



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
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Swiss Cooperation Office
South Caucasus



Call for project ideas

Supporting Innovation in Agricultural and Rural Economy Professions Related to Vocational Education and Training

Tbilisi, Georgia
7.11.2021

I. BACKGROUND

The United Nations Development Program Georgia (UNDP) with the financial support of the Swiss Development and Cooperation Agency (SDC) is implementing the project "**Modernization of Vocational Education and Training (VET) system related to agriculture in Georgia (Phase II)**", which aims at creating and developing a modern system of vocational education and extension in agriculture in Georgia.

The UNDP/SDC collaboration on VET and Agricultural Extension (AE) started in 2008. Support was provided for effective policymaking, developing capacities of VET service providers, and improving the quality of VET and AE services. The support aimed to increase (self) employability of VET graduates and the effectiveness of self-employed farmers. In 2013 the SDC and UNDP cooperation intensified, and, together with the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia (MoES) and the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia (MEPA), the four partners placed greater emphasis on systemic change and focused on the biggest community of rural population – the farmers. An extensive 5-year project started to contribute to developing a system of high-quality VET and AE services in agriculture that results in improved livelihoods of the rural population.

Upgrading the skills and technical capabilities of farmers and rural entrepreneurs to improve productivity and overall farm management, and competitiveness is a fundamental objective of both ministries, the MEPA and the MoES. Because of the special circumstances in the agricultural sector, with up to 90 % of farmers being self-employed and where most farmers live far away from VET colleges in rural and isolated areas, AE is critical knowledge and skills transfer element. Most farmers are using outdated technologies, old machines and varieties of low productivity. They have limited access to quality information on modern technologies, training and advisory services. At the same time, there is a lot of knowledge and information on modern agriculture available in Georgia among the various universities, research institutions, VET colleges, (R)ICCs, private Agriculture Extension providers, farmers organisations, prospective VET students, and others. There is a need in forming MoES and MEPA coordinated and harmonised approach on VET and AE to make the best use of all available knowledge and information.

The recent developments in VET show some changes that are already taking place, meaningfully modifying the objectives and purpose of the skills development. These changes can be seen as innovation practices in VET. Examples of innovations in VET can include the new ways of skills building, the development of applied research, entrepreneurship, the incubation of new technology firms, and the development of consultancy activities and technology spread for small- and medium-sized enterprises. The different types of strategies and solutions proposed by new VET policies show the importance of investigating how diverse vocational education systems, networks, and schools are. Below listed innovative practices have been selected by UNESCO-UNEVOC based on their relevance to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and their advancement of youth employment, access to decent work, entrepreneurship and lifelong learning opportunities:

- Developing innovative solutions to community problems
- Preparing learners for real-world problems
- Changing perceptions of TVET professions
- More Women in ICT and empowering rural women through ICT in TVET
- Development of female entrepreneurship

- Mobile Learning and Assessment Services
- The Innovation Awards
- Greening for a sustainable environment
- Self-sufficient schools: turning learning into earning and saving
- Open educational resources for adult learners
- Encouraging teachers to integrate more real-world experiences in classroom teaching and to explore innovative ways of taking the learning beyond the classroom
- Building capacity of instructors to provide more valuable work experiences
- Collaborations with society, companies, and institutions
- Employability by developing the skills of future workers
- Bridging the gap between applied research and the market

II. PURPOSE OF THE CALL

The purpose of the call is to identify prospective project ideas contributing to the project's overall objective to support full scale projects' proposals around these initiatives. The priority will be given to those which propose partnerships, and deliver a demonstrable positive impact for supporting innovative practices in vocational education and training.

Following the selection of the best project ideas, the successful applicants with the best project ideas will be selected by the UNDP project to form the quality partnership and co-design comprehensive project proposals for the future implementation. As a project partner, selected applicants are expected to provide inputs in the UNDP project planning and design and be actively involved in its implementation. UNDP does not take obligation of funding all the selected winner project ideas.

Priority will be given to the initiatives that propose:

- 1. Support the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia and its system in the reform implementation through:**
 - Introduction/Development Digital learning Online and Blended Learning Methods in VET
 - Strengthening Economic Relevance (External Efficiency) of VET: Identification of the professions of the future in cooperation with private and public partnerships.
 - Establishment of Sustainable Job Forums
- 2. Support Raising Quality of VET Provision (centres of excellence, supply of qualified teachers and instructors, quality assurance, etc.) through:**
 - Linkages with upper secondary general and higher education
 - Innovative solutions for development of Entrepreneurship Skills among VET Graduates
 - Introduction of Knowledge Smart Technologies for Dissemination of Innovation in Agriculture and rural economy related vocations (Social effect of climate-smart agriculture measures and its role in the implementation of rural and agricultural strategy)
- 3. Support Agriculture Knowledge and Information System (AKIS) development through:**
 - Scaling up the research of AKIS: Information as a tool of innovation

- Support the efficient network of the knowledge and training providers in the context of AKIS
- 4. **Support the Rural, Green and Climate Smart Skills Development and Knowledge Transfer through:**
 - Skills Development and Transfer in Greening and Climate Smart Agriculture
 - Promoting climate-smart agricultural practices, raising farmers' knowledge, and providing effective agricultural extension services
 - Lifelong Learning systems support in Agriculture Professions.

III. WHO CAN APPLY:

Project ideas are expected to be submitted by the local and international non-governmental organizations, public and academic institutions that possess at least 5 years' experience and the administrative, financial, and technical capacity to implement a project in line with the objectives mentioned above as well as might bring a meaningful contribution to the project objectives. Good track record of working with donors in the past will be an asset.

The organizations must be legally registered entities in their country of operation, and the organization and its performance indicators must be in good financial standing. International organizations may apply if the project idea benefits Georgia. Successful applicants must be prepared to be true partners, they will not be beneficiaries or recipients of support, but rather entities that can truly share both the risk and reward of the activity. Project ideas envisaging cooperation with private sector (employers) are welcome.

We look for innovative, strategic, creative, targeted actions with high potential of capacity building and those that propose a clear vision of change, sustainability, multiplier effect, local ownership.

IV. SUBMISSION OF PROJECT IDEAS

If you have a project idea that meets the requirements of this call and are interested in partnering with the UNDP, please complete a standard **Project Idea Submission Form** (see Annex 1) and submit it electronically to tea.gulua@undp.org and shalva.lazariashvili@undp.org

Deadline for applications: We are accepting project ideas until **29 November 2021 18:00** in PDF (signed and stamped) and word formats. The subject line should read: "Call for Ideas – VET innovations". No applications will be accepted after this deadline.

If additional clarifications required, questions can be sent to the same email address indicated above. Answers to questions will be provided within two working days.

Note: Consultation meeting with interested applicants on the preparation of the project ideas will be held on **15 November 2021, at 12:00 via web-based platform due to COVID related restrictions ('Zoom', meeting details will be provided only to those who confirm their status and interest to the consultation meeting)**. As a rare exception (in case of no access to the internet or any other strong argument), meeting at the project office can also be considered as an additional opportunity (address: 5 Arakishvili str. dead-

end), 1st floor, Tbilisi, Georgia). While on-line meeting is considered as a recommended means of communication.

Submission of more than one application by one applicant is encouraged.

UNDP will acknowledge the receipt of each application within 3 business days. Please contact us if you have not received a confirmation.

DISCLAIMER: UNDP is not responsible for any technical problems that might result in delays in the receipt and/or loss of your application(s).

V. SELECTION PROCESS

All project ideas proposals will be reviewed by the Evaluation Committee comprised of the representatives of relevant UNDP representatives. The Evaluation Committee will assess project ideas according to the evaluation criteria:

- 1) Relevance of the idea to the purpose and priorities of this call (set out above);
- 2) Extent to which the action addresses the needs of agricultural vocational education and training service providers and beneficiaries.
- 3) Feasibility of the project – problem identification, soundness of analysis of the potential risks and evidence of ability to contribute to addressing them, stakeholders mapping and analysis (including external stakeholders), etc.;
- 4) Measurable and realistic long-term results/outcomes (objectively verifiable indicators);
- 5) Demonstrated sustainability of proposed efforts.

All decisions on the selection of project ideas will be taken not later than 2 weeks after closing date for applications. The successful applicants will be notified accordingly and will be assisted in developing ideas into full fledged proposals.

VI. IMPORTANT ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

UNDP implements a policy of zero tolerance on proscribed practices, including fraud, corruption, collusion, unethical practices, and obstruction. UNDP is committed to preventing, identifying and addressing all acts of fraud and corrupt practices against UNDP as well as third parties involved in UNDP activities. (See <https://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/corporate/Transparency/UNDPAntiFraudPolicyEnglishFINA%20June2011.pdf> <https://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/operations/procurement/protestandsanctions> for full description of the policies).

In responding to this Call for Ideas, UNDP requires all Proposers to conduct themselves in a professional, objective and impartial manner, and they must at all time hold UNDP's interest paramount. Proposers must strictly avoid conflicts with other assignments or their own interests, and act without consideration for future work.

Annex 1

Project Idea Application Form

(to be completed in English language)

General information	
Name of organization	
Contact Person	
Mailing address	
Email of the contact person	
Telephone & mobile number	
Website or social media link	
Partner Organization (if any)	
Project Title	
Project title should be clear and concise	
Project Idea (Briefly describe your project idea highlighting the VET innovation aspects, main results, and envisaged impact in maximum 250 words)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Description of project idea:• Innovation aspects:• Main results:• Expected impact:	
Project Idea Justification (Provide clear description of the problem to be addressed. Indicate if this is a follow up project or a new idea. Highlight innovative aspects. Maximum 250 words)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Problem Statement:• Is this a follow up project or a new idea:• Highlight innovative aspects	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does the idea engage women and girls 	
Risks (Please identify the main risks related to project implementation and management responses to those risks in maximum 100 words)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk: • Management response: • Risk: • Management response: <p>(you can list as many risks as relevant)</p>	
Implementation Methodology (List project activities and provide brief description of each activity that will be used for project implementation in maximum 200 words)	
Target geographic area	
Target group of beneficiaries	
Number of direct beneficiaries	
Project duration (months)	
Project budget in USD	
Area of proposed work	

Important notes:

Please fill out all boxes of the project idea application form.

Please respect the maximum words allowed. Applications that go over the maximum words allowed will be disqualified.

Submit the application electronically at: shalva.lazariashvili@undp.org / tea.gulua@undp.org

Within 3 business days we will inform you on the receipt of your project idea. If not, please contact us again at: tea.gulua@undp.org

Disclaimer: UNDP is not responsible for any technical failures that might cause delays in receiving your application.

Evaluation Criteria of Grant Project Application and its Scoring

#	Selection Criteria	Selection Criteria Description	Score Percentage
1.	Applicant's Experience	The applicant has sufficient experience of the administrative, financial, and technical capacity to implement a project	Max. 15%
2.	Project Idea	The idea is relevant to the purpose and priorities of the call	Max. 20%
3.	Quality and Feasibility	The idea is feasible – problem identification, soundness of analysis of the potential risks and evidence of ability to contribute to addressing them, stakeholders mapping and analysis (including external stakeholders)	Max. 20%
4.	Sustainability and Replication Potential	The idea demonstrates sustainability of proposed efforts. Measurable and realistic long-term results/outcomes (objectively verifiable indicators)	Max. 15%
5.	Scope of Action	Extent to which the action addresses the needs of agricultural vocational education and training service providers and beneficiaries	Max. 20%
6.	Project cost	The project cost is relevant and in line with the call idea	Max. 10%
TOTAL			Max. 100%