable and in line with normal procurement practice for public contracts in Georgia. Retainer Fees not supported by evidence that specific bona fide services were furnished are not allowable.
 - The costs of training related to the Grant activity are allowable to the extent that they are in conformity with costs that are normally allowed by the Government of Georgia. These include expenses for transportation, lodging and subsistence charged on an actual cost basis or on a per diem or mileage basis in lieu of actual costs incurred provided the method used is applied to an entire trip and results in charges not exceeding those which would be paid in accordance with MCC's policies.
 - Contributions and donations to outside organizations are unallowable, unless explicitly authorized in the Grant Agreement.
 - Entertainment costs are not allowable.
 - Fines and penalties resulting from failure to comply with applicable laws and regulations are unallowable.
 - MCC strongly prefers that all costs are charged as direct costs, rather than a combination of direct and indirect costs (overhead and/or general and administrative expense).
 - Insurance costs required for necessary for activities supported by the Grant are allowable;
 - Interest on borrowing (however represented) are not allowable;
 - Lobbying costs, e.g. to influence the introduction or modification of legislation or to influence the decisions of legislators or officials, are not allowable. However providing a technical and factual presentation to legislators or officials of information on a topic directly related to a Grant is allowable;
 - Allowable public relations costs include the costs of communicating with the public and press pertaining to specific activities or accomplishments which result from performance of the Grant, the costs of conducting general liaison with news media to the extent that such activities are limited to communication and liaison necessary to keep the public informed on matters relating to the Grant, and costs specifically required by the Grant;
 - Advertising costs relating to the grant are allowable but the costs of advertising for any purpose not related to the Grant are not allowable;
 - Publication costs including the costs of printing, distribution, promotion, mailing, and general handling are allowable.
 - Costs incurred for infrastructure or equipment are not allowable within the terms of the STPP Small Grants Scheme. The cost of materials or supplies may only be included if strictly necessary for performance of the Grant project;
 - Costs of meetings and conferences held to facilitate implementation of the Grant are allowable, including the cost of meals, transportation, facility rental, speakers' fees (except for persons speaking in their official capacity on behalf of the Government or Government Affiliate) and other items incidental to such meetings or conferences. Costs of attendance at professional meetings or conferences on a topic related to the Grant are also allowable.
 - The costs of leasing or purchasing office space are not allowable.
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- Costs incurred in the preparation of Grant proposals are not allowable.
- Payments for taxes are not allowable.
- The cost of audits required by, and performed in accordance with, Grant requirements are allowable (including financial audits, technical audits and evaluations etc.).

The above list is not comprehensive and covers only the cost categories that might commonly be expected to be raised in relation to the STPP Small Grants Scheme. Full details are provided in the MCC document referred to above.
