



**PROJECT DOCUMENT**

**UNDP Georgia**

**Project Title: Modernization of Vocational Education and Training (VET) System related to Agriculture and Rural development in Georgia VET (Phase 3)**

**Project number: 00113225 (output 00111493)**

**Implementing Partner: Ministry of Education and Science (MoES)**

**Start Date: 1 September 2022**

**End Date: 31 August 2025**

**PAC Meeting date: 15-Sept-2022**

**Brief Description**

The project will provide support to further development and strengthening effective public private partnerships and well-developed A-VET and extension systems that ensure improved delivery of relevant, high-quality A-VET and extension services.

Improving knowledge and skills has never been more important for creating inclusive and sustainable societies as in today's globalized, knowledge-driven world. It is a key to eradicating poverty, promoting equitable economic and social development, upholding human rights, creating global citizens, fighting inequality, and preserving our environment. Both, MoES and Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture (MEPA) have identified similar challenges that hinder rural development and the improvement of livelihoods in rural areas. **High unemployment rates** (especially among youth and women), and the **insufficient availability of highly qualified jobs** have a negative impact on the rural economy. Both ministries cite the lack of skilled labour in various sectors, **low levels of vocational training, insufficient use of modern technologies and knowledge and limited investments in rural areas** as some of the key factors that need to be improved for rural areas to thrive. The UNDP/SDC collaboration on VET and Agricultural Extension (AE) started in 2008. Support was provided for effective policy making, developing capacities of VET service providers, and improving quality of VET services and Extension with the aim of increasing (self)employability of VET graduates and effectiveness farmers. In 2013 the SDC and UNDP cooperation intensified, and, together with MoES and MEPA, the four partners emphasised more on systemic change and focused on the biggest community of rural population – the farmers. An extensive 12-year project started to **contribute to the development of a system of high-quality VET and AE services in agriculture that results in improved livelihoods of the rural population.**

During a third and final phase of three years and with a budget of USD 4,519,444, the project will continue to contribute to **improve the knowledge and skills of rural youth, women, and man in Georgia, leading to increased productivity, income, and job creation (self-employment).**

At impact level the Project will provide support that **improved competencies in line with market demands contribute to enhanced (self)-employment and higher income for a vibrant and resilient rural economy and better livelihoods for youth, women, men, and vulnerable groups.** The project will focus on **institution building and system development** on one hand and on **improving service provision** on the other hand. It will work closely with and support public and private sector partners intervening at national as well as regional level and support the development of a system of high-quality VET and extension services in agriculture. The project will achieve two outcomes:

1. **Quality of agricultural VET and extension services in Georgia is enhanced due to effective cooperation of public and private stakeholders.**
2. **Rural youth, women and men learn and apply relevant agricultural knowledge and skills, which are responding to the market needs.**

The Project will ensure setting up and strengthening of an institutional set-up that will be capable to deliver high quality A-VET and AE services. It is expected that this intervention will bring sustainable change at system level and will have a lasting impact on the livelihood of the farming community.

The project will provide support for the strengthening of existing VET and extension structures. These include the **Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia (MoES), Skills Agency (SA), Rural Development Agency (RDA), Environmental Education and Information Centre (EIEC),** their staff and their respective sub-agencies. **Agro Duo** as the private sector representative for education in the agricultural sector: **6 public A-VET colleges in 6 regions, 10 MEPA Information Consultancy Centers** in regions, and target 15,000 farmers and 2,500 A-VET graduates. The focus is on completing and consolidating initiatives started during the first and second phases of the project, handing over to partner institutions, scaling up some of the interventions to other regions and taking on a coaching and facilitation role.

The project contributes to:

**UNSDCF 2021-2025/UNDP CPD 2021-2025 Outcome 3:** By 2025, all people without discrimination benefit from a sustainable, inclusive and resilient economy in Georgia;

CPD Output Output 3.1. Improved competitiveness of private sector and labour force, especially youth and vulnerable groups through labour policy, private sector development, social responsibility and skills development.

**UNDP Strategic Plan 2022-2025:** Output 1.3 Access to basic services and financial and non-financial assets and services improved to support productive capacities for sustainable livelihoods and jobs to achieve prosperity

Indicative Output with gender marker: **Output 00111493:** GEN2(Gender equality as a significant objective)

|                                   |   |   |
|-----------------------------------|---|---|
| <b>Total resources required:</b>  | USD 4,519,444.04 (o/w Project Budget USD 4,475,440.04 and RC Levy (1%) 44,004.40) |   |
| <b>Total resources allocated:</b> | USD 4,519,444.04  |   |
|                                   | <b>UNDP TRAC:</b>   | USD 75,000.00   |
|                                   | <b>Swiss Agency for Development &amp; Cooperation (SDC)</b>                       | USD 4,444,444.04 (o/w Project Budget USD 4,400,440.04 and RC Levy (1%) USD 44,004.40) |
| <b>Unfunded:</b>                  | 0   |   |

**For the United Nations Development Programme:**

**For the Swiss Cooperation Office for the South Caucasus:**

**For the Ministry of Education and Science**

**For the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture:**

Nick Beresford  
UNDP Resident Representative

Dr. Danielle Meuwly  
Head of Regional Cooperation

Valerian Gobronidze  
Deputy Minister

Giorgi Khanishvili  
First Deputy Minister

Date:

25.11.22

Date:

14.2.23

Date:

25.11.22

Date:

13.02.23

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## **List of Abbreviations & Acronyms**

|          |   |
|----------|---|
| AE       | Agricultural Extension  |
| Agro Duo | Sector Skills Organization for Agriculture  |
| AKIS     | Agricultural Knowledge and Information System   |
| ASC      | Agricultural Sector Committee   |
| A-VET    | Vocational Education and Training in Agriculture                                      |
| AUG      | Agrarian University Georgia   |
| EIEC     | Environmental Information and Education Centre  |
| EMIS     | Education Management Information System   |
| EO       | Extension Officer   |
| GDP      | Gross Domestic Product  |
| GEOSTAT  | National Statistics Office of Georgia   |
| GFA      | Georgian Farmers Association  |
| GMS      | General Management Support  |
| GoG      | Government of Georgia   |
| HAFL     | Bern University of Applied Sciences, School of Agriculture, Forest, and Food Sciences |
| ICC      | Information and Consultation Centre   |
| IPM      | International Project Manager   |
| ISSET    | International School of Economics at Tbilisi State University                         |
| KM       | Knowledge Management  |
| LEPL     | Legal Entity of Public Law  |
| M & E    | Monitoring & Evaluation   |
| MEPA     | Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture                                  |
| MoES     | Ministry of Education and Science   |
| NCEQE    | National Center for Educational Quality Enhancement                                   |
| NPO      | National Program Officer  |
| NVETC    | National VET Council  |
| PIFA     | Project Implementation using a Facilitation Approach                                  |
| PM       | Project Manager   |
| PPP      | Public Private Partnership  |
| PS       | Private Sector  |
| RDA      | Regional Development Agency   |
| RIA      | Review of Institutional Arrangements  |
| (R)ICC   | (Regional) Information and Consultation Centre  |
| SA       | Skills Agency   |
| SASC     | Swiss Agricultural School Caucasus  |
| SDC      | Swiss Development Cooperation   |
| SIAP     | Strategy Implementation Action Plan   |
| SSO      | Sector Skills Organization  |
| TABCO    | Triesdorf Agribusiness Consulting   |
| TPDC     | National Center for Teacher Professional Development                                  |
| ToT      | Training of Trainers  |
| UNDP     | United Nations Development Programme  |
| VET      | Vocational Education and Training   |
| WBL      | Work Based Learning   |
| WP       | Work plan   |

## **1. DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGE**

### **1.1. General overview of the economic situation with emphasis on agriculture sector**

Georgia's agricultural sector remains a significant contributor to the Georgian economy, accounting for about 6,1% of GDP and the country's total economy<sup>1</sup>. The total value added of agriculture is one billion USD, an amount equivalent to agricultural exports<sup>2</sup>, with wine, water, fruits, and nuts bringing in the most dollars.

<sup>1</sup> Agriculture of Georgia 2020, Georgian Department of Statistics [<https://www.geostat.ge/ka/single-archive/3357#>]

<sup>2</sup> Trade in Agricultural Goods 2021, Ministry of Environment and Agriculture of Georgia [<https://mepa.gov.ge/Ge/Files/Download/52433>]

However, with half of all agricultural exports destined for Russia and Ukraine, trade is expected to decline significantly under the impact of the Ukraine war in 2022.

In rural Georgia, with a population of 1.5 million, one in five jobseekers is unemployed, but the unemployment rate in rural areas is slightly lower than in urban areas (18.2% vs. 22.2%). GeoStat estimates that about a quarter of a million people are employed in agriculture, fisheries, and forestry, with the absolute majority of these jobs in rural areas. Overall, agriculture is the largest employer, accounting for 20% of jobs, but offers the lowest wages at only 70% of the national average<sup>3</sup>.

While agriculture is large in numbers, only about 6% of farms are fully commercialised, while over 80% of these farms are subsistence farms that consume at least half of their production. The least profit-oriented farms are in Racha-Lechkhumi and Kvemo Svaneti, Guria, Imereti and Mtskheta-Mtianeti, where commercial farming accounts for only 1% of agricultural activity. Racha and Imereti are also among the regions with the highest unemployment, at 30% and 20% respectively<sup>4</sup>.

There are several reasons for the insufficient productivity of agriculture in Georgia, the main one being the division of land. The average private landholding is less than one hectare and can only be sufficient for self-sufficiency, unless it is used for high-tech operations such as greenhouses, which are too capital intensive for ordinary farmers. Moreover, the sale of agricultural land to foreigners is restricted by law, so foreign direct investment in agriculture, which would bring in capital and know-how, is almost non-existent. Another problem is access to public agricultural land such as pastures. Land reform is underway to regulate its use through long-term leases, but since no inventory has been taken for decades and farmers' use of pastures is chaotic, there is significant resistance from rural people to these changes, which are supposed to lead to more productive agriculture.

Furthermore, despite significant government investment in the form of subsidies and matching grants for inputs, machinery, and equipment, amounting to around USD 0.2 billion per year, farmers' productivity growth is inadequate and is currently below USD 1900 in value added per agricultural worker<sup>5</sup>, which is six times lower than in the poorest economy in the European Union.

The declining productivity indicator, despite access to finance and technology that could make even smallholder farmers profitable, leads to the problem of lack of skills and knowledge. Government investment programmes for agriculture do not include technical assistance. Most donor projects with agricultural programmes provide some necessary training to beneficiary farmers, but this does not include formal training. The main institution responsible for capacity building of farmers is the Rural Development Agency, which has over 50 extension centres in the regions, but is severely understaffed and states that it lacks qualified agricultural specialists to provide the necessary knowledge. This problem leads to a lack of number and quality of specialised agricultural programmes in vocational and higher education institutions. In addition, low income makes the sector unattractive to young people, which is a further setback to the turnover of productive labour.

To understand the Georgian agricultural sector, it is important to distinguish between different types of farmers who have very different needs:

- **The overwhelming majority of Georgian farmers are smallholders**, who account for almost all agricultural "employment". These farmers keep 1 to 2 cows and cultivate an area of 1 to 1.25 hectares, often divided into several plots. They use few inputs and services such as fertilisers, pesticides, irrigation, veterinary services, or feed. This leads to low productivity and their production is vulnerable to natural disasters such as droughts, floods, or animal diseases. Many of these farmers are already old and the succession of their farms is not assured.
- **Medium-sized farmers** with 5 to 10 cows and a cultivated area of 3 to 10 ha are a new group of farmers that is steadily growing. They are usually younger than the small farmers and make better use of newly acquired knowledge and modern technologies. If they had better access to knowledge, skills, and inputs, they could rapidly increase their productivity.

<sup>3</sup> Salaries 2020, Georgian Statistics Office [<https://www.geostat.ge/ka/modules/categories/39/khelfasebi>]

<sup>4</sup> Employment and Unemployment 2021, Georgian Statistics Department [<https://www.geostat.ge/en/modules/categories/683/Employment-Unemployment>]

<sup>5</sup> World Bank Agricultural Value Added Per Worker 2019 [[https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NV.AGR.EMPL.KD?most\\_recent\\_value\\_desc=false](https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NV.AGR.EMPL.KD?most_recent_value_desc=false)]

- **Professional, investor-run large-scale farms** account for only a tiny fraction of Georgia's total production, although scattered evidence and some expert statistics suggest that the volume is growing rapidly. Farm managers are usually very well trained and have their own channels for accessing the necessary knowledge and skills.

This distinction is important because the problems faced by these three types of farms are very different. Smallholder farmers lack expertise and basic resources, have difficulty accessing inputs, and are severely affected by natural disasters such as livestock diseases, drought, and floods. Larger investment farms have more resources, expertise, and the capacity to protect themselves from the most obvious systemic risks. However, they usually face difficulties in identifying and setting up their first farm, in raising finance at a reasonable cost, and in finding experienced managers.

The three types have different needs in terms of training (farm management), access to inputs (possibly through promotion of cooperatives) and a range of incentives to encourage a shift in production to higher quality products, higher value products and production in the late and early seasons (when prices and imports are highest).

## 1.2. Development Challenges of Georgia

The main development challenges in Georgia can be summarized as follows:

**Recovery after COVID:** The economy has recovered strongly from the recession, with GNI projected to grow by double digits in the second half of 2021 and by 8% overall. While this is impressive, concerns remain about how inclusive this growth has been taking into consideration that poverty increased from 17.3% in 2019 to 21.3% in 2020, and it remains to be seen how this changed in 2021. Although the traditionally high current account deficit is largely covered by FDI inflows, which support the relatively high investment ratio, it contributes to the volatility of the currency. Inflation, which tends to affect lower-income groups more, remained high at 13.9%. Georgia may thus be experiencing a bifurcated recovery, with the poorer sections of the population not yet fully benefiting from the economic recovery.

**Rise in unemployment:** Despite considerable economic growth and an improved business climate, the country is known for its "jobless growth". The economic policies of the last decade, while investing and increasing growth rates, failed in their attempt to promote employment and strengthen the competitiveness of the Georgian economy. According to official data, even during the years of highest growth from 2005 to 2007, unemployment in Georgia did not decrease noticeably, but only fell from 13.8% to 13.3%. The skills of the workforce do not match the evolving needs of businesses, leading to poor employment outcomes, especially in rural areas. The gender gap remains wide, although women are strongly represented in highly skilled occupations. Unemployment remained higher in 2021 at 22%, compared to 17.3% before the pandemic.

**Expected impact of the war in Ukraine:** The war in Ukraine will have a negative impact on global and regional economies. The distorted trade, decline in remittances, impact on food and oil import prices and resulting deterioration in the balance of payments, potential reduction in tourist inflows, global oil prices and exchange rate fluctuations will affect several groups of producers, including their suppliers, leading to deteriorating living standards, increased poverty, vulnerability, and inequality (especially for rural communities).

**Urban-rural divide.** Territorial inequalities and the widening urban-rural gap pose a challenge to Georgia's goals of achieving equitable socio-economic and environmental development and territorial cohesion. Rural areas are increasingly characterized by lower income levels, greater poverty, lower human capital, an unfavorable demographic situation, and out-migration (especially of highly skilled workers, youth, and women). The prevailing "vicious circle": low population density, lack of critical mass for quality services and infrastructure, lower business creation/growth, job loss and feverish job creation and ageing is further fueled by the uneven distribution of public resources, limited private investment, low competitiveness of MSMEs and their integration into market systems. These trends are tearing apart the socio-economic structures of many rural communities, leading to gender imbalance and rural shrinkage, which are vulnerable to external shocks and pressures.

**Low economic participation of youth:** Youth (15-29 years) have the highest unemployment rate in Georgia (40.3%, 2021) and 34% are NEETs, compared to 10.1% on EU average. A lack of internships, career

guidance, skills mismatches in the labor market, limited business development support and more contribute to poor socio-economic outcomes for youth, especially in rural areas. This is further exacerbated by and correlated with rural youth migration to urban areas (e.g., for low value-added employment in the geek economy) and international emigration (42% of potential migrants are in the 18-30 age group, ETF, 2014). Moreover, one third of young people living in rural areas believe that it would be good for them to move away to find employment (FES, 2016). The economic participation and well-being of young people is even more drastic in the disadvantaged areas along the ABL (especially in the Shida Kartli region) and regions with ethnic minorities.

**Skills gaps and unemployment:** Almost half of the unemployed have a university degree, while at the same time representatives of the private sector and industry report their inability to find qualified workers. In contrast to the needs of the labor market, there is a surplus of people with tertiary education and a shortage of workers with vocational education. According to World Bank projections, by 2030, 33% of jobs requiring vocational skills will not be filled by workers with vocational training, while 22% of workers with tertiary education will not be able to find jobs requiring higher education. The group of young people under 29 years of age remains the largest group of unemployed, indicating the difficulty of finding a first job and the mismatch of education and skills with market requirements.

**Low rural economy diversification:** Although agriculture is the main source of livelihood in the regions of Georgia and holds great potential for growth, it only meets the challenge of rural employment as an increasing share of rural household income comes from non-agricultural activities that promote livelihood diversification in rural communities. Although the rural poverty rate of 26.7% contrasts with the urban poverty rate of 14% in Georgia, the implementation of effective policies and programmes to reduce this poverty remains a critical challenge for the country's development. Due to limited income opportunities, there is an increasing migration to urban areas, especially among the youth.

**Gender inequalities:** Gender inequalities are most pronounced in rural areas. Rural women are underrepresented in local economic planning and in primary and value-added sectors of the economy, which is associated with income inequality, lower (only 16%) asset ownership and severe destructive impacts of COVID-19 (UNDP, 2020). Gender stereotypes, unequal sharing of unpaid agricultural and domestic work, and a lack of gender-responsive services and programmes limit women's opportunities to acquire new skills, establish agricultural or other businesses, and earn sustainable incomes.

Women in rural areas face the challenge of combining education and training with agricultural, domestic, community and care tasks. Existing education and training provision is often difficult to access and not flexible enough (ILO, 2020). These difficulties are particularly acute in ethnic minority areas where families are often less willing to invest in girls' education because of common practices such as early marriage, low pay for women's work, family reservations about women working outside the home and the expectation that girls and women will do most of the housework. As a result, educational disadvantages accumulate throughout women's lives, as basic education is often a prerequisite for developing other skills.

**Contribution of the VET system to addressing development challenges:** Short-term training for job seekers is very fragmented and does not feed into an effective LLL system. The learning environment, teacher and trainer skills limit the full implementation of work-based learning models. There is a lack of modern innovative teaching methods such as project-based learning, blended learning, and others. Access to knowledge and skills development systems remain challenging in rural areas resulting in limited capacities of private sector to expand and grow. Supporting measures for increased access to skills development opportunities will contribute to the reduction of skill mismatch (gender, age, regions) and promote equal development opportunities through better inclusion.

### **1.3. Government's strategy to support the development of agriculture & rural development**

The Georgian Strategy for Agricultural and Rural Development 2021 - 2027 aims to address the challenges of sustainable economic development and inclusive economic growth of the country through socio-economic development in rural areas. The main objectives of the strategy include:

- Competitive agricultural and non-agricultural sectors.
- Sustainable use of natural resources, ecosystem conservation, climate change adaptation.
- Effective food/feed safety, veterinary and phytosanitary systems.

Improving the knowledge, skills and technical capabilities of farmers and rural entrepreneurs to increase productivity and competitiveness is a fundamental objective of the Ministry, which provides knowledge, information, and advice to farmers through the Environmental Information and Education Centre. The centre promotes environmental and agricultural education among the population, involves the population in the environmental decision-making process and ensures access to environmental and agricultural information.

MEPA will work closely with the Georgian Ministry of Labour, the National and Agricultural Academies of Sciences, vocational training institutions, and Georgian and international education and research service providers, including relevant NGOs, to strengthen vocational training, adult education, research, and science both in Georgia and at regional and international levels.

#### 1.4. Georgian Government strategy for VET

The far-reaching reforms of the last two **decades have transformed the economy and led to impressive economic growth** and an improved business climate but have **failed in their attempt to boost employment** and strengthen the competitiveness of the Georgian economy. **Low job creation, persistently high unemployment combined with low productivity, underemployment, and high levels of poverty**, especially in rural areas, continue to pose a major challenge to the country's development agenda. The need for skills development in rural areas clearly goes beyond the agricultural sector, which employs about 60% of the active labor force (both, formal and informal employment), but contributes only 6% to Georgia's GDP. The lack of productivity in this sector suggests widespread subsistence farming and poverty.

According to the National Statistics Office Georgia, the capital Tbilisi accounts for 50 % of the regions' gross value added. As the rural poverty rate of 25.7% contrasts with the urban poverty rate of 17.1% <sup>6</sup>in Georgia, the implementation of effective policies and programmes to reduce this poverty and promote skills development in various sectors of the rural economy is of great importance. Reducing poverty, increasing productivity and resilient development of Georgian regions require a systemic approach based on:

- a) **developing an integrated approach to rural skills development** (integrating skills development into rural development policies and private sector and entrepreneurship development strategies),
- b) **expanding access to quality education and training** (providing affordable technical and vocational training), designing policies to include those most disadvantaged in accessing education and training, such as women in poverty, persons with disabilities and ethnic minorities).
- c) **promoting diversified skills development systems** (linking formal and non-formal training systems, institutional training with work-based learning environments, development sector-led training programmes).

The VET sector has always been identified as one of the priorities of the Georgian government. According to the "Programme of the Georgian Government 2021-2024" (February 2021), the development of VET remains a priority of the Georgian government as an important tool to address the imbalance between supply and demand in the labor market. The programme identified twelve strategic directions to be developed: Increasing funding and introducing a results-based funding model; developing a long-term strategy and action plans for VET; implementing the new model for VET management by SSOs and partnerships with the private sector; improving access to VET, especially for disadvantaged groups; and developing a new model for professional development and career development for VET teachers; Implementation of the new model for remuneration of VET teachers; Continuation of new accreditation standards to ensure quality; Expansion of dual VET programmes, scales for integrated programmes and regulations for short courses; Recognition and expansion of informal education; Internationalization of VET by creating opportunities for international certification; Introduction of EMIS for VET and creation of a new portal; Development and construction of infrastructure. UNDP has been instrumental in supporting the Ministry of Education and Science (MoES) in the identification of these 12 strategic directions.

The Georgian Ministry of Education and Science has developed a "VET Strategy for Georgia 2022-2027" together with an action plan to be officially approved in Spring 2022. As the document states, the strategy responds to the challenges facing Georgia in the 21st century, in particular the rapid changes in technology

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<sup>6</sup> GeoStat, 2020



and the labor market, the demand for new skills, the ageing population, globalization, the "green transformation", the Covid-10 pandemic and post-Covid development.

The strategy summarizes the main challenges of TVET: limited accessibility and low participation rates; low quality of teaching and learning and the problem of competitiveness of TVET human resources; difficulties in the transition from education to the labor market and mismatch between skills demand and supply; ineffective governance of the sector and low private sector participation; lack of sustainability of reform and difficulties in policy implementation.

For 2022-2027, the strategy focuses on three main objectives:

1. ensuring innovative, flexible, diverse, and inclusive services as stimulators for the development of society and the economy.
2. transforming TVET providers into Skills Hubs.
3. introducing a TVET governance model based on shared responsibility.

The action plan includes key indicators for each of the objectives that the MoES will focus on in the period 2022-2027, using 2021 as a baseline:

|                    |  |
|--------------------|--|
| <b>Objective 1</b> | <b>Ensuring innovative, flexible, diverse, and inclusive services as a stimulator for development of society and economy (17 activities)</b> |
| Indicators         | 1. Rate of dropouts (33%-26%)  |
|                    | 2. Transition from school to TVET/ (basic education – 1%-8%; full general education – 3.6%-10%)  |
|                    | 3. Self-employment/entrepreneurial activity rate of TVET graduates (10%-18%)   |
|                    | 4. Number of graduates of dual programmes (332-1200)   |
|                    | 5. Number of municipalities with accessible TVET (37 – 65/all municipalities)  |
|                    | 6. Number of adults involved in TVET/25+/gender (2883-7000, where 42% will be women)   |
|                    | 7. Transition from school to TVET of Special Education Needs persons (SEN) / (105-300/number)  |
| <b>Objective 2</b> | <b>Transform the TVET providers as skills hubs (12 activities)</b>   |
| Indicators         | 1. Number of TVET institutions that operate in accordance with the entrepreneurial model (0-20)  |
|                    | 2. Number of teachers using the TVET institution-based teacher development services (0%-100%)  |
|                    | 3. Number of excellence centers and regional hubs (0-7)  |
|                    | 4. Number of programs for which an internationally recognized certificate/diploma is issued (5-40)   |
|                    | 5. Number of training programs / program components offered in electronic format (0-20)  |
| <b>Objective 3</b> | <b>Introduction of TVET governance model based on shared responsibilities (6 activities)</b>   |
| Indicators         | 1. Number of Sectoral Skills Organizations (SSOs) (0-10)   |
|                    | 2. Number of WBL programmes (100-300)  |
|                    | 3. Share of TVET budget in total budget of education (5%-8%)   |

According to the strategy, the newly established Skills Agency is the main agency responsible for implementing the strategy and it is envisaged that most activities will be carried out by donor agencies and some by the public and private sectors, including VET institutions.

### 1.5. The role of agricultural extension

Agricultural extension plays a crucial role in increasing agricultural productivity, improving rural livelihoods, and addressing environmental and social challenges. It is interesting to note that agricultural extension has become increasingly important again in Central European countries over the last decade, and it is expected that the importance of agricultural and rural information and extension services will even increase in the foreseeable future, be it for a country's food security, or in terms of natural resource management and climate-friendly production.

The draft National Agricultural Extension Strategy 2022 to 2027 defines the main objectives as follows:

- To transmit the most appropriate or latest technical knowledge to farmers for innovative and productive agriculture.
- To motivate farmers for overall development.
- To improving the technical competence of extension officers.
- To provide feedback from farmers to extension officers/scientists, universities, agricultural colleges and target groups on problems and constraints in agriculture.
- To strengthen linkages between farmers, extension officers and researchers.

At the field level, the state extension service currently consists of 54 information and consultation centres (ICCs) with 3 to 6 staff. While the government extension services are recognised as crucial for farmers, the importance of many other stakeholders has increasingly come to the fore in recent years. Farmers get their information and support from a variety of actors. The draft strategy takes this into account and shows that the activities of government extension services have their clear and important place in the overall agricultural knowledge and innovation system (AKIS). A successful AKIS strategy includes:

- Improving the flow of knowledge and strengthening the links between research and practice.
- Strengthening all agricultural extension services and promoting their linkages within AKIS and especially with research.
- Promoting cross-thematic and cross-border interactive innovation.
- Supporting digital transformation in agriculture.

To overcome the existing challenges and further develop the Georgian AKIS, the individual AKIS actors need to be identified and roles and responsibilities clarified. The study also recommends supporting the establishment of knowledge centres for specific agricultural sectors to continue the successful digital transformation and promote participatory approaches and applied research.

Collaboration between extension and VET institutions is a crucial element to improve knowledge transfer and innovation, and to strengthen links between applied research and agricultural practice.

While the target group of A-VET is mainly young people, A-Extension focuses on active farmers. However, many synergies can be exploited in terms of knowledge and skills development, staff training, and training materials and practical demonstration.

Cooperation at the field level needs to be supported by the relevant ministries and agencies at national level.

## 1.6. Relevant Programs of International Organizations in VET and AE

The MoES and the SA have been supported in the implementation of VET reforms by multiple donor agencies, including the European Union, the World Bank, UNDP/SDC, UK GGF, Kew/PEM, GIZ, ADB and USAID. They contribute to VET system development in Georgia through the Projects targeting at skills ecosystem development, VET infrastructure improvement, VET quality assurance systems, WBL and SSO ecosystem development and introduction of the industry-led qualifications that support VET graduates transition to employment. The ratio of proposed Project's funding to the total allocations of other development partners in VET sector in Georgia amounts to 4,5% (Annex 4).

The **EU** (2019-2023) provides budgetary support to the government to analyse and assess the geographical accessibility of VET, which will be used to inform further decisions on the development of new VET infrastructure. The project also facilitates the development of a new sectoral strategy for TVET and a strategy for career guidance, counselling, and career planning in formal education.

**ADB** (2020-2025) has engaged in the TVET sector in 2020 to support the diversification of TVET providers, strengthen the capacity of public schools in the regions to implement TVET programmes, develop two training centres, and promote the internationalisation and inclusion of the TVET sector.

**The USAID** project (2021-2025) works in the following directions: Stimulating private sector engagement in skills development, developing short- and long-term programmes in formal and non-formal education, and improving access to VET in the regions.

**The German Government through KfW Development Bank** has made available a loan of EUR 20 million (Investment Measure) and a grant of EUR 3 million (Accompanying Measure) to the Government of Georgia

for investing into the construction and operation of a Center of Excellence (CoE), as a first of its kind TVET institution in two selected priority sectors of logistics and construction.

Donors work closely with the MoES and, since 2021, also with the newly established Skills Agency, which plays an important role in the VET sector.

## 1.7. UNDP's support to VET, agricultural extension, and rural development

UNDP, in partnership with the EU, is implementing the programme "Improving Rural Development in Georgia" (2018-2022, USD 11.9 million) to support rural development policies to ensure sustainable development leading to higher living standards for rural populations. UNDP supports bottom-up policy planning; the involvement of civil society organisations in national coordination mechanisms; the implementation of a community coordination framework with an integrated role of national agencies at the community level; the establishment of EU-compliant institutional mechanisms for planning, implementing and evaluating the impact of rural development activities; rural economic diversification and job creation; new business development services; skills development and employment mechanisms; and energy-efficient and renewable energy solutions for rural enterprises and households.

To strengthen the COVID resilience of the rural economy, UNDP promotes the digitalisation of rural enterprises, the implementation of the smart villages concept, social innovations, and the economic empowerment of rural youth and women. By 2022, UNDP has supported sustainable natural resource management in rural areas on 78,028 ha of forest. The supported rural enterprises created/retained 413 jobs in the targeted communities. State agencies implementing the UNDP-supported rural development strategy invested more than GEL 2.8 billion GEL during 2017-2020 achieving the following results: 433,697 rural dwellers with improved access to new or improved infrastructure, 35,978 beneficiaries who acquired/improved skills necessary for the labour market, 16.6% more irrigated land, 18.7% more forest land managed under sustainable forest management plans, 328 enterprises with new tourism products/infrastructure and investments in 3,248 rural enterprises.

UNDP, with support from the EU, is also implementing the project "Increasing opportunities for lifelong learning through local partnerships" (2020-2023, USD 1.3 million) to improve the employability of men and women through increased access to quality education and vocational training, focusing on non-agricultural sectors of the rural economy. This project promotes a model for vocational education and training at secondary level, supports the Skills Agency in developing services for youth in NEETs, supports secondary schools in vocational education and training, and promotes digital and entrepreneurial skills.

Under ENPARD 3 (2018-2022) UNDP is expanding support to rural development policy implementation by targeting interventions for economic diversification of rural economy and improving sustainable management of natural resources in rural areas. As ENPARD 3 is improving VET services in non-farm sectors in rural areas, this project and ENPARD 3 are being implemented in coordination and cooperation to develop quality VET services in rural areas.

## 1.8. The UNDP/SDC collaboration in VET and extension: results of phase 2

Cooperation between UNDP and SDC in VET began in 2008, supporting, effective policymaking, capacity building of VET service providers and improving the quality of VET services with the aim of increasing the employability and efficiency of self-employed VET graduates.

In 2013, SDC and UNDP focused their cooperation on systemic change and concentrated on the largest group of the rural population - farmers. UNDP and SDC launched a comprehensive five-year project to **contribute to the development of a system of high-quality VET and AE services in agriculture that results in improved livelihoods of the rural population**. In 2018, the second phase started with the same objective and building on the achievements of phase 1. Phase 2 will end in August 2022. The project has gained an excellent reputation and serves as a model for other sectors on how VET needs to be reformed and institutionalized in Georgia. Various concepts that have been tested in the agricultural sector are now being applied in VET in general. In close cooperation with the MoES and in line with the SIAP of the MoES,

the project has taken a leading role in the implementation of the state VET reform in the agricultural sector and beyond.

Main achievements of the project can be summarized as follows:

- promoted the A-VET with the aim of **improving agricultural knowledge and skills, leading to higher productivity, higher income, and increased self-reliance of male and female farmers.**
- supported **comprehensive VET reforms**, with a focus on the agriculture sector, to create a system for vocational development of farmers.
- brought change by **involving the private sector in the coordination and delivery of VET**: The MoES and MEPA, together with 5 other ministries and the Georgian Chamber of Commerce and Industry jointly established the **Vocational Skills Agency** as a **platform for direct private sector participation and public-private partnerships for human capital development**. The establishment up of a PPP for VET has been on the project's agenda since the first day of phase 1 and is a major achievement of ten years of hard work. It is the foundation for linking needs of the labor market with VET, and for supporting innovative educational pathways, improving competitiveness, and creating better employment opportunities for graduates.
- was instrumental in developing a **conceptual and legal framework for the development of Sectorial Skills Organizations (SSOs) in Georgia established the first SSO, AgroDuo**, whose functions include the definition of skills needs, qualification requirements, occupational standards, promotion of VET, certification of training enterprises and implementation of the VET policy.
- facilitated the **development of the new VET Law and corresponding sub-legal acts** and is contributing to the smooth **implementation of the new law**.
- contributed to the strengthening of the entire VET system by **designing, developing and supporting the implementation of new regulations**.
- ensured the implementation of **the new enrolment regulations**, which provide equal opportunities for different social and disadvantaged groups seeking vocational training in Georgia.
- promoted the **work-based learning ecosystem** by introducing relevant methodologies and developing capacities of WBL actors.
- supported the MoES in **introducing a progressive governance system and services in VET**.
- supported the **use of sector-leading skills for the most profitable value chains in agriculture**: cheese production, viticulture/wine making, horticulture, artificial insemination of cattle, beekeeping, artisanal distillation, ornamental gardening and tea processing. The project has supported farmers in adopting innovations: Over 660 farmers and rural households are adopting climate-smart practices.
- Under the **College Support Fund**, activities to strengthen VET institutions were supported: 21 regulatory documents, 5 policy documents, 4 concept documents, 22 short-term agricultural training programmes, 2 long-term VET programmes and 1 mobile application for students were developed, approved and put into operation. In addition, 6 vocational training institutions were provided with various types of agricultural equipment and machinery and 32 short-term training programmes were funded. In total, more than 1000 beneficiaries (farmers) were trained.

In agricultural extension, the Project:

- initiated the **AKIS study** to know more on how and from what sources farmers receive reliable and relevant knowledge, guidance, information and support, to continuously evolve and solve problems successfully, and respond to external expectations & development opportunities.
- supported the **development of the agricultural extension services ecosystem** and the establishment of farmer advisory councils in four target regions (16 200 beneficiary farmers) - an institutional mechanism for long-term skills and knowledge development.
- Established a **digital extension services platforms** in the target regions to enable farmers to access quality services remotely equipped with software and hardware applications. The project has strengthened the capacity of extension officers to provide customized services and apply the new extension platforms and it created an ecosystem for formal training and retraining in agriculture. It also introduced new extension service packages that are now offered by government agencies and other service providers.
- Promoted various digital teaching methods and services such as Agripedia (public access displays with interactive interface), online knowledge libraries for information on agriculture and

agribusiness and others. **More than 35,000 farmers have accessed information** on various production and processing topics through these platforms.

**More than 16,000 farmers benefited from the services provided** (technological improvement, market positioning, new crops and others). More than 4,000 farmers were trained through new service packages and up to 4,000 farmers participated in the field demonstration services. On average, beneficiary farmers' income increased by 43%.

Finally, the project supported **the development of the Swiss Agricultural School Caucasus (SASC)**, established by the Georgian Association for Applied Education and Development (AED) in the village of Sarkineti (Dmanisi municipality). This is an unprecedented private non-profit initiative in the field of agricultural VET in Georgia. UNDP supports AED in Swiss knowledge transfer and integration into the Georgian VET system by implementing the (dual) WBL model, which aims to transform the existing supply-driven VET system into a demand-driven model to meet the industry's need for the skilled labour.

## 1.9. Lessons learnt

The last nine years of cooperation provided an excellent environment to learn more about how best to support the Georgian government to further institutionalize and expand quality VET and guidance services. The following lessons were learned:

### ➤ **Systemic change is slow process:**

The UNDP/VET project is an excellent example of how long it takes to bring about change. It took more than 8 years to put the vision of an independent PPP platform for VET into practice and to create SSOs. A perspective of up to 15 years, which is common in SDC projects, is therefore much more sustainable in the long run than short-term projects of only a few years.

### ➤ **Supporting Government-led efforts and strategies:**

Coordination and working within the framework of government-led action plans is a crucial factor in strengthening VET and extension in Georgia. Coordination does not only mean the exchange of information between stakeholders. It is equally important to ensure (and enforce) that all stakeholders work towards the same goals and use the same structures. This is only possible if VET and extension stakeholders are led and guided by a strong Ministries, which is the case for the MoES in Georgia. Coordination can best be ensured if funds are channeled through national structures and staff are integrated into national structures. While the UNDP/SDC project has always worked within the framework of government-led action plans and also works through national structures, this is not always the case with other international partners. Greater success is possible with more trust in the national partners. Trust leads to ownership and involves handing over responsibility, tasks and finances.

### ➤ **Private sector support:**

PPP in VET is a key success factor and has finally been achieved in Georgia with the creation of the SA and the SSO. It is now important to work closely with these new structures and especially to support PS stakeholders to organize themselves and join the SSOs in their sector. A weak SSO is no justification for not supporting it as SSOs will learn and grow by taking responsibility and managing resources. Supporting sector associations that are not members of an SSO creates competition within the private sector and weakens the work of the newly established SSO. It is therefore crucial to insist that a sector association joins an SSO and to support it through the SSO.

### ➤ **Orientation towards modern agriculture and beyond:**

Agricultural professions are not very attractive for young people in Georgia. The main reasons are hard physical work and limited income opportunities. Young people can only be attracted to agricultural careers if vocational training programmes adopt an agribusiness approach that focuses on climate-smart agriculture, mechanization and the application of modern technologies and

practices. In the future, it will also only be possible to earn a satisfactory income on larger farms. Access to finance would also be important for this, but this would go beyond the scope of the project. For young people and farmers who have limited access to land, it is therefore important that they are also taught skills that will help them to expand their profession to earn an income outside agriculture. The trend is that farming is becoming more and more a part-time occupation and farmers have additional jobs and diversify their income-generating activities. To earn a living, they need additional skills beyond the typical farming skills. These include skills in agro-tourism, direct sales of agricultural products or food processing.

➤ **Quality of VET:**

All efforts to increase the attractiveness of VET will fail if the quality of VET and its links to employment are not improved. While considerable progress has been made in the last 10 years in terms of governance, involvement of the private sector and institutionalization of VET, progress on quality has been limited. Therefore, this needs special attention during the consolidation phase.

Public and private institutions, and in particular the public VET institutions RICC and ICC, will only be able to transform themselves into centers of excellence and provide quality services if they are empowered (e.g. with their own budget), if the technical expertise of staff is improved, and if appropriate management and performance systems are in place to increase accountability and ensure efficient implementation of activities and use of resources. It is crucial to remove administrative hurdles and bureaucratic obstacles and to develop an approach that provides more support to these service providers so that they can develop and flourish individually. This includes improving the individual knowledge and skills of staff as well as the conditions of employment.

➤ **Blended learning:**

Blended learning, if implemented properly, will open a wealth of new opportunities and greatly increase the scope of interventions. The future will offer unimagined possibilities here. While the Covid pandemic had many negative effects, it also had a very positive impact on digital learning by accelerating the digitization of learning.

Blended learning programmes brings the potential to reach more beneficiaries with high quality programs and can reduce training costs per students. However, digital learning also has its drawbacks as learners learn in isolation and learning tends to be theoretical compared to WBL. Especially in skills development, it is important that training programmes include practical components and WBL. The challenge will be to find the right mix between digital learning and practical application. There is also the possibility of setting up learning centers where learners have access to computers and the internet, learn independently and are supervised by a tutor. This would also allow for mutual exchange between learners.

There is still a need for far-reaching studies in this area, and coordination is a crucial factor in setting up digital platforms and blended learning programmes.

➤ **Learning from international experience:**

Learning from international experiences was an integral part of the first two phases and had a great impact on the project. Various elements of the Swiss system were adapted to the Georgian context (e.g. minor program for teachers/EO, involvement of PS and SSOs, linking A-VET and AE). The following is very important if a project wants to learn from international experience:

- International partners like to draw on experiences from their own VET systems, but VET systems in other countries are often very different and not always compatible. Too many different experiences can cause more confusion than benefit. Every international experience has to be adapted to the Georgian context, copy - paste is not possible.
- International study tours are very expensive, so it is important to choose the right participants.
- Peer-to-peer exchanges and focus on a specific topic have proven to be more effective than study tours with a heterogeneous group of participants dealing with many topics.
- Working visits (e.g. developing the minor program together with a Swiss university) are more effective than visits that only serve to exchange experiences.

- The right timing for an exchange is crucial. It is best to start an activity in Georgia first and then see how it is done elsewhere.
- Bringing international experiences to Georgia is often cheaper and more effective than visits abroad.

➤ **Awareness raising, including the creation of incentives and motivators for VET students & graduates:**

VET is still considered a 'second-class education' in Georgia compared to higher education. Civil society in Georgia needs to learn and understand that VET is an alternative and not simply a worse choice. Awareness-raising activities and the introduction of incentives and motivators for VET students and graduates, but also for VET teachers and counsellors will improve the reputation of VET and make it more attractive. Adding an international dimension to VET (internships partnerships, study tours, etc.) will also contribute to the attractiveness of VET.

➤ **Sectoral approach:**

Given the diversity of different professions and economic sectors, it is advisable to take a sectoral approach to VET. Different occupations and sectors have different needs and challenges, and the private sector is organized very differently. Some sectors are more fragmented than others, and different sectors are structured differently. As far as the agricultural sector is concerned, some aspects need to be considered in terms of vocational training and extension:

- Most businesses (in this case farms) are family businesses;
- Up to 90 % of farmers are self-employed and are not looking for work. At the same time, there is a need for access to finance to invest in their own farms;
- The labor market is limited, and workers are mostly employed as unskilled seasonal workers; yet there is a lack of skilled labor in agriculture;
- There is a greater need for start-up support for young VET graduates than in other sectors, as it is not possible to start one's own business without financial support and management advice;
- Most farmers live in rural and remote areas and are not mobile, especially livestock farmers. They have long travel distances to vocational schools or extension centers and cannot be away from their farms for long periods of time; they are more interested in short-term modular trainings and in opportunities for blended learning.
- Farmers are often more conservative and traditional than workers in other sectors;
- The agri-environmental component is an important element of vocational training and it is crucial to closely link or merge the two components; a specific model is needed for vocational training and extension in agriculture.

Professions in the agricultural sector include not only farmers, but also specialized professions such as vegetable or fruit growers and food processing occupations such as wine processing or cheese making (see Annex 5 for a list of all occupations).

## **2. STRATEGY**

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### **2.1. The rationale for the project**

Improving knowledge and skills has never been more important for creating inclusive and sustainable societies as in today's globalized, knowledge-driven world. It is a key to eradicating poverty, promoting equitable economic and social development, upholding human rights, creating global citizens, fighting inequality, and preserving our environment. This statement by UNESCO also applies for the agricultural sector where the acquisition of modern knowledge, skills and technologies is vital for increasing productivity and income and for creating inclusive societies. Indigenous knowledge, skills and technology are important for farmers but are no longer sufficient to meet the current challenges.

On an average, agriculture accounts for around 60% of the regional distribution of GDP in Georgia, which opens opportunities for developmental and supportive interventions that focus on regional strengths by identifying competitive advantages beyond agricultural sectors and the potential for excellence in rural areas

through the comprehensive involvement of all relevant stakeholders. This leads to smart, resilient and sustainable growth that promotes a more efficient and competitive economy with high levels of employment and inclusive growth.

**VET and support for the agricultural and farming sector have become a priority area for the Georgian government and are one of the driving forces in the fight against rural poverty and regional development.** In this regard, the Agriculture and Rural Development Strategy of Georgia 2021 – 2027 and the VET Strategy of Georgia 2022 – 2027 (draft version) build on previous strategies that guided the development and implementation of phase 1 and 2 of this project. They provide the strategic frameworks in which improving farmers' knowledge and information and improving vocational training are among the main strategic directions to create an environment that increases the competitiveness of the agri-food sector, promotes stable growth of high-quality agricultural production, creates (self-) employment, and eradicates rural poverty through sustainable development of agriculture and rural areas. The intentions of the Georgian Government are in line with the policy agendas of UNDP and SDC, which aim to improve economic development and create decent jobs by closing the gap between skills and labor market needs.

The **SDC's cooperation strategy for the South Caucasus** focuses on improving economic development and decent job creation, improving the framework conditions for market access, and promoting innovative private sector initiatives to facilitate decent job creation. One of **UNDPs main priorities in Georgia** is economic development that includes promoting sustainable growth and creating development opportunities for people. Systemic reform of VET and its adaption to the labor market, as well as boosting agriculture and rural development are important steps in this direction<sup>7</sup>. The proposed Project will contribute to the **Output 3.2 indicator on the sustainable and inclusive rural and agriculture development and improved livelihoods** of the UNDP Country Strategy Paper and **SDG Goal 8: Decent work and Economic Growth**.

UNDP and SDC have long experience of working together to implement development projects in Georgia. Both institutions demonstrate a common interest in developing income and employment opportunities within the framework of the United Nations Development Framework for Georgia, which emphasizes the importance of poverty reduction and aims to promote inclusive development, job creation, education and basic social services, especially for vulnerable groups. For more than 10 years, the two partners have worked closely together with the MoES and MEPA to strengthen VET coupled with AE, farmer support services and value chain development. They have been instrumental in creating new structures, systems and training programmes. During a final phase of the project, it is now important to consolidate the work done and increase its sustainability.

The intervention strategy and approaches of the first and second phases have proven to be relevant and effective and will not be changed in this final phase. However, slight adaptations are made to ensure a smooth phasing out. Key elements of the project theory of change can be summarized in **Theory of Change model** (See model in separate file).

## **2.2. Process of developing the proposal**

The present proposal is based on the results of an extensive internal and external consultation process as an inclusive process started as early as 2021. Various analytical documents were developed, and ideas exchanged between UNDP, SDC, the project team and the stakeholders.

In January 2022, a supporting consultancy team was set up, consisting of an international VET/ agriculture economist (team leader), an international extension and teachers training specialist, a national VET expert and a national macroeconomist. In February 2022, the team conducted several online meetings with stakeholders and analysed existing documents. In March 2022, the team met in Tbilisi for an intensive two-week planning phase. Workshops were held with various stakeholders and the project team to gather opinions and views, develop the project plan and budget, and review the strategy. Participants in the workshops and meetings are listed in Annex 11. The log frame developed during this process (and described below) was validated by the project's main partners, MEPA, MoES, SA, Agro Duo, GFA, SDC and UNDP. The results of all these consultations are integrated in the project design.

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<sup>7</sup> <https://www.ge.undp.org/content/georgia/en/home/economic-development.html>



### 2.3. Implementation strategy

The implementation strategy developed for phase 1 and refined for phase 2 has proven to be very effective and will also be applied in phase 3. Key elements of the strategy include:

- Emphasis on national ownership with a focus on private sector participation.
- Macro, meso and micro level interventions.
- Strong focus on the three success factors: strong national structures, skilled people, accessible quality services.
- Balanced intervention between A-VET and AE with a particular focus A-VET teachers and extension officers' capacity enhancement and coordinated efforts for training and extension services delivery for students and rural farmers.
- Support to develop skills and knowledge in occupations that contribute to the development of comparative advantages of rural areas.

Considering that this will be the last phase of the project, it is important to phase out project support by completing/consolidating initiatives started during the first and second phase and handing them over to partner institutions, extending some of the interventions to other regions and playing a coaching and facilitating role.

The following drivers and barriers were identified that could accelerate or slow down activities and the handing over process:

| Drivers   | Barriers  |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- New and comprehensive strategies are in place and serve as excellent guidance for all VET actors.</li> <li>- Strong commitment of national stakeholders to the new strategies.</li> <li>- The project is fully aligned with the SA action plan.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Financial self-sustainability of SSOs will be difficult to achieve.</li> <li>- Technical expertise of national VET and agricultural experts is still limited.</li> <li>- The new institutional set-up for VET (new structures, etc.) is very different from that of the past. In the short term, this could lead to confusion for some and resistance to change for others.</li> <li>- The role of the PS has become more important, but the capacity of the PS is still weak and the take up of tasks and responsibilities might delay.</li> <li>- The attractiveness of agriculture is still low among young people, and it is doubtful that this will change soon.</li> </ul> |

The project strategy is built on the following elements and principles:

#### **National Ownership and Leadership:**

The project has been instrumental in working with national partners to implement the project, strengthen framework conditions and build institutional capacity, and will continue to do so. It has also conducted studies and supported the creation of the SA and Agro Duo, the first SSO in Georgia. Now it is important to provide further support so AgroDuo to strengthen institutionally, sustain financially, expand its member network, diversify its services and participate in A-VET quality assurance in accordance with the mandate defined under relevant regulations.

Firstly, and most importantly, alignment with the Ministries' (MoES and MEPA) strategic documents and action plans (such as the VET Strategy Implementation Action Plan, the Agriculture and Rural Development Strategy and its Action Plan) is needed to ensure ownership and commitment by the Ministries and to ensure that their strategic objectives are pursued under the project.

Over the past 10 years, the project team has not only established excellent relations with the MoES and worked hand in hand with the Ministry and its agencies, but also contributed to the development, updating and implementation of the Ministry's SIAP. All project activities related to VET will be fully compliant with the

SA Action Plan and the Action Plan of the new VET Strategy. The Project log frame follows a similar structure to the Action Plan. It is also planned to integrate some of the Project staff into national structures to further strengthen national ownership, knowledge transfer and help phase out the project.

Working in line with MEPA strategies is more difficult, but working with sub-agencies of the MEPA has proved successful and will continue. In addition, the project will establish a close working relation with the EIEC for the implementation of AKIS recommendations (2.3.2), the development of a system for up-skilling/re-skilling (2.2.5) and the training of extension officers (1.1.3).

### **Macro, Meso and Micro level interventions**

- **At the macro level**, the project will contribute to system and policy development as well as institutional strengthening and coordination at the national level. Particular attention will be paid to the support of the SA and Agroduo to execute their mandate, strengthen institutionally and take national ownership on already established frameworks and systems. In addition, the project will contribute to increasing the attractiveness of vocational education and training, particularly among ethnic minorities, and strengthening aspects of short-term training, entrepreneurship, and digitalisation. To strengthen Agro Duo, the project will work closely with the GFA. An important aspect of this will also be to analyse opportunities and contribute to increasing the self-sustainability of the private sector involvement in VET. The project will closely monitor progress in the organisational development of key partners and institutions.
- **At the meso level**, the project will continue to work in selected pilot regions by engaging and supporting regional partners and creating networks at the regional level. Particular attention will be paid to the implementation of the AKIS recommendations at regional level and to supporting RICCs in developing AKIS for the regions they are responsible for. Strengthening of rural stakeholders will continue. Finally, the project will explore and test how capacity development models that stimulate the rural economy work, with a particular focus on capacity development for the smart specialisation approach. The project will identify niches in rural areas and support the process of providing relevant skills.
- **A particular focus is on the micro level** to provide technical and management support to selected service providers (colleges, RICCs/ICCs) to transform into skills hubs and role models for other service providers. These hubs and excellence centres will also be used to train and guide other colleges and ICCs. The project will work with schools in selected ethnic minority regions of Georgia to increase their participation in vocational education. Furthermore, the Project anticipates working with municipal administrations of rural areas to identify sectors possessing comparative advantage for local development and support to embedding skills development system.

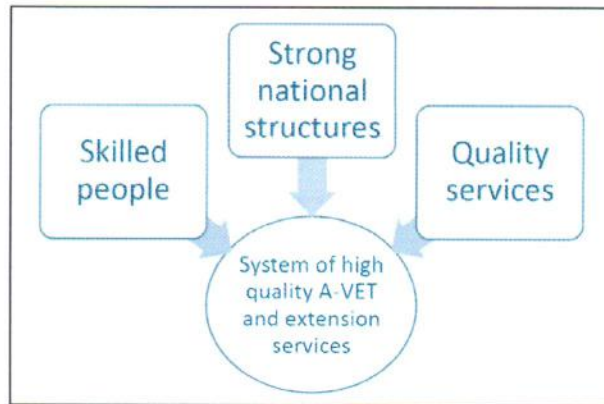
Private sector development will take place at all three levels (national, regional and local).

### **Interactions between people and links among institutions and services**

Interventions for phase 3 were again developed based on the assumption that there are three critical factors for successfully and sustainably building a system that provides high quality A-VET and extension services to secondary school graduates and farmers in Georgia.

|   |
|---|
| <b>Strong national structures – Skilled People – Quality Services</b> |
|---|

Having successfully created public-private partnership models for the coordination and provision of VET and guidance services by bringing together the public and private sectors in the last phase, it is important to strengthen these new structures during the consolidation phase. In the final phase of the project, special attention will also be paid to improving the quality of VET and extension services. Already established training programmes for the training of human resources (multipliers), who can provide different types of training and services and impart knowledge and practical skills to farmers, will be expanded. Efforts will also be made to better organise teaching and learning by revising curricula and introducing new blended learning programmes. In short, colleges and extension services are being supported to become centres of excellence. All this is illustrated in the figure below.



Critical factors for successful system development.

### **Private sector development and its mandate in VET**

Private sector development is one of the most important success factors in VET and has already started in the first and second phases. In the past, GFA has established itself as the representative of the private sector for A-VET. GFA was also instrumental in the establishment of Agro Duo, which has changed the situation. It is now important that GFA becomes a member of Agro Duo to further increase the legitimacy of the SSO in representing farmers in vocational education. The project will support Agro Duo and GFA to join forces and further strengthen Agro Duo through internal capacity building. The project will also temporarily cover part of the operating costs while devising a more sustainable funding mechanism so that Agro Duo can be independent in fulfilling its main functions.

Standardizing private sector participation and representation in VET in all occupations by scaling up the experience of the Agro Duo to new SSOs will be an important aspect of VET reform in the coming years. Together with Agro Duo, the Project will support the SA in exploring the preconditions of establishing additional SSOs applying the experience and practices of the Agro Duo as a model.

In cooperation with Agro Duo and GFA, the project will also expand the WBL and support the strengthening of individual farms as hosts for trainees in the various WBL programmes. It will advocate for special incentives for farms and food processing companies involved in the implementation of the WBL. Private companies should ensure accountability and long-term commitment (like the Swiss model).

Finally, the project will work with other private sector representatives, regional and national NGOs and service providers to strengthen their capacities. Qualified service providers will be identified to strengthen private sector representatives and support them in organizational development.

### **Holistic intervention along the entire VET Value Chain**

Accompanying measures along the VET value chain such as improving the image of VET, career guidance, labor market integration and promoting equal access and inclusion in VET are very important. The project will support SA to work towards an inclusive and equitable system where young people make the right choices for their future, have equal access to VET, improve their skills, knowledge and attitudes, and find jobs.

### **Linking A-VET and agricultural extension services**

Linking A-VET and agricultural extension has been promoted by the project from the beginning and is based on the following hypothesis:

- The **same expertise** is passed on to farmers during VET and extension sessions.
- **Similar infrastructure** is needed for A-VET & Extension.
- **Similar information/learning** material is needed: books, information materials, digital resources, etc.
- The **same experts** are needed, and A-VET teachers can also be used as extension officers and vice versa because they have a similar profile. Both need technical knowhow in agriculture (they must have a technical qualification) and both need pedagogical and facilitation skills.

- A **similar approach** is needed in A-VET and extension bearing in mind that farmers cannot stay away from their farms for long, that farms are often very isolated, that farmers are often very conservative, etc.
- The **distinction between A-TVET and extension is blurred**. Imparting knowledge and information to a farmer can be a two-hour advisory meeting with a farmer, a one-day information session at a college, a one-week course or a one-year training course. In a modular training approach, several modules together lead to an A-TVET qualification, while a short-term course is classified as an extension activity.

The project will continue to work closely with MoES and MEPA-related institutions to create more synergies between A-VET and agricultural extension.

### **Project implementation using a facilitation approach**

UNDP will adopt a facilitation approach to project implementation and delegate the implementation of all project components to national structures (with some agreed exceptions in relation to the specific topics, such as digital procurement, monitoring and evaluation, on-demand policy advice and evidence generation). UNDP's will provide overall oversight and technical backstopping, while national partners will take an active role in actual implementation of activities. Key elements of this approach include:

- *Decision making*: UNDP will create a conducive environment by providing the necessary information and advice to support the lead of relevant national partners in decision making.
- *Knowledge management*: UNDP will activate and share knowledge with national partners and stakeholders to foster innovation, especially in the areas of VET, extension and private sector involvement.
- *Networking*: UNDP will link public and private VET and extension service providers, farmers, MoES and MEPA related institutions, universities and research centers, international partners and other relevant stakeholders and information sources and facilitate close collaboration and exchange of knowledge and information.
- *Advocacy & neutrality*: UNDP will advocate for and protect the interests of the various stakeholders and vulnerable groups, while remaining neutral and impartial.
- *Inclusive participation*: UNDP will provide advice and will engage all segments of the community, including the most marginalised and disadvantaged groups.
- *Capacity Development and technical support*: UNDP will contribute to the capacity development of national partners and provide continuous technical support and policy consultancy on demand basis.
- *Innovation*: UNDP will contribute to the continuous innovation process in VET, Agriculture and Business development and will share information and documentation during meetings and other events.
- *Monitoring and evaluation*: UNDP will be involved in monitoring processes at partner level to provide advice and improve quality of the project.

It is expected that this approach will strengthen empowerment and ownership of national partners.

## **3. RESULTS AND PARTNERSHIPS**

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### **3.1 Overall goal**

The overall goal of the project is the following:

**Improved agricultural knowledge and skills contribute to increased productivity, income and employment of rural youth, women, and men in Georgia.**

Both MoES and MEPA have identified similar challenges that hinder rural development and the improvement of livelihoods in rural areas. **High unemployment rates** (especially among women), and the **insufficient availability of highly qualified jobs** have a negative impact on the rural economy. Both ministries cite the lack of skilled labour in various sectors, **low levels of vocational training, insufficient use of modern technologies and knowledge** and **limited investments in rural areas** as some of the key factors that need to be improved for rural areas to thrive.

The government has prioritised and allocated funds to promote investment in agriculture, food processing and infrastructure supporting agriculture and rural development. Access to modern agricultural machinery and technology is also being improved through the government's activities related to importing machinery and providing services to farmers. However, farmers will only be able to benefit from this change in national policy if they have the necessary skills, knowledge and competencies to deal with these new opportunities. In addition, farmers need to have access to information and extension services to make informed decisions that will affect the productivity of their farms.

In its new strategy, MEPA aims to modernise the agricultural sector by giving high priority to diversification, dissemination of innovative technologies and climate and environmentally sound agricultural practices. However, additional knowledge and information that do not automatically translate into higher productivity and income will not bring about change in the lives of farmers and rural communities. It is therefore important that at the impact level, the project aims to improve the lives of rural communities, with a focus on young people and farmers to enable them to increase their productivity and income. For secondary school graduates and established farmers, it is crucial not only to acquire new technical skills, but also to become entrepreneurial and integrate themselves into agriculture and beyond, either by working on their own farm or finding a job in a commercial enterprise. In this way, they can acquire more personal assets and have more financial means to meet basic needs for themselves and their families.

The project will focus on **governance and shared responsibility between the public and private sectors for improving quality of Agricultural services in Georgia**. It will work closely with public and private sector partners, operating at both national and regional levels, to support the development of a system of quality vocational training and extension services in agriculture that includes:

- Provision of trainings, standards, and programmes for public and private A-VET stakeholders in Georgia through effective collaboration with the SSOs
- Capacity strengthening of A-VET institutions, teachers, and extension officers for the delivery of high-quality services
- Digitalization of the system for increased accessibility, effectiveness and quality of advisory services in A-VET and extension
- System enabling A-VET graduates to acquire applicable knowledge and skills
- Increased satisfaction of trainees and employers with modernized A-VET system in Georgia

This dual intervention is expected to bring about sustainable change at the level of the system and service delivery and to have a lasting impact on the livelihoods of the farming population. The project follows a flexible approach that allows the work started to be consolidated and fully handed over to the national structures. The structural changes in rural communities as a result of agricultural modernisation and improved productivity, as well as the impact on the most vulnerable group of farmers, will be closely monitored and new appropriate rural development measures will be tested with a view to a possible new project.

The project will directly contribute to the achievement of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals No: 4 (ensure inclusive and quality education for all and promote lifelong learning) and No. 8 (promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work for all) and will also have an indirect impact on Goals No. 1 (no poverty), No. 2 (zero hunger) and No. 16 (Peace, justice and strong institutions).

### 3.2 Expected Results (Outcomes and Outputs)

The Project will support modern and newly created VET services, with a focus on dual VET and the development of flexible extension services that respond to the needs of different farmer groups. This will be achieved through the achievement of the following two outcomes:

| Overall Goal  | Outcomes   |
|---|--|
| <b>Improved agricultural knowledge and skills contribute to increased</b> | <b>1. Quality of agricultural VET and extension services in Georgia is enhanced due to</b> |

|  |   |
|--|---|
| productivity, income and employment of rural youth, women, and men in Georgia. | effective cooperation of public and private stakeholders.   |
|  | 2. Rural youth, women and men learn and apply relevant agricultural knowledge and skills, which are responding to the market needs. |

### Outcome 1: Quality of agricultural VET and extension services in Georgia is enhanced due to effective cooperation of public and private stakeholders.

The provision of quality services to improve the knowledge, skills and attitudes of young people and farmers by skilled professionals is a critical success factors addressed here. Quality of service has been high on the agenda of this project from the beginning, but achievements here have been less significant than in system development and governance. Therefore, special attention will be given to this area in the final phase. The project will support **VET institutions and extension providers to become Skills Hubs where needs and attributes of different groups of stakeholders are nurtured through assessment, support and a tailored approach to teaching and learning.** Individualized and personalized learning pathways will increase students' chances of success and prepare them for their further goals - study, training or employment.

Outcome 1 is achieved by the following 3 outputs:

Output 1.1: *A-VET public and private stakeholders trained, standards and programs elaborated through effective collaboration with SSOs / AgroDuo for the delivery of high-quality services*

Output 1.2: *Capacities/qualification of A-VET institutions, teachers and extension officers enhanced through collaboration of A-VET stakeholders*

Output 1.3: *Digitalization of the system enhanced to increase A-VET accessibility for users, effectiveness of public-private collaboration and quality of training/advisory services*

A first output focuses on the transformation of VET institutions and extension providers into Skills Hubs. The concept of skills hubs implies an expanded, broader and inclusive conceptualisation of skills provision taking into account innovation, pedagogy, social justice, lifelong learning, cross-cutting skills, organisational and professional learning and community needs. It also includes the development of an entrepreneurial culture and practice, which in turn can be seen as the main measure of organisational development dynamics.

Furthermore, the Project will support enhancement of A-VET teachers and in-company instructors' skills and capacities to deliver work-based learning programmes. Already introduced WBL and new extension models will strengthen practical ways of learning. In particular, the new SSO, Agro Duo, will be supported for the advancement of the WBL ecosystem and the elaboration of WBL regulations. Responsibilities for WBL will be transferred from GFA to Agro Duo. The enhancement of teachers and in-companies' instructor skills for WBL is also important, as well as collaboration between colleges and enterprises. On the AE side, blended learning mechanisms will be introduced, and services will be diversified in compliance with the home-based training concept.

Administrative staff and management of the VET providers will be trained and coached to improve systems, processes, and methodologies to meet the needs of the target group and provide quality services. A network will be established to promote learning and mutual exchange. The focus will be on expanding the training program of VET teachers and EOs, which was developed in Phase 2 and is currently only offered by one university. ToT training will be important here, as will the creation of synergies between the training for VET teachers and EOs.

Special attention will be given to cooperation with the SASC, which has become the first Skills Hub for agriculture in Georgia. The SASC, which has an international partnership with the Plantahof<sup>8</sup>, is supported in extending its approach to other regions. Other similar international exchange programmes are being

<sup>8</sup> Plantahof is a VET and extension service provider based in Landquart, Switzerland

promoted. Finally, it was noted that colleges have difficulties in engaging in business activities, although this has been allowed since the adoption of the new VET law. Together with selected colleges, a business model is to be developed to strengthen the entrepreneurial component of the colleges in a very practical way and at the same time increase the colleges' income and self-sustainability.

Further support and empowerment of the new strategic actors of Georgian VET System – SSOs – will be maintained at the meso level. In particular, Agro Duo, the first SSO established with the support of the project, will be supported to develop a business development strategy and action plan that will ultimately have a positive impact on increasing the SSO's self-sustainability. Agro Duo will be supported to define and expand its services and increase membership and stakeholders. Market-oriented skills profiles and a new student assessment model will be developed, and Agro Duo's experience and practice will be shared with other emerging SSOs.

In addition, it is important to better organise teaching and learning and align it with best practices. Agricultural training programs will be revised, and green economy sector skills will be streamlined, and other sectors possessing comparative advantage for the development of rural areas will be identified and supported. This also includes the revision of existing qualification and relevant VET and extension delivery capacities. The aim here is that programs are in line with international standards. Where necessary new innovative modules will be developed that will allow farmers to diversify their incomes (e.g. in agro-tourism).

Making use of new (digital) technologies the project will develop a blended learning concept and strengthen digital implementation capacities of service providers. This includes the improvement of digital knowledge management platforms, as well as support in digital accountability of VET colleges, development of relevant digital tools and alignment of existing digital platforms of the MEPA and MoES. A blended learning training program for teachers and farmers with a home-based practical component will be developed and piloted together with the SASC. Finally, colleges will be supported to conduct and assess labour market skills needs.

## **Outcome 2: Rural youth, women and men learn and apply relevant agricultural knowledge and skills, which are responding to the market needs.**

Strengthening the vocational training system to better respond to the needs of economic development in rural areas is increasingly seen as an important tool for adapting the labour force to the new needs and demands of sectoral diversification. Although agriculture is the main source of livelihood in rural areas and has growth potential, it poses a challenge to rural employment as an increasing share of rural household income comes from non-agricultural activities. This highlights the need for livelihood diversification in rural communities. The project will identify skills needs and develop additional training programmes for niche products and additional topics to promote rural development. The Project in cooperation with the local municipal administrations and VET providers will identify the need of revision and development of qualifications in rural tourism, rural construction, land management and other areas.

Recent policy changes in VET in Georgia have led to the development and introduction of a new model of VET governance that promotes equal and effective engagement of the public and private sectors in the governance of the VET. In the new institutional arrangement, important functions and responsibilities are delegated to new public and private institutions. In other words, a new VET governance apparatus has been created that facilitates the development of a value chain for VET policy design and implementation through the joint efforts of public institutions and the private sector. The project has played an important role in this process, and it is now important to support the consolidation of the new institutional arrangements and make them sustainable.

Outcome 2 is achieved by the following 3 outputs:

Output 2.1: *A-VET graduate students acquire applicable skills.*

Output 2.2: *Recipients of extension services obtain applicable knowledge in new technologies.*

Output 2.3: *Satisfaction with modernized A-VET system is increased among trainees and employers.*

In 2021, the Ministry of Labour and the Georgian Chamber of Commerce jointly established a non-commercial legal entity - the SA. The agency's new institutional model, based on a public-private partnership, was developed to ensure the quality and relevance of the VET system and to improve the coordination of VET among key stakeholders. The project will support SA in building its capacity by promoting digitalisation at the

SA, including automation of processes, digital accountability of colleges, digital tools and further development of existing platforms. It will also strengthen coordination in the development and dissemination of quality and accessible teaching and learning resources, which is currently uncoordinated and sporadic, and the development of a system for up-skilling/re-skilling. For the latter, cooperation with the EIEC is also crucial. Finally, the project will help harmonise the legal framework for VET reform and its implementation.

The development of a unified career guidance system involving all levels of education, including VET, is high on the SA agenda. This includes career guidance, counselling, and career planning, as well as continuous career planning and counselling services for youth and adults so that they can make informed career decisions and realise their potential. It also includes the active integration of graduates into the labour market. The project will support the SA's efforts. This will also include entrepreneurial training and coaching for graduates who want to start their own businesses, the elaboration of internship mechanisms between VET and extension, and the organisation of job fairs.

In 2020, the project commissioned an analysis of the Agricultural Knowledge and Information System (AKIS) in Georgia, which found that the Georgian AKIS includes a wide range of public and private actors. Despite the common will to strengthen AKIS in Georgia and the presence of nationwide networks and strong leaders driving change, the analysis pointed to a lack of coherence and coordination, as well as a lack of sustainability, skills and underestimation of farmers' needs. A number of relevant recommendations were made but have not yet been implemented. The project will support the EIEC in implementing these recommendations by strengthening cooperation at national and regional levels. At the same time, RICCs in two pilot regions will be supported to study and assess the actors in their local skills ecosystem and to improve cooperation between them. Finally, the flow of knowledge between research and practice as well as synergies and cooperation between VET and guidance will be promoted.

The project will continue to strengthen the capacity of rural stakeholders and facilitate broad participation at different levels of rural planning and development. Special attention and resources will be devoted to regions where the development of key competencies (e.g. digital literacy, foreign languages, social skills) is more challenging. Vocational training institutions and extension services will be supported to provide target groups with a variety of non-formal training opportunities to diversify their livelihoods.

VET should be accessible to all, regardless of age, gender, social background, religion, physical or mental ability, political or ethnic affiliation. Everyone should have the opportunity to learn, work and develop. The SA is aware of this and intends to establish a social inclusion fund and advocate for social support for students to be integrated into the voucher system. Given the large number of vulnerable groups, it would be beyond the project's capacity to make an impact here. However, the project will support the SA in its advocacy and conceptual work, and it is planned to pilot the social inclusion fund in at least one college in the region of Kvemo Kartli. The Project will analyse the results of proposed intervention vis a vis increased participation of ethnic minorities in VET and advocate gradual transfer of ownership and funding by the state.

### **3.3. Stakeholders, target groups, target regions and beneficiaries**

#### **3.3.1. Key stakeholders for VET**

As emphasized above, the project's contributions led to the introduction of a new model for VET governance that promotes equal and effective engagement of the public and private sectors in the governance of the VET sector. In 2021, the MoES and the Georgian Chamber of Commerce jointly established a non-commercial legal entity - **the Skills Agency (SA)**. The new institutional model of the SA, based on a public-private partnership, aims to ensure the quality and relevance of the VET system and improve the VET coordination among key stakeholders. In addition, the new VET strategy foresees the creation of Sector Skills Organisations (SSOs) that represent the private sector.

The new VET strategy 2022-27 (not yet approved) provides the framework for the reform implementation. Functions and responsibilities have been redistributed as follows:

- **The MoES** continues to carry the overall responsibility for VET and continues to be responsible for strategy development, data analysis, monitoring VET policy and funding, promoting equity and accessibility, and promoting and marketing VET.



- **The National Center for Educational Quality Enhancement (NCEQE)** is responsible for accrediting and licensing of vocational education, training and retraining programs, authorization of VET institutions and monitoring of VET institutions for meeting the authorization standards.
- **The Education Management Information System (EMIS)** is responsible for collection and safeguarding of education data.

#### The Skills Agency (SA)

The SA will play an important role in implementing the VET strategy and was established with the aim of promoting the development of modern skills tailored to the needs of the country's economy, promoting inclusive vocational education and development tailored to the needs of the individual, and promoting the internationalization of human capital development policy.

Its main duties include:

- Support in the creation/updating of VET standards;
- Support the creation/development of training tools and textbooks for VET;
- Support the introduction of innovative teaching approaches, including dual and work-based training;
- Facilitate/coordinate the participation of representatives of relevant sectors in the training and qualification process;
- Support the professional development of those involved in VET, including teachers;
- Support for inclusive and accessible vocational education and training and services for students, including career guidance services;
- Participation in monitoring and evaluation of VET reform, cooperation with international organizations and donor agencies, etc.
- is authorized to grant or withdraw SSO legal status to legal entities in the respective economic/occupational sectors.

One of the main objectives of the Skills Agency is to support the development and empowerment of new strategic actors and influencers of VET processes at the meso level - the Sectoral Skills Organisations (SSOs).

#### Sector Skills Organizations (SSOs)

The new legal framework<sup>9</sup> defines SSOs as non-entrepreneurial, non-commercial legal entities, which obtain the SSO status after successful compliance with the following criteria:

- Members should represent the specific business or employment sector,
- Should recognize and understand the SSO key functions,
- Should have a long-term development strategy describing how the SSO intends to implement the key SSO functions in the long term.

Key functions of SSOs include:

- Conduct analyses and defining skills needs in economic/employment sectors, development of PPPs, support VET program implementation, communication, etc.
- Develop occupational and educational standards in specific economic/employment sectors.
- Entrust and withdraw private companies the educational enterprise status, provide consulting, conduct monitoring.
- Develop and implement the VET policy in close cooperation with the SA.

#### **3.3.2. Key public stakeholders for extension**

The **Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture** has overall responsibility for agricultural extension in Georgia, which is currently preparing a new extension strategy (2022 - 2025) with FAO support.

<sup>9</sup> It is planned that the legal framework will be approved end of April 2022

In providing extension services, MEPA is supported by 9 RICCs and 50 ICCs. The Georgian Strategy for Agriculture and Rural Development 2021-2027 defines the development of competitive agricultural and non-agricultural sectors as one of the main objectives through the implementation of knowledge and awareness raising measures among farmers and entrepreneurs, the development of value chains with a focus on innovative technologies, the promotion of young farmers in rural areas and the improvement of their access to services. Institutionalised farmers' associations supported in the previous phase of the project apply a bottom-up approach to identify the needs of the sector within farming communities at the community and regional levels and ensure that they are involved in the process of designing training programmes and delivering extension services. Through participatory and inclusive approaches, Farmers' Boards ensure that the services provided are farm-based, practical and holistic. In doing so, they facilitate and make an important contribution to the implementation of the strategy to develop a competitive agricultural sector in Georgia. Farmers' needs identified on an ongoing basis by the RICCs and ICCs should be taken into account in the agricultural vocational training system, including the provision of short-term training. By extending the mandate of the Environmental Information and Training Centre to agriculture, MEPA will better anchor its positioning in agricultural vocational training and extension.

**The Environmental Information and Education Centre (EIEC)** of the MEPA was established on 14 May 2013. The main priority of the EIEC is to achieve the following goals:

- Promote environmental and agricultural education in Georgian society and raise public awareness;
- Support public participation in the decision-making process;
- Ensure access to information on environment and agriculture;
- Introduce and implement MEPA's integrated information technology policy.

The EIEC promotes sustainable development by fostering education on environmental components and providing access to comprehensive information.

**Municipalities.** Municipalities will be important stakeholders for the project, as the introduction of knowledge and skills development systems will be embedded as an integral part of the municipal development plans. The project envisages exploring opportunities for skills development systems as part of a smart specialisation strategy to support regions' competitive advantage.

### 3.3.3. Private stakeholders

In addition to the SSOs mentioned above, the main private actors include farmers' associations, large-scale farmers, input suppliers, food processors and other agribusiness companies, as well as private educational institutions and extension centers (mainly NGOs). The project focuses on cooperation with sectoral associations (SSOs) and providers of vocational training and extension.

**Agro Duo** was created in 2019 to advocate VET system development, including WBL, among governmental institution, private sector and other stakeholders contribute to human capital development in the sector through ensuring the provision of quality VET in agriculture. Its main functions include the following:

- Act as a representative sectorial counterpart on A-skills for authorities and other institutions;
- Develop occupational standards and contribute to educational standard development based on labor market needs in line with relevant legislation;
- Certify training companies for WBL in relevant field and facilitate WBL cycle in related skills;
- Contribute towards quality assurance in VET by development and implementation of qualification exams and by other means;
- Provide skills-related support services to member companies including educational module/program content development, capacity building, etc.

**Georgian Association of farmers:** The agricultural sector is very fragmented with thousands of smallholder farmers. This makes it impossible to work with individual farmers in the provision of VET. It is important that farmers are organised and represented by sector organisations or farmers unions.

The GFA has managed to steadily increase its membership base and currently has 1134 individual members and 182 farmer cooperatives. GFA has been instrumental in A-VET and took the lead for WBL. With the creation of Agro Duo the role of GFA in A-VET has now to be reviewed.

**SASC:** The Community College Swiss Agricultural School Caucasus is an unprecedented non-profit private initiative in Georgia's vocational education system. The main goal of the school is to serve as an example for a nationwide agricultural education structure. The school, which specializes in livestock breeding, dairy farming and cheese processing, is built according to Swiss standards and will work in three directions:

- Two-year VET program in cattle breeding and milk processing
- Short-term training of teachers from public VET colleges and extension specialists
- Short-term technical courses/training for farmers; extension services for farmers.

In addition to theoretical courses, the school will also offer practical training for the students. For this purpose, a dairy farm and a modern cheese factory have been built on the school's premises. Under the supervision of professional teachers, the students will carry out the daily work on the farm themselves: They prepare the feed for the farm, work in the laboratory, process milk, make dairy products and sell them in the school's own shop. In addition, a network of private farms is being established where the students will do their internships.

**The main private providers of extension services** are NGOs, which are funded by international donors, and private input providers, which are self-financing and provide farmers with the various inputs, ranging from seeds to mechanisation. Although this funding model is not sustainable, NGOs play an important role in providing services to farmers supplementary to the services that ICCs provide on municipal level at relatively lower cost. They have built trust among farmers and help them in various directions, ranging from business plan development to legal support for cooperative registration and other matters.

**The second important group among private extension service providers are farm input providers.** They have a wide range of agricultural clients in their portfolio, from micro farms to large commercial farms. In their farm input supply businesses, they mainly serve micro, small and medium farmers. For the large farms, they have a special VIP service on site. They play a key role in improving farmers' knowledge and skills. The staff of the private extension services need to be strengthened. Their participation in farmer advisory bodies is also crucial and should be taken into account when working with these bodies. In addition, the project will support joint activities between public and private extension providers. These joint activities could relate to the provision of bulk and digital extension to farmers, short-term training for farmers, demonstration plots, field days, etc.

#### **3.3.4. Donor community**

Several international donors support the government and the skills agency in their efforts to strengthen the vocational training sector, rural development and agricultural extension. These are mainly the EU, ADB, USAID, FAO, KFW/PEM, GIZ and SDC. A detailed list of these donors and their programmes is provided in Annexes 4 and 5. The project will seek cooperation and coordination with these initiatives as most of them also contribute to the implementation of the VET Strategy 2022-2027 and the Agriculture and Rural Development Strategy 2022-2027.

In terms of cooperation with SDC, the project will maximize synergies between UNDP and SDC supported programmes and convergence of activities.

The project will work closely with other SDC projects in rural areas, namely:

- The Kakheti Rural Development Project (MOLI), Phase 2, implemented by HEKS/EPER;
- the National Animal Identification and Traceability Systems (NAITS) project implemented by FAO;
- the Alliances Caucasus Program (ALCP) implemented by Mercy Corps.

These projects support farmers in developing agricultural value chains, improving access to finance and improving agricultural practices, thus creating the conditions and opportunities for collaboration between implementing partners and the project. The knowledge and skills development components will help create

an enabling environment for the application of more effective agricultural and agriculture-related technologies, private investment and access to finance.

UNDP will continue co-chairing the VET donor coordination format together with EU Delegation and promote joint action, coordination and cooperation.

### 3.4. Target groups

The following institutions and their staff (that are described above) are direct target groups and important partners in achieving the intended project impact:

- The Georgian Ministry of Education and Science (MoES)
- The Ministry for Environmental Protection and Agriculture (MEPA)
- The Skills Agency (SA)
- The National Centre for the Improvement of Educational Quality (NCEQE)
- The Rural Development Agency
- The Environment Information and Education Centre (EIEC)
- Agro Duo
- The SASC

#### Service Providers:

- **7 public A-VET colleges**<sup>10</sup> in 7 regions of Georgia
- **Short-term training** providers in the regions of Georgia
- **10 MEPA Information Consultancy Centers** in 6 regions (including the 4 regional Centers)
- **3 – 5 non-state extension service providers (NGOs)** at regional level. Currently, these are Apkhazintercont in Racha, Union Samkaro in Samtskhe-Javakheti, AFAD in Samegrelo and Centre of Innovations in Guria. The partners in the new phase of the project will be selected in line with UNDP rules and regulations.

#### Indirect target groups (or staff from target groups):

- **Up to 60 Extension workers** (employed by the ICCs) will receive re-training while 20 will participate in a new course for extension workers that will lead to certification
- **Up to 10 Multipliers (ToT)** will be trained on providing farm management and entrepreneurship courses;
- Every year, up to **50 A-VET teachers** will benefit directly or indirectly from capacity strengthening activities (training and others);
- **Up to 15,000 farmers** will benefit from face-to-face, group consultations/extension and short-term trainings;
- **Up to 2,500 A-VET Student** that should be enrolled during the 3 years period (including WBL students);<sup>11</sup>
- **Up to 70 WBL students** that should be enrolled during the project period.<sup>12</sup>
- **Up to 60 NEET youth** entering labour market;
- **Up to 100 ICC clients** apply new technologies;
- **Up to 15 VET students, teachers and extensionists** will benefit from international internships (5 per year);
- **Local and national level sectorial farmers associations, The GFA farmers Council** and agriculture cooperatives and private services providers will be actively involved into coordinating activities and piloting of different models of cooperation in vocational training and extension services provision.

<sup>10</sup> This includes Universities that offer VET programs.

<sup>11</sup> Currently average 350 students a year are enrolled. The project aims at an annual increase of 10%.

<sup>12</sup> Currently 54 students are enrolled. The project aims at an annual increase of 20%.

### 3.5. Beneficiaries

The direct beneficiaries of the project are VET graduates (including vulnerable groups in selected regions), NEETS, farmers, including potential farmers (secondary school graduates enrolling in a VET programme) and already established farmers running commercial or subsistence farms. The project will ensure that the different needs of these groups are identified and addressed and reflected in project activities. In particular, the needs of the adult and youth rural population, including the unemployed, will be addressed by providing flexible models of formal and non-formal training and extension to ensure their employment or self-employment. This includes rural extension services, participation in information and demonstration events, short-term training and access to information for those who want to have their own farm or start their own agricultural business.

The following number of farmers and students will be supported:

- 10'000 smallholder farmers who will benefit from both extension services and short-term training;
- 1'500 VET students, including women, youth, disadvantaged groups and NEETs;
- Vulnerable groups that will be targeted by the Social Inclusion fund (exact number to be determined).

Indirect beneficiaries of the project include all VET entrants and graduates, as the overall support for SA is also expected to have a positive impact on the total number of VET entrants and graduates. These numbers have dropped from 18,595 enrolments in 2013 to 12,521 in 2018, but it is expected that with the establishment of the SA, the increase in government funding allocated to VET and the lifting of COVID 19 restrictions, these numbers will soon increase again.

### 3.6. Target region and target colleges

As for **outcome 1**, the project will continue to support 6 public colleges and private training centre in 6 target regions (Guria, Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti, Imereti, Racha-Lechkhumi and Kvemo Svaneti, Samtskhe-Javakheti, Adjara), of which four were already supported in Phase 2 (see table below). In addition, the project envisages to explore skills development needs in green economy sectors, niche product development and various value chains for which target regions will be identified.

As for **outcome 2**, the project will work at the national and regional level with 10 ICC (including 4 RICCS) in target regions of Georgia. The strengthening of institutions and systems will benefit the whole country.

Table 2 provides an overview of the target regions and target schools and shows the regional presence of other SDC projects.

**Table 2: Target regions and target colleges**

|   | Region and location  | Criteria                           |   |                                |                               |
|---|--|------------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
|   |  | Presence of SDC supported projects | Gov. priority in establishing new service providers | Existence of Extension Service | Existence of an A-VET College |
| 1 | Kvemo Kartli Region<br>Locations in Marneuli and Dmanisi for neighbouring areas coverage | X                                  | X   | X                              |                               |

|   |   |   |  |   |                          |
|---|---|---|--|---|--------------------------|
| 2 | <b>Racha Lechkhumi Region</b><br>Location in Ambrolauri with local and neighbouring coverage  | X |  | X | Erkavani Blauenstein EDU |
| 3 | <b>Samtskhe Javakheti Region</b><br>Locations in Akhaltsikhe with neighbouring areas coverage | X |  | X | Opizari                  |
| 4 | <b>Samegrelo – Zemo Svaneti Region</b><br>location in Senaki and neighbouring areas coverage  | X |  | X | Zugdidi University       |
| 5 | <b>Imereti Region</b><br>Location in Bagdadi for neighbouring areas coverage                  | X |  | X | Iberia College           |
| 6 | <b>Guria Region</b><br>Location in Ozurgeti and Goraberejouli for neighbouring areas coverage | X |  | X | College Gantiadi         |
| 7 | <b>Ajara AR</b><br>Kobuleti college   | X |  |   | Kobuleti College         |

## 4. CROSS CUTTING ISSUES

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Seven cross-cutting themes have been identified that are relevant to all aspects of the project. The activities under the different outputs are directly or indirectly related to these cross-cutting themes and have been designed in such a way that many of them will have a positive impact on them. The following themes were identified:

**Entrepreneurship.** Entrepreneurial skills are increasingly important to help the workforce adapt to the changing demands of the economy. VET and AE systems can play an important role in helping young people acquire these skills. These skills relate both to an entrepreneurial mindset and to a range of competences needed to start and run a successful business. Entrepreneurial skills benefit everyone, especially students and existing farmers, whether they start a business or not, as entrepreneurial skills can be beneficial in any workplace. Since in agriculture most farmers are self-employed, entrepreneurship is particularly important. In VET, entrepreneurship programmes and modules give students the tools to think creatively and become effective problem solvers. In AE, farm management and other non-technical modules will help farmers become competitive and profitable in the long run. In addition, relevant optional technical modules such as basic skills in machinery repair, carpentry, woodworking, masonry, mechanics and tourism will help young farmers discover new activities that can be useful to them on their farms, but also open up opportunities for self-employment. Guidance and coaching services to help graduates of the VET system make the transition to work will further support these efforts.

Spreading an entrepreneurial mindset will be one of the main priorities of the project and a practical approach to entrepreneurship is crucial. Colleges need to think entrepreneurially and act as businesses to show students what entrepreneurship looks like in practice, rather than just offering theoretical courses.

The opportunity to apply the knowledge in practice is very important here. Special attention is given to university graduates and farmers who already have their own business/farm, as they are more open to coaching and counselling.

**Digitalisation.** One of the few positives of the COVID 19 pandemic was the discovery of the potential of digital working and learning in daily life. Digitalisation is becoming more and more integrated into our daily routine just as we've been spellbound by our smartphones in recent years, in the future young farmers are likely to put on their digital glasses or consult other devices that will help them analyze their work and make decisions. Digital tools can support Georgian farmers in providing safe, sustainable and quality food. Today, many farmers are already using digital technologies such as smartphones, tablets, in-field sensors, drones and satellites. These technologies provide a range of farming solutions such as remote measurement of soil conditions, better water management and livestock and crop monitoring. Blended learning has also become more important in recent years to improve the access to and quality of learning. And finally, digitalization helps us to automate procedures and processes in the administration of VET and extension.

The digitization efforts initiated in phase 2 of the project will be strengthened and consolidated.

**Internationalization.** In today's age of global knowledge and technology, networked thinking and global awareness are increasingly seen as important and sought-after qualities. This project is a living example of the positive impact that internationalization can have on strengthening VET and extension systems. Systems in other countries were analyzed and studied and then adapted to the local context. As the current labor market requires graduates to have international, foreign language and intercultural skills to interact in a global environment, institutions are putting more emphasis on internationalization.

For the agricultural sector, much can be learned from international engagement, not only in terms of educational management and extension, but also in terms of private sector organization or new agricultural techniques. This gives the project a global dimension and promotes international exchange and learning. Furthermore, the international engagement will contribute to innovation and increase the attractiveness of vocational training and extension. It is a contribution to social and cultural development.

The project will continue to support the development of international partnerships to promote exchange, learning and sharing of good practices between like-minded organisations. Exchange visits between peers (e.g. teachers) and international internships for trainees and farmers will again be supported.

**Environment and Green Skills.** We are at a turning point and our survival depends on acting quickly to adapt and mitigate the impact of human activities on the environment. These changes require a shift in values, mindsets, attitudes and skills so that we can all be part of, contribute to and benefit from the process of change. Therefore, VET can contribute either positively or negatively to environmental protection. The integration of environmental concerns and green skills into VET aims at averting the risks of environmental degradation and improving the sustainability of agro ecosystems. Therefore, these aspects need to be integrated into all training modules and extension packages. The integration of green competences in learning programmes goes beyond agricultural professions and is even at the beginning of creating completely new professions such as solar technician and others.

The project will be implemented considering possible negative impacts on the environment and considering its institutional, policy and operational aspects. Technical assistance will be provided to VET institutions in applying best practices in implementing environmentally sustainable training and extension programs

**Gender mainstreaming.** Between 2013 and 2017, the average participation of girls in VET was 43%, which is quite commendable. However, the situation is less impressive in the A-VET professions with only 20 % female trainees. In other occupations, the discrepancy between male and female trainees is even more dramatic. In construction, for example, the share of female trainees is only 2%.

The project regularly tracks and analyses the incentives and disincentives for each gender in the different VET occupations. Tracking of gender participation is carried out at different stages of the VET process: application, completion and (self-)employment, in order to analyse gender differences in VET and extension (including social and cultural aspects). The project will then work to increase women's participation.

A high proportion of women will be ensured by promoting equal opportunities at every stage of implementation, and training modules will be offered on topics of particular interest to women. Special qualification packages are being developed that are primarily aimed at women farmers (agro-tourism, direct agricultural sales).

The target population will be sensitised through vocational guidance and information campaigns so that women and men can make informed decisions regarding vocational training. At the same time, the project will explore further opportunities to use vocational training and counselling services for the economic empowerment of rural women. Project partners will be encouraged to improve gender equality.

The project will adopt a non-discriminatory approach and ensure proactive participation of women in the proposed activities - training, extension and coaching in agriculture.

**Inclusiveness and leaving no one behind.** Inclusion is a high priority not only for the Georgian government, but also for SDC and UNDP. Inclusion is embedded in the country strategies of SDC and UNDP and the new VET strategy also promotes equal access and inclusion in VET. The challenges are evident at three levels:

- How to find the most disadvantaged families? because they do not receive the necessary information in time?
- How to retain them? because they do not have the means (transport, food, accommodation) to participate in training programmes?
- How to integrate them into the labour market? because they do not dare to apply freely for a job and attend interviews?

Access to education and vocational training opportunities should be a right for all groups of the population, regardless of social or economic affiliation or geographical location in the State of Georgia. To achieve this, the SA will pay special attention to the needs of different target groups and provide special services for vulnerable groups, including ethnic minorities, students with special educational needs, etc. However, access to the system by different target groups is still not guaranteed, mainly due to the lack of financial resources. The SA intends to establish a social inclusion fund and the project will pilot the fund in at least one college. It is hoped that this will encourage other donors to participate in inclusion activities on a larger scale.

**Media and communication.** The image of VET and in particular A-VET is a combination of attitudes, associations and information that significantly influence young people's educational decisions. It is deeply rooted in social structures and traditions. Changing the image of VET takes a lot of effort and time. While there are a variety of factors, such as the quality of services, political will or the perception of beneficiaries, the media plays an important role in changing the perception of politicians and civilians.



The project will continue to advocate for the provision of quality vocational education and training in Georgia and increase capacities of media to prominently feature VET in the media.

## 5. RISK ANALYSIS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

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Project implementation is associated with various risks related to political issues, the economic situation in Georgia, environmental issues and farmer motivation. This means that a number of risk mitigation measures should be implemented to ensure strong commitment and well-designed new partnership models between the target institutions that also take into account aspects of long-term sustainability (see Annex 8 for a more detailed description of the risks).

Monitoring of risks is the responsibility of the project manager and will be integrated into UNDP's work plan and relevant reporting procedures to project partners and the donor.

The main risks that could affect the implementation of the project have been identified as follows:

### **Enforcement of VET legislation and political will to increase government funding**

Various new strategic documents of both ministries are available and confirm the importance of the interest in VET, A-VET and AE. Considering the fact that these strategies are newly developed, they are not expected to change. However, the different interests of MEPA and MoES could have a negative impact on cooperation and pose some risks. A major risk is that the government is not able to enforce the new VET legislation and does not allocate sufficient resources for the implementation of action plans related to the strategies. It is assumed that:

- The new VET legislation will be enforced;
- The Government will assume its financial responsibility and increase its financial contribution to A-VET and extension services;
- The new VET strategy will attract additional resources;
- The political will to transfer responsibilities to emerging institutions is in place;
- MEPA and MoES coordinate their A-VET and AE efforts, cooperate and share responsibilities.

### **Mitigation strategies include:**

- Continue to advocate for A-VET and AE and conduct activities to make VET more popular;
- Support the implementation and proper enforcement of the VET legislation.
- Diversify funding sources by convincing the private sector to become more involved and assist colleges in carrying out economic activities by sharing best practices.
- Sensitise government to provide more funding for VET and AE.
- Continuous dialogue and involvement of both ministries in project implementation.

### **Interpretation of the new VET strategy creates confusion and misunderstanding**

The interpretation and implementation of the new VET strategy are the crucial elements for reforming the current VET system through the introduction of SAs and SSOs. The new SA, together with the SSOs, should be the cornerstones of the new system and play a key role in institutionalizing the new approach. The establishment of a national extension agency (RDA) is also a crucial element for demand-driven extension services for farmers, as it should play the role of a national coordinating and quality assurance body for public extension and PPP formats. However, it is conceivable that the introduction of these new structures will raise questions and, at best, meet with resistance and misunderstanding. Various aspects relating to the set-up of the new structures and the distribution of responsibilities need to be discussed further and clarified.

### **Mitigation strategies include:**

- Active consultations, advocacy and providing of evidence that the new structures are more effective.
- Continue lobbying and promoting the benefits of private sector involvement in VET;
- Promote best practices (national and international).

### **Transformation of colleges into Skills hubs**

The structural and functional model of the new generation of VET institutions in Georgia is built on two contemporary concepts widely used in VET: Centers of Excellence (CoVEs) and Skills Hubs (SH). Skills

Hubs (SH) are often used to refer to a structural/functional model of VET - a collaborative platform that enables governments, employers and VET providers to work together on innovative solutions and developments in the VET sector. It also implies an expanded, broader and inclusive conceptualization of skills provision - taking into account innovation, pedagogy, social justice, lifelong learning, cross-cutting skills, organizational and professional learning and community needs.

The transformation of colleges into skills hubs is an important element of the new VET strategy - a very ambitious goal that presupposes that the necessary knowledge and experience are available in the existing VET institutions or at least in Georgia. This is not necessarily the case.

**Mitigation strategies include:**

- Active support to the SA and colleges in the transformation process
- Using SASC as role model for other colleges.
- Analyzing the potential and needs of individual colleges to become Skills Hubs and development of a methodology to support transformation.
- Training and coaching of college administration.
- Support colleges to develop economic activities.

**Low interest of youth in agricultural professions**

Attracting young people to the agricultural sector and keeping them there remains a challenge in Georgia. Interest in agricultural professions is low, as is enrolment in VET institutions. When considering career choices, many young people in Georgia tend to avoid agriculture and choose occupations that require less manual labor and offer better employment and income prospects. Young people can only be attracted to work in agriculture if they can earn an income large enough to ensure their personal development and the development of their families.

**Mitigation strategies include:**

- Promoting entrepreneurship skills, and agrobusiness, including training and coaching;
- Teaching of modern technologies and mechanization.
- Conducting information events to attract more young people to agricultural careers.
- Linking agriculture to rural development.

## 6. SUSTAINABILITY AND SCALING UP

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With regard to the sustainability of the project, a first important step was taken by aligning the project objectives with the national strategies and priorities as well as the action plans of the public and private sectors since the beginning of the project. The VET strategy of Georgia 2022-27 and the Georgian Strategy for Agricultural and Rural Development 2021 - 27 and their action plans were both considered in the preparation of the consolidation phase of the project.

The efforts of phase 1 and 2 of the project have led to the creation of new national structures owned by the government and the private sector, which further contributes to the sustainability of the project. Project sustainability can be looked at from three angles.

**Institutional sustainability.** The involvement of national public and private actors in all phases of the project was already the case in phase 1 and 2 and led to the establishment of the SA and Agro Duo. These two institutions now have the main responsibility for VET (SA) and A-VET reforms' implementation. The strengthening of these two institutions will continue and they will lead the implementation of various project activities. Part of the project team will also be moved to the SA and work in its premises, while the UNDP team will be downsized and have a steering, coordinating and advisory role. The creation of this new structure for VET governance and assigning responsibility for the implementation of the Project's interventions in extension provision domain will further enhance sustainability. The responsibility for the implementation of the project lies, as far as possible, with the national actors.

**Technical sustainability.** Training, re-training and extension services are sustainable if they meet the needs of the beneficiaries, if they have a direct impact on increasing productivity and income, if extension support for the proposed new technologies is locally available and if the investment costs for new technologies are affordable. The training programmes and extension packages developed over the past 10 years will be revised and consolidated as needed. This work will be carried out by national experts, and it is also important that newly developed vocational training and extension packages are nationally owned. Close involvement of Agro Duo will be pushed. An expansion of the programmes will also take place. It is important that training activities and services are operational, practical, holistic, modular, include a self-learning component and are delivered by qualified teachers and counsellors. Finally, the establishment of so-called Skills Hubs will also contribute to technical sustainability.

**Financial sustainability.** Increasing financial sustainability is the most difficult of the three aspects. It is unrealistic to expect that beneficiaries will be able to bear much of the cost of training and extension services, except for a very small group of large farmers. As far as VET services are concerned, it is also the responsibility of the government to provide young people with free or at least heavily subsidised training. The project will work to ensure that farmers are the backbone of Georgian society and investing in their training will have a positive impact on the whole country. The financial commitment of the MoES to VET has increased and is already commendable. The ratio of SA to the total VET spending of the MoES is 16% in 2022. As for MEPA's financial commitment, it is expected that the RDA will gradually increase financial allocations to reach a positive impact on the financial sustainability of extension activities.

A major challenge is the financial involvement of the private sector. In order to guarantee the sustainability of VET, it would be important that the operational costs of Agro Duo are covered by the private sector. However, this will not be the case until the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> phase. However, the project will support Agro Duo in developing a funding strategy and it is hoped that the financial independence of Agro Duo will at least slightly improve during the next 3 years.

Project funds will be used mainly for institutional and systemic development, development and testing of new learning materials and training programmes, improvement of learning infrastructures, institutional strengthening, training of multipliers and development of service delivery systems. The running costs of training and extension institutions and the direct costs of training and extension activities should be borne by the government or financed by private investors or through income-generating activities.

## 7. MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

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### 7.1. Project Institutional Set-up

**Project Governance Arrangements:** The project will be implemented under the National Implementation Modality (NIM), with the MoES as the implementing partner. UNDP will support the implementation of the

project (Letter of Agreement between UNDP and the Government for the Provision of Support Services is attached as Annex 14).

The project funds will be managed according to UNDP rules and regulations. The project will be implemented in close collaboration with MEPA, MoES, SA, Agro Duo, RDA, EIEC and partners, like SASC and VET colleges, which will serve as Responsible Parties (RP) of the project. Where necessary, project activities will be coordinated with relevant local authorities and other local stakeholders.

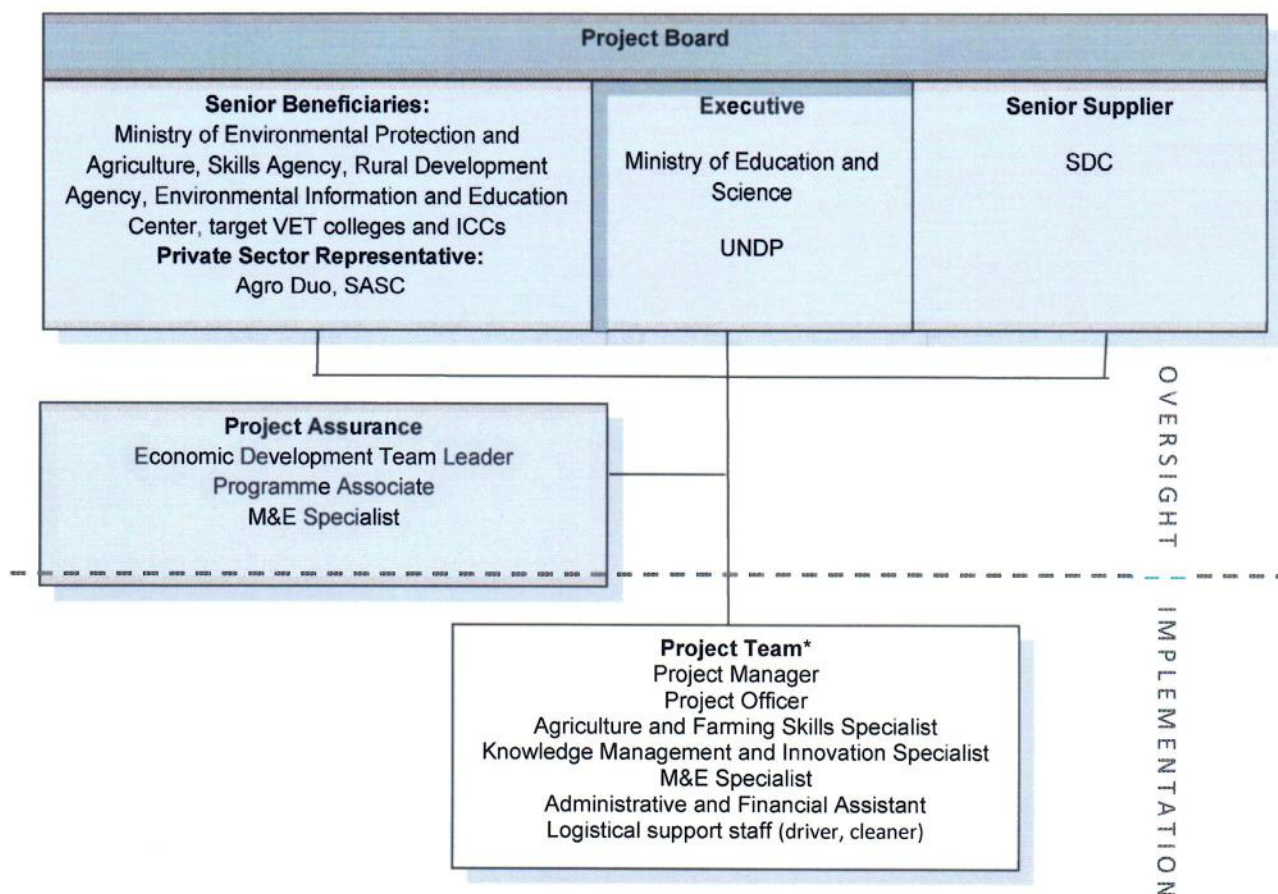
A Project Board will be established to oversee the overall strategic direction of the project, with representation from suppliers, implementers, and beneficiaries. The project Board will be composed of the following permanent members: MoES, MEPA, RDA, EIEC, SA, SDC, UNDP and Agro Duo and SASC with an observer status.

The project Board will function as the overall coordination, management and decision-making body of the project and will meet at least twice a year. The Project Board will be **chaired by UNDP** and the **Project Manager (PM) will serve as the Secretary** of the Project Board. He/she ensures the preparation of the meetings and the drafting of the minutes. The main tasks of the Project Board include:

1. Approval of project policies, strategies and concepts;
2. Approval of progress reports, annual work-plans including implementation modalities and budgets.
3. Facilitate relations and cooperation with external stakeholders (donors, other Government units, supporters of the project, etc.);
4. Monitoring the overall progress of the project;
5. Confirming, where appropriate, the proposed contractual modalities in accordance with the agreed workplan.
6. Provide overall guidance on policy and direction for the project.

The UNDP Economic Development Team Leader, the respective Programme Associate and the UNDP M&E Specialist will assume the role of project quality assurance. The project assurance team acts as an objective quality monitoring body and reviews the progress of the project and the quality of the outcomes and outputs. Prior to the meetings of the Project Committee, the Project Leader shall duly present the progress report on the previous period and the plan for the next period.

## Project Organisational Structure



\* The Project Team structure will be decreased to Project manager, Project Officer and Administrative and Finance Assistant from January 2023

**Management and implementation modalities:** Day-to-day activities are coordinated and managed by a **Project Team (PT)**.

In accordance with UNDP rules and regulations, the PT is responsible for mobilising various inputs for the implementation of the project components and activities according to the approved work plan. The PT is headed by a Project Manager and includes other staff as described in 7.2. The main tasks of the PT include (but are not limited to):

- Developing work-plans for approval by the Project Board in accordance with the project document, the log frame, the budget and UNDP rules and regulations.
- Ensuring smooth implementation and coordination of all activities;
- Managing grants and contracting;
- Ongoing monitoring and quality assurance of all activities;
- Capacity building of key partners;
- Networking of stakeholders, and technical institutions, including knowledge management and learning;
- Preparation of documents for the Project Board meetings, organization of meetings and preparation of minutes;
- Supporting the development of guidelines, policies and strategy papers.

The PT will work closely with MoES, MEPA, SA, RDA, Agro Duo, GFA and other project partners. Part of the proposed activities will be implemented by MoES and MEPA agencies, the SA or by Agro Duo/GFA (as

indicated above and in the budget). Other activities will be implemented under contracts in accordance with UNDP rules and regulations.

The project will have an office in Tbilisi where the project team will be located and manage the project activities.

## 7.2. Staffing

The UNDP project team will be involved in project implementation in the following composition: Project Manager, Project Officer, VET Specialist, Agriculture and Farming Skills Specialist, Knowledge Management and Innovation Specialist, M&E Specialist, Administrative and Financial Assistant, Logistical Support Staff.

This staff composition will be reshuffled to the key project implementing team (project manager, project officer and administrative and financial assistant) from January 2023 and project specialists will be transferred to the structures of main implementing partner organizations (Skills Agency, National Center of Education Quality Enhancement, Rural Development Agency and Environmental Education and Information Center) on individual basis.

The project staff will perform the following tasks:

- **The PM** will ensure the implementation of the project activities according to the project proposal, budget and log frame and will lead and guide the project team in achieving the results. The PM is responsible for the overall administrative, financial and human resource management. He/she will build and maintain partnerships with national and international stakeholders as well as with the SDC and act as secretary of the project Board. He/she will also coordinate all activities related to capacity building of service providers and project partners. The PM will have proven skills and practical experience in agriculture, vocational training or organizational development and capacity building. He/she will have overall responsibility for M&E and will work with both internal and external evaluators of the project. The PM will work with policy makers to ensure sustained institutional and political support for the project initiatives.
- **The Project Officer** will provide support to the PM with the analytical work and preparation of relevant assessment, analytical reports and overviews on the ongoing economic and human capital development reforms. He/she will be responsible to coordinate work of the Projects national and international consultants. He/she will work with policy makers and institutions in A-VET to contribute to the sustainability of activities initiated by the project. He/she will identify new opportunities in the A-VET and education sector to support inclusiveness, WBL and other new concepts and directions.
- **The VET Specialist** will provide technical expertise related to skills development systems (WBL system development, SSO system development, NEETs), education quality enhancement area and institutional support to SA. From January 2023, the Specialist is expected to take relevant responsibilities at the SA and NCEQE for implementing activities in the above areas.
- **The Agriculture and Farm Skills Specialist** will provide technical expertise and support on agriculture and farm skills issues. He/she will coordinate regional extension and knowledge transfer activities for farmers and manage and supervise implementing partners and service providers. He/she will collaborate RDA and the EIEC, with farmer organizations and ICCs at the regional level and support their capacity building activities. As of January 2023, the Specialist is expected to transfer to RDA and EIEC for the implementation of activities in the above areas and other UNDP implementing partners.
- **The Knowledge Management and Innovation Specialist** will be responsible for the design, analysis and implementation of knowledge management and innovation components and provide guidance on conducting studies, comparative analysis, and reviews. He/she will be responsible for identifying capacity gaps among project partners and developing and facilitating capacity building

programmes. He/she will develop a detailed timeline for the above programmes. As of January 2023, the Specialist is expected to take over the responsibility of implementing the activities in the above areas at the SA and SASC.

- **The Finance and Administration Assistant** is responsible for finance, procurement, recruitment, logistics and reporting. He/she is responsible for the timely monitoring and updating of work plans and related budgets. He/she monitors project expenditure and informs the PM of any issues related to deliveries. He/she checks, processes and records all payments, manages the invoices and expense claims received, codes the items with the agreed budgets and initiates payments.
- **The M&E and Grants Specialist** will work with the Project Manager and short-term M&E experts to develop and populate the comprehensive monitoring matrix. He/she is responsible for data collection and entry into the system. He/she works with other team members, contractors and grantees to consolidate monitoring data and enter it into the system. He/she is also responsible for conducting or outsourcing the tracer study. He/she serves as the main point of contact for grantees who need assistance in using the Foundation's grant portal to submit applications and requirements. As of January 2023, this position will be abolished as UNDP implementing partners will take the lead in implementing project activities.
- The logistical support staff will consist of a **cleaner** and a **driver/logistics** officer who will provide logistical support to project staff.

The UNDP Country Office staff listed below will provide support and services for the smooth implementation of project activities (including programme planning, monitoring and evaluation, visibility) and will devote part of their working time to this:

- **The Economic Development Team Leader** will provide quality assurance for the project by supporting Project Board meetings, leading the preparation of planning and management tools and facilitating coordination within UNDP, other UN agencies and concerned stakeholders.
- **The Programme Associate** supports, advises and ensures the quality of project management staff in human resources, financial and procurement matters, including financial reporting to the client and donors.
- **The Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Officer** supports the establishment of a rigorous monitoring system, including individual components, and is responsible for the external evaluation of the project.

In addition to permanent project staff, external consultants will be recruited to provide specific technical inputs and expertise for studies and assessments, evaluations and training programme development, and more. It is also planned to offer internships to international students to support the project and its contractors and implementing partners in conducting surveys and analyses, and in building partnerships with international universities.

### 7.3. Visibility and communication

Promoting agriculture and VET as an interesting option for young people, improving the image of agriculture in Georgian society and increasing public support remain very important as young people's interest in agricultural activities is very limited. The promotion of VET, and in particular A-VET, is no longer a key activity of the project in this consolidation phase but improving the image of VET and promoting VET as the first educational choice for young people in Georgia is an integral part of the SA Action Plan and is also high on Agro Duo's agenda. It remains a cross-cutting issue for the project and UNDP will continue to improve visibility and communication wherever possible and:

1. enable and ensure wider public awareness of the reform of national TVET and extension systems.
2. promote project activities to ensure a high degree of visibility of the interventions implemented as well as the roles of the different actors.



3. Strategic and coherent communication of project plans, achievements and results, targeting key audiences and using all the different information channels, public campaigns and information resources of the project partners.

## 8. PROJECT BUDGET

The total budget for the 3-year project period 2022 – 2025 is USD 4,519,444, of which USD 44,004 is RC Levy and project budget is USD 4,475,440. SDC contributes USD 4,444,444 (including RC Levy) 1% to the total amount while UNDP will contribute USD 75,000. The MoES, ADB and other UNDP programmes contribute significantly to the implementation of the VET strategy through the SA. Details are provided in Annex 3.

Other donors contributing to the VET strategy are USAID, GIZ and the EU. These funds are managed by the international partners and are not channeled through the SA.

The following table gives an overview of the total budget for this project. A more detailed budget for the project has been prepared and is presented in Annex 2.

### VET Phase 3: Budget September 2022 – August 2025

|   | Sept-Dec<br>2022 | 2023             | 2024             | Jan-Aug<br>2025  | Total            |
|---|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| <b>Programme costs</b>  |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |
| <b>1. Enhanced quality of A-VET and extension services due to effective cooperation of public and private stakeholders</b>  | <b>20,000</b>    | <b>790,000</b>   | <b>642,000</b>   | <b>430,000</b>   | <b>1,882,000</b> |
| 1.1. A-VET public and private stakeholders trained, standards and programs elaborated through effective collaboration with SSOs / AgroDuo for the delivery of high-quality services | 10,000           | 395,000          | 292,000          | 160,000          | 857,000          |
| 1.2: Capacities/qualification of A-VET teachers and extension officers enhanced through collaboration of A-VET stakeholders   | 10,000           | 285,000          | 270,000          | 225,000          | 790,000          |
| 1.3: Digitalisation of the system enhanced to increase A-VET accessibility for users, effectiveness of public-private collaboration and quality of training/advisory services       | 0                | 110,000          | 80,000           | 45,000           | 235,000          |
| <b>2. Rural youth, women and men learn and apply relevant agricultural knowledge and skills responding to the labour market needs</b>   | <b>20,000</b>    | <b>633,190</b>   | <b>510,000</b>   | <b>341,000</b>   | <b>1,504,190</b> |
| 2.1: A-VET graduate students acquire applicable skills  | 10,000           | 250,000          | 210,000          | 140,000          | 610,000          |
| 2.2: Recipients of extension services get applicable knowledge in new technologies  | 10,000           | 275,190          | 220,000          | 145,000          | 650,190          |
| 2.3: Satisfaction with modernized A-VET system is increased among trainees and employers  | 0                | 108,000          | 80,000           | 56,000           | 244,000          |
| <b>Subtotal Programme Costs</b>   | <b>40,000</b>    | <b>1,423,190</b> | <b>1,152,000</b> | <b>771,000</b>   | <b>3,386,190</b> |
| <b>Management costs</b>   |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |
| <i>Subtotal Human resources Costs</i>   | <b>66,940</b>    | <b>124,231</b>   | <b>127,179</b>   | <b>87,833</b>    | <b>406,183</b>   |
| <i>Subtotal operational costs</i>   | <b>45,600</b>    | <b>109,400</b>   | <b>111,400</b>   | <b>90,709</b>    | <b>357,109</b>   |
| <b>Subtotal Management Costs</b>  | <b>112,540</b>   | <b>233,631</b>   | <b>238,579</b>   | <b>178,542</b>   | <b>763,292</b>   |
| <b>Total Net</b>  | <b>152,540</b>   | <b>1,656,821</b> | <b>1,390,579</b> | <b>949,542</b>   | <b>4,149,482</b> |
| General Administration Fee UNDP HQ 8%   | 10,603           | 130,546          | 109,246          | 75,563           | 325,959          |
| <b>Total Programmable Budget</b>  | <b>163,143</b>   | <b>1,787,366</b> | <b>1,499,826</b> | <b>1,025,105</b> | <b>4,475,440</b> |
| <b>of which SDC</b>   | <b>143,143</b>   | <b>1,762,366</b> | <b>1,474,826</b> | <b>1,020,105</b> | <b>4,400,440</b> |
| <b>of which UNDP</b>  | <b>20,000</b>    | <b>25,000</b>    | <b>25,000</b>    | <b>5,000</b>     | <b>75,000</b>    |
| <b>RC Levy (1%)</b>   |                  |                  |                  |                  | <b>44,004</b>    |

|   | Sept-Dec<br>2022 | 2023             | 2024             | Jan-Aug<br>2025  | Total            |
|---|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| <b>Grand Total (including 1% RC Levy)</b> | <b>163,143</b>   | <b>1,787,366</b> | <b>1,499,826</b> | <b>1,025,105</b> | <b>4,519,444</b> |

Exchange rate USD – CHF = 1:0.9

|                      |                                      |
|----------------------|--------------------------------------|
| SDC:                 | 4,444,444 (including RC Levy)        |
| UNDP:                | 75,000                               |
| <b>Total Budget:</b> | <b>4,519,444 (Including RC Levy)</b> |

**Outcome 1: Quality of agricultural VET and extension services in Georgia is enhanced due to effective cooperation of public and private stakeholders**

Output 1.1: Funds are allocated for the revision of educational standards and implementation of A-VET quality assurance measures by the Agroduo; also, for the development of an implementation roadmap of the VET colleges' transformation onto skills hubs.

Output 1.2: Funds are allocated for the capacity and qualification development of An-Vet institutions, teachers and extension officers.

Output 1.3: Funds are allocated for the implementation of digitalization measures supporting increase accessibility and effectiveness of A-VET and extension systems in Georgia.

**Outcome 2: Rural youth, women and men learn and apply relevant agricultural knowledge and skills corresponding to labour market needs.**

Output 2.1: Funds are allocated to strengthen rural development support programmes and introduction of the skills development initiatives in rural areas.

Output 2.2: Funds are for supporting ICC and their clients for the development of extension packages.

Output 2.3: Funds are allocated for the strengthening of regional services.

**Management costs**

Total management and monitoring costs are estimated at around USD 250,000 per year (17% of the total budget). This is significantly less than in Phase 2, mainly because part of the project team will be integrated into the SA. The fee for the general management service is estimated at 8% of the total net budget, in line with UNDP rules and regulations.

## 9. MONITORING, REPORTING AND EVALUATION

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Monitoring, evaluation and review processes are a constant effort to find answers to the questions: "How are we doing?" and "What can we do better?" These questions are particularly important in this consolidation phase as the time to the end of the project is limited (only 3 years). Monitoring and evaluation activities are an essential part of obtaining information on the results and impact of the project and ensuring that the project is phased out properly. The project will continue to use the monitoring and evaluation system already established to ensure monitoring of progress for each indicator defined in the project protocol framework. Monitoring activities will be coordinated by the project's M & E Officer and regularly carried out by the project team with the support of the UNDP Country Office.

The project will ensure that guidelines and structures are in place to support good gender monitoring at project level. It will establish M&E mechanisms that record and track gender gaps, collect baseline data and measure benefits and negative impacts on each disadvantaged group separately whenever possible, and verify that the needs and interests of these groups continue to be addressed in implementation.

Using a results-based approach that focuses on the key achievements of the project, a monitoring matrix will again be used as an internal monitoring tool to collect information for quarterly, half-yearly and annual progress reports. The monitoring matrix will be updated at the beginning of the project and data collection will be ensured by the project team according to the regularity defined in the monitoring matrix. The monitoring matrix includes the following:

1. log frame matrix reference number
2. description of results for the output and outcome levels of the project
3. indicators as defined in the log frame and/or clarification/precision of indicators
4. (a) indicator value as baseline, (b) target value at the end of the project, (c) indicator value during the project lifetime (target in one, two, three, four years)
- (5) source of information, method(s) of data collection
6. frequency of data collection
7. responsibilities (depending on internal or external expert) for data collection and/or data provision
8. comments and explanations

The monitoring system provides inputs for mandatory reporting and on the one hand supports the steering of the interventions, but also serves as a communication vector between all partners involved for critical reflection and organizational learning and supports any kind of reviews and (external) evaluations. The project will use surveys and other instrument-based methods to determine progress on selected indicators and collect information with the help of external organizations or consultants.

Semi-annual work plans are used to establish activity plans and targets for the implementation of the activities (including the budget for the implementation of the activities), which contribute to the development of a strategy for the achievement of the project objectives stated in the project document and are defined in the monitoring matrix. The work plans are reviewed and updated on a quarterly basis by the project manager in cooperation with his/her team.

Internal quarterly progress reports will be prepared by the Project Manager and half-year reports will be submitted to SDC and the Project Board. The progress reports are in line with the annual work plans and reflect the progress made towards achieving the results, the factors contributing to or hindering the achievement of the results and the lessons learned (subject to compliance with the SDC Guidelines on Progress Reporting by Partners"). A final project report will provide an assessment and analysis of project performance throughout the project period, including outputs and outcomes achieved, constraints, lessons learned and recommendations to avoid key problems in future projects. A reflection on the whole 3 phases (2013 - 2025) of the project will also be included.

Finally, it is planned to conduct an external project evaluation in the third year of Phase 3 to assess the achievements and impact of the entire 12-year project. This evaluation will be conducted by SDC and is not included in the project budget.

Annual external financial audits (including operations of implementing partners) will be carried out according to UNDP rules and procedures. The schedule and an additional description of the monitoring activities are given in the table below.

## Monitoring Plan

| Monitoring Activity                       | Purpose  | Frequency   | Expected Action  |
|---|--|---|--|
| <b>Track results progress</b>             | Progress data on the outcome indicators in the log frame will be collected and analyzed to assess the project's progress in achieving the agreed outcomes.   | Quarterly or at the frequency required for each indicator.  | Slower progress than expected is dealt with by the project management.   |
| <b>Monitor and Manage Risk</b>            | Identify specific risks that could jeopardize the achievement of the intended results. Identify and monitor risk management measures using a risk log. This includes monitoring of measures and plans that may be required under UNDP's social and environmental standards. Audits are conducted in accordance with UNDP audit policy to manage financial risks.   | Bi-annually   | Identified risks are tracked by the project management and measures are taken to address the risks. The risk log is actively maintained to track identified risks and actions taken. |
| <b>Learn</b>                              | Knowledge, best practices and experiences are regularly captured and actively adopted by other projects and partners and reintegrated into the project.  | At least annually   | Relevant lessons and findings are captured by the project team and used as a basis for management decisions.   |
| <b>Annual Project Quality Assurance</b>   | The quality of the project is assessed against UNDP quality standards to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the project and to assist management in making decisions to improve the project.   | Bi-annually   | The areas of strength and weakness are reviewed by project management and used as a basis for decisions to improve project performance.  |
| <b>Review and Make Course Corrections</b> | Internal review of data and evidence of all monitoring activities as a basis for decision-making.  | At least annually   | Performance data, risks, experience and quality are discussed by the project board and used for course corrections.  |
| <b>Project Report</b>                     | A progress report will be presented to the Project Board and key stakeholders, consisting of progress data showing the results achieved against pre-defined annual targets at the output level, the annual project quality rating summary, an updated risk log with mitigation measures, and any evaluation or review reports prepared over the period.  | Bi-annually, annually, most recent annual updated report at the request for payments of tranches and at the end of the project (final report) |  |
| <b>Project Review (Project Board)</b>     | The steering mechanism of the project (i.e. the project board) will conduct regular project reviews to assess the performance of the project and review the work plans to ensure realistic budgeting during the project period. In the final year of the project, the project board will hold a project closure meeting to capture lessons learnt and discuss possibilities for scaling up the project, as well as share the project results and lessons learnt with relevant target groups. | Bi-annually   | Any quality concerns or slower than expected progress should be discussed by the project board and management actions agreed to address the issues identified.                       |

## Evaluation Plan

| Evaluation Title | Planned Completion Date         | Key Evaluation Stakeholders | Cost and Source of Funding |
|------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Final Evaluation | 2 <sup>nd</sup> quarter of 2025 | MoES, MEPA, SDC             | SDC                        |

## 10. LEGAL CONTEXT

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This project document shall be the instrument referred to as such in Article 1 of the Standard Basic Assistance Agreement between the government of Georgia and UNDP, signed on 1-Jul-1994. All references in the SBAA to "Executing Agency" shall be deemed to refer to "Implementing Partner."

The project will be implemented by the **Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia** ("Implementing partner") in accordance with its financial regulations, rules, practices and procedures only to the extent that they do not contravene the principles of the Financial Regulations and Rules of UNDP. Where the financial governance of an Implementing Partner does not provide the required guidance to ensure best value for money, fairness, integrity, transparency, and effective international competition, the financial governance of UNDP shall apply.

## 11. RISK MANAGEMENT

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### Government Entity (NIM)

1. Consistent with the Article III of the SBAA *[or the Supplemental Provisions to the Project Document]*, the responsibility for the safety and security of the Implementing Partner and its personnel and property, and of UNDP's property in the Implementing Partner's custody, rests with the Implementing Partner. To this end, the Implementing Partner shall:

- a) put in place an appropriate security plan and maintain the security plan, taking into account the security situation in the country where the project is being carried;
- b) assume all risks and liabilities related to the Implementing Partner's security, and the full implementation of the security plan.

2. UNDP reserves the right to verify whether such a plan is in place, and to suggest modifications to the plan when necessary. Failure to maintain and implement an appropriate security plan as required hereunder shall be deemed a breach of the Implementing Partner's obligations under this Project Document.

3. The Implementing Partner agrees to undertake all reasonable efforts to ensure that no UNDP funds received pursuant to the Project Document are used to provide support to individuals or entities associated with terrorism, that the recipients of any amounts provided by UNDP hereunder do not appear on the United Nations Security Council Consolidated Sanctions List, and that no UNDP funds received pursuant to the Project Document are used for money laundering activities. The United Nations Security Council Consolidated Sanctions List can be accessed via <https://www.un.org/securitycouncil/content/un-sc-consolidated-list>.

4. The Implementing Partner acknowledges and agrees that UNDP will not tolerate sexual harassment and sexual exploitation and abuse of anyone by the Implementing Partner, and each of its responsible parties, their respective sub-recipients and other entities involved in Project implementation, either as contractors or subcontractors and their personnel, and any individuals performing services for them under the Project Document.

(a) In the implementation of the activities under this Project Document, the Implementing Partner, and each of its sub-parties referred to above, shall comply with the standards of conduct set forth in the Secretary General's Bulletin ST/SGB/2003/13 of 9 October 2003, concerning "Special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse" ("SEA").

(b) Moreover, and without limitation to the application of other regulations, rules, policies and procedures bearing upon the performance of the activities under this Project Document, in the implementation of activities, the Implementing Partner, and each of its sub-parties referred to above, shall not engage in any form of sexual

harassment ("SH"). SH is defined as any unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature that might reasonably be expected or be perceived to cause offense or humiliation, when such conduct interferes with work, is made a condition of employment or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment. SH may occur in the workplace or in connection with work. While typically involving a pattern of conduct, SH may take the form of a single incident. In assessing the reasonableness of expectations or perceptions, the perspective of the person who is the target of the conduct shall be considered.

5. a) In the performance of the activities under this Project Document, the Implementing Partner shall (with respect to its own activities), and shall require from its sub-parties referred to in paragraph 4 (with respect to their activities) that they, have minimum standards and procedures in place, or a plan to develop and/or improve such standards and procedures in order to be able to take effective preventive and investigative action. These should include: policies on sexual harassment and sexual exploitation and abuse; policies on whistleblowing/protection against retaliation; and complaints, disciplinary and investigative mechanisms. In line with this, the Implementing Partner will and will require that such sub-parties will take all appropriate measures to:

- i. Prevent its employees, agents or any other persons engaged to perform any services under this Project Document, from engaging in SH or SEA;
- ii. Offer employees and associated personnel training on prevention and response to SH and SEA, where the Implementing Partner and its sub-parties referred to in paragraph 4 have not put in place its own training regarding the prevention of SH and SEA, the Implementing Partner and its sub-parties may use the training material available at UNDP;
- iii. Report and monitor allegations of SH and SEA of which the Implementing Partner and its sub-parties referred to in paragraph 4 have been informed or have otherwise become aware, and status thereof;
- iv. Refer victims/survivors of SH and SEA to safe and confidential victim assistance; and
- v. Promptly and confidentially record and investigate any allegations credible enough to warrant an investigation of SH or SEA. The Implementing Partner shall advise UNDP of any such allegations received and investigations being conducted by itself or any of its sub-parties referred to in paragraph 4 with respect to their activities under the Project Document, and shall keep UNDP informed during the investigation by it or any of such sub-parties, to the extent that such notification (i) does not jeopardize the conduct of the investigation, including but not limited to the safety or security of persons, and/or (ii) is not in contravention of any laws applicable to it. Following the investigation, the Implementing Partner shall advise UNDP of any actions taken by it or any of the other entities further to the investigation.

b) The Implementing Partner shall establish that it has complied with the foregoing, to the satisfaction of UNDP, when requested by UNDP or any party acting on its behalf to provide such confirmation. Failure of the Implementing Partner, and each of its sub-parties referred to in paragraph 4, to comply of the foregoing, as determined by UNDP, shall be considered grounds for suspension or termination of the Project.

6. Social and environmental sustainability will be enhanced through application of the UNDP Social and Environmental Standards (<http://www.undp.org/ses>) and related Accountability Mechanism (<http://www.undp.org/secu-srm>).

7. The Implementing Partner shall: (a) conduct project and programme-related activities in a manner consistent with the UNDP Social and Environmental Standards, (b) implement any management or mitigation plan prepared for the project or programme to comply with such standards, and (c) engage in a constructive and timely manner to address any concerns and complaints raised through the Accountability Mechanism. UNDP will seek to ensure that communities and other project stakeholders are informed of and have access to the Accountability Mechanism.

8. All signatories to the Project Document shall cooperate in good faith with any exercise to evaluate any programme or project-related commitments or compliance with the UNDP Social and Environmental Standards. This includes providing access to project sites, relevant personnel, information, and documentation.

9. The Implementing Partner will take appropriate steps to prevent misuse of funds, fraud or corruption, by its officials, consultants, responsible parties, subcontractors and sub-recipients in implementing the project or using UNDP funds.

10. In the implementation of the activities under this Project Document, UNDP places reasonable reliance upon the Implementing Partner for it to apply its laws, regulations and processes, and applicable international laws regarding anti money laundering and countering the financing of terrorism, to ensure consistency with the principles of then in force the UNDP Anti-Money Laundering and Countering the Financing of Terrorism Policy.

11. The Implementing Partner will ensure that its financial management, anti-corruption, anti-fraud and anti money laundering and countering the financing of terrorism policies are in place and enforced for all funding received from or through UNDP.

12. The requirements of the following documents, then in force at the time of signature of the Project Document, apply to the Implementing Partner: (a) UNDP Policy on Fraud and other Corrupt Practices and (b) UNDP Office of Audit and Investigations Investigation Guidelines. The Implementing Partner agrees to the requirements of the above documents, which are an integral part of this Project Document and are available online at [www.undp.org](http://www.undp.org).

13. In the event that an investigation is required, UNDP has the obligation to conduct investigations relating to any aspect of UNDP projects and programmes in accordance with UNDP's regulations, rules, policies and procedures. The Implementing Partner shall provide its full cooperation, including making available personnel, relevant documentation, and granting access to the Implementing Partner's (and its consultants', responsible parties', subcontractors' and sub-recipients') premises, for such purposes at reasonable times and on reasonable conditions as may be required for the purpose of an investigation. Should there be a limitation in meeting this obligation, UNDP shall consult with the Implementing Partner to find a solution.

14. The signatories to this Project Document will promptly inform one another in case of any incidence of inappropriate use of funds, credible allegation of fraud or corruption or other financial irregularities with due confidentiality.

Where the Implementing Partner becomes aware that a UNDP project or activity, in whole or in part, is the focus of investigation for alleged fraud/corruption, the Implementing Partner will inform the UNDP Resident Representative/Head of Office, who will promptly inform UNDP's Office of Audit and Investigations (OAI). The Implementing Partner shall provide regular updates to the head of UNDP in the country and OAI of the status of, and actions relating to, such investigation.

15. UNDP shall be entitled to a refund from the Implementing Partner of any funds provided that have been used inappropriately, including through fraud, corruption or other financial irregularity, or otherwise paid other than in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Project Document. Such amount may be deducted by UNDP from any payment due to the Implementing Partner under this or any other agreement. Recovery of such amount by UNDP shall not diminish or curtail the Implementing Partner's obligations under this Project Document.

Where such funds have not been refunded to UNDP, the Implementing Partner agrees that donors to UNDP (including the Government) whose funding is the source, in whole or in part, of the funds for the activities under this Project Document, may seek recourse to the Implementing Partner for the recovery of any funds determined by UNDP to have been used inappropriately, including through fraud, corruption or other financial irregularity, or otherwise paid other than in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Project Document.

*Note:* The term "Project Document" as used in this clause shall be deemed to include any relevant subsidiary agreement further to the Project Document, including those with responsible parties, subcontractors, and sub-recipients.



16. Each contract issued by the Implementing Partner in connection with this Project Document shall include a provision representing that no fees, gratuities, rebates, gifts, commissions or other payments, other than those shown in the proposal, have been given, received, or promised in connection with the selection process or in contract execution, and that the recipient of funds from the Implementing Partner shall cooperate with any and all investigations and post-payment audits.

17. Should UNDP refer to the relevant national authorities for appropriate legal action any alleged wrongdoing relating to the project, the Government will ensure that the relevant national authorities shall actively investigate the same and take appropriate legal action against all individuals found to have participated in the wrongdoing, recover and return any recovered funds to UNDP.

18. The Implementing Partner shall ensure that all of its obligations set forth under this section entitled "Risk Management" are passed on to each responsible party, subcontractor and sub-recipient and that all the clauses under this section entitled "Risk Management Standard Clauses" are included, *mutatis mutandis*, in all sub-contracts or sub-agreements entered into further to this Project Document.

## Annex 1: Project Logframe

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|---|
| <p><b>Intended Outcome as stated in the UNSDCF 2021-2025/Country Programme Document (CPD) 2021-2025 Results and Resource Framework: Outcome 3:</b> By 2025, all people without discrimination benefit from a sustainable, inclusive and resilient economy in Georgia; CPD Output 3.1. Improved competitiveness of private sector and labour force, especially youth and vulnerable groups through labour policy, private sector development, social responsibility and skills development.</p>  |
| <p><b>Outcome indicators as stated in the CPD 2021-2025 Results and Resources Framework, including baseline and targets:</b></p> <p>3.1/ (UNSDCF indicator 3.1) [NationalSDG 1.2.1] Proportion of population, including children, living below national poverty line, by location and sex; <b>Baseline</b> (2015): Georgia: 21.6%; Urban: 18%, Rural: 26.4%; <b>Age; Groups:</b> 0-17: 24.2%, 18-64: 22%, 65 and above: 16.4%; <b>Female:</b> 21.3%; <b>Male:</b> 22%; <b>Target</b> (2030): Reduce by 20%</p> <p>3.2/ (UNSDCF indicator 3.2) [National SDG 8.5.2] Unemployment rate, by sex, age and persons with disabilities <b>Baseline</b> (2015): All: 14.1%; <b>Female:</b> 12.4%; <b>Male:</b> 15.6%; <b>Age Groups:</b> 15-24: 33.8%, 25-34: 20.3%, 35-44: 15.2%, 45-54: 12.0%, 55-64: 8.2%, &gt; 65: 1.1%; <b>Target</b> (2030): All: 9.5%</p> <p>3.3/ (UNSDCF indicator 3.3.1) [National SDG 8.6.1] Proportion of youth (15-24 years) not in education, employment or training (NEET), by sex <b>Baseline</b> (2019): 30.6%; <b>Target:</b> Reduce by 8%</p> |
| <p><b>Applicable Output(s) from the UNDP Strategic Plan 2022-2025:</b> Output 1.3 Access to basic services and financial and non-financial assets and services improved to support productive capacities for sustainable livelihoods and jobs to achieve prosperity</p>   |
| <p><b>Project title and Atlas Project Number:</b> Modernization of Vocational Education and Training (VET) System related to Agriculture and Rural development in Georgia VET (Phase 3)<br/> <b>Project number:</b> 00113225 (output 00111493)</p>  |

| Hierarchy of objectives<br>Strategy of Intervention  | Key Indicators  | Data Sources<br>Means of Verification   | Assumption and risks   |
|--|---|---|--|
| <b>Impact (Overall Goal)</b>   | <b>Impact Indicators</b>  |   |  |
| Improved agricultural knowledge and skills contribute to increased productivity, income and employment of rural youth, women, and men in Georgia.                        | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li># of smallholder farmers with increased income from agricultural production (AFS_ARI_1) (baseline: 0; target: 7'500)</li> <li>% of productivity increase of farmers during project period (baseline: 0; target 30% increase during the project duration)</li> <li>Number of VET graduates obtaining new or better employment (STT and long-term trainings) (IED_ARI_2) (baseline: 0, target: 1'260 (30 % female, 5% vulnerable)</li> <li>% Of beneficiary (VET) income increase during project period (baseline: 0, target: 30% increase during the project duration)</li> </ol>   | <p>Impact survey on income and productivity increase of farmers and VET graduates.</p> <p>Partners (MEPA, MoES, NGOs) statistical data and reports).</p>                          | <p>A: Attractiveness of VET will continue to increase.<br/> A Modernisation of agriculture will attract more young people to enter the sector.<br/> R: Climate change and the impact of the war in the Ukraine have a negative impact on agricultural productivity and related economic downfall on livelihoods.</p> |
| <b>Outcomes</b>  | <b>Outcome Indicators</b>   |   | <b>External Factors (Assumptions and Risks)</b>  |
| <p><b>Outcome 1:</b><br/> Quality of agricultural VET and extension services in Georgia is enhanced due to effective cooperation of public and private stakeholders.</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.1/ # of new PPPs in A-VET and AE delivery (Baseline 0; Target: 2).</li> <li>1.2/ # of clients served in rural areas by A-VET and AE delivery (baseline: 0; target: 16'800 (15'000 farmers; 1'800 students); 30% female).</li> <li>1.3/ # of initiatives for SSO ecosystem enhancement (baseline: 0; target: 3).</li> <li>1.4. # of NEET youth entering labour market (baseline:0, target: 60; 30% women, 5% vulnerable).</li> <li>1.5. Number of contributions towards a Vocational Education and Training (VET) system that are more inclusive or more relevant to the labour market (IED_TRI_3; baseline: 0, target: 3)</li> </ol> | <p>Activity policy and performance records</p> <p>Service records and population engagement data</p> <p>Studies and surveys on improved economic opportunities of NEET people</p> | <p>A: New umbrella institutions (SA) as well as international experience (SASC / role model) are in place.<br/> R: Transformation of colleges into Skills Hubs might not have the anticipated results.<br/> R: Lack of qualified education managers, teachers and EO leads to low quality services.</p>              |

| <p><b>Outcome 2:</b><br/>Rural youth, women and men learn and apply relevant agricultural knowledge and skills, which are responding to the market needs.</p> | <p>2.1/ # of WBL graduates / year (baseline: 50 students/year; target: 55 student/year; 30% female).<br/>2.2/ # of youth (15-24y) and adults (&gt;24) (F/M) who gained access to improved vocational skills (baseline: 0; target: 2'500; youth 80%; Adults: 20%, female 30%);<br/>2.3/ # of A-VET graduates employed in agricultural sector per year (baseline: 0, target: 420/year; 30% female);<br/>2.4/ # of extension client farmers applying improved agriculture practice per year (baseline: 0; target: 3'330/year (10'000 total); youth 20%; adults 80%; female 20%).</p> | <p>SSO founding and statutory documentation</p> <p>Studies and surveys on efficiency of the transformed skills development policy</p>   | <p>A: Joint donor support for new structures<br/>R: The interpretation of the new VET strategy creates confusion and misunderstanding.<br/>R: New structures are unable to meet expectations.</p>   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Outputs (per outcome)   |   | Output Indicators   |   |   |
| Outcome 1: Quality of agricultural VET and extension services in Georgia is enhanced due to effective cooperation of public and private stakeholders.         |   | Means of Verification   | Assumption and Risks  |   |
| <p><b>Output 1.1.</b></p>   | <p>A-VET public and private stakeholders trained, standards and programs elaborated through effective collaboration with SSOs / AgroDuo for the delivery of high-quality services</p>   | <p>1.1.1/ # of educational standards revised /elaborated by AgroDuo (baseline: 0, target: 4)<br/>1.1.2/ # of curricula revised / elaborated by AgroDuo (baseline: 0, target: 4)<br/>1.1.3/ # of examination requirements elaborated by AgroDuo (baseline: 0, target: 1)<br/>1.1.4/ # of VET institutions with a roadmap of transformation (baseline: 0; target: 2 colleges)<br/>1.1.5/ # of VET institutions and extension centres with elaborated capacity development programme for implementation (baseline: 0; target: 2 colleges and 2 extension centres)<br/>1.1.6/ # of new services introduced at AgroDuo (baseline: 0, target: 3)</p>  | <p>- Transformation methodology concept<br/>- Capacity development program document<br/>- Revised educational standards<br/>- SSO founding and statutory documentation.<br/>- SSO system documentation.<br/>- Training related data and statistics.</p> | <p>R. Financial sustainability of SSOs cannot be achieved</p>   |
| <p><b>Output 1.2.</b></p>   | <p>Capacities/qualification of A-VET institutions, teachers and extension officers enhanced through collaboration of A-VET stakeholders</p>   | <p>1.2.1 / # of institutions with a revised minor program for VET teachers (baseline: 0; target: 3.)<br/>1.2.2 / # of revised qualification standards for teachers' &amp; enterprise instructors and # of companies applying revised standards (baseline:0. target:1 standard, 15 teaching enterprise).<br/>1.2.3 / # of A-VET teachers and extension officers with improved qualification (baseline: 150. target: 300)<br/>1.2.4. % of member company instructors trained by AgroDuo in new model of students' assessment (baseline:0, target: 50%)<br/>1.2.5.# administration staff of VET institutions trained through various capacity development measures (baseline:0, target: 120)<br/>1.2.6.# or regions with Micro AKIS concept applied (baseline: 0, target: 2)</p> | <p>- Developed materials, curricula, methodology, roadmap documents<br/><br/>- Policy dialogue records, regional level resources of micro AKIS</p>  | <p>R: Limited cooperation between A-VET colleges and ICCS results in poor linkages of VET and AE and duplication of activities and services</p> |

|   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| <b>Outcome 1: Quality of agricultural VET and extension services in Georgia is enhanced due to effective cooperation of public and private stakeholders.</b>  |  |  |
| <b>Output 1.1: A-VET public and private stakeholders trained, standards and programs elaborated through effective collaboration with SSOs / AgroDuo for the delivery of high-quality services</b>   |  |  |
| <p>1.1.1. Support Agro Duo in developing a business development strategy and action plan for increasing self-sustainability to scale up its services and increase the number of members and stakeholders.</p> <p>1.1.2. Support Agro Duo in developing market-oriented qualification profiles and curricula, revising educational standards and the new model on students' assessment</p> <p>1.1.3. Support for the development of a system for up- skilling/re-skilling and strengthening technical capacity of SA/Agro Duo/EIEC for this</p> <p>1.1.4. Analysis of potential and needs of colleges and extension providers and development of a methodology for the transformation</p> <p>1.1.5. Support setting up a network (digital and face to face) for the exchange among colleges, extension institutions, and their staff.</p> <p>1.1.6. Support, train and coach of college and RICC administrative staff (administration, leadership) for their institutional development.</p> <p>1.1.7. Support developing blended learning mechanisms for Extension</p> <p>1.1.8. Assess VET programs in line with international standards</p> <p>1.1.9. Development of a blended learning concept and standards; strengthen digital implementation capacities.</p> <p>1.1.10. Support the development of a blended learning pilot training program for teachers and farmers (with practical with home-based component).</p> <p>1.1.11. Support the harmonisation of the regulatory framework for VET reform implementation</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Technical expertise in org. development and private sector VET involvement</li> <li>- Financial resources for Agro Duo secretariat, for WBL for institutional support, to conduct analysis &amp; studies and to organize meetings, etc.</li> <li>- Technical expertise in VET.</li> </ul> |  |
| <b>Output 1.2: Capacities/qualification of A-VET teachers and extension officers enhanced through collaboration of A-VET stakeholders</b>   |  |  |
| <p>1.2.1. Support implementation of the new WBL regulation according to the WBL action plan of the SA</p> <p>1.2.2. Support collaboration between Agro Duo and education providers</p> <p>1.2.3. Supporting / facilitating developing synergies and collaboration between A-Vet and extension.</p> <p>1.2.4. Support the development of teaching enterprises (farms).</p> <p>1.2.5. Support the SA and EIEC for the scaling up of the VET teachers and extension officers pre- and in-service training (minor program, TOT)</p> <p>1.2.6. Support to develop/revise standards for extension officers and extension providers</p> <p>1.2.7. Support to number of initiatives for VET institutions administrative staff development</p> <p>1.2.8. Support RICCs in 2 pilot regions to explore and assess the actors in their local skills ecosystem (Micro AKIS) to enhance collaboration.</p> <p>1.2.9. Support the EIEC in the implementation of AKIS recommendations by enhancing collaboration at national and regional level.</p> <p>Support implementation of the new WBL regulation, according to WBL action plan of SA</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Technical expertise in A-VET and AE.</li> <li>- External expertise on AKIS</li> <li>- Financial resources to conduct analysis and studies, to organize meetings, to provide support, for travelling and to ensure logistics, etc.</li> </ul>  |  |
| <b>Output 1.3: Digitalization of the system enhanced to increase A-VET accessibility for users, effectiveness of public-private collaboration and quality of training/advisory services</b>   |  |  |
| <p>1.3.1. Support digitalisation at the SA including automatization of processes, digital accountability of VET colleges, digital tools and the further development of existing platforms.</p> <p>1.3.2. Support the SA in coordinating the production and dissemination of teaching and learning resources and ensuring their quality.</p> <p>1.3.3. Support the NCEQE in the introduction of 360 assessment tool</p> <p>1.3.4. Improvement of existing digital knowledge management platforms (<a href="http://www.my.mepa.gov.ge">www.my.mepa.gov.ge</a>, <a href="http://www.region.mepa.gov.ge">www.region.mepa.gov.ge</a>, <a href="http://www.vet.ge">www.vet.ge</a>, <a href="http://www.vet.emis.ge">www.vet.emis.ge</a> )</p> <p>1.3.5. Support colleges to conduct and assess labour market skills needs.</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- External expertise in IT</li> <li>- Technical expertise in social inclusion</li> <li>- Financial resources to run pilot and to produce information materials.</li> </ul>  |  |

| Outputs (per outcome) |  | Output Indicators   | Means of Verification  | Assumption and Risks               |
|-----------------------|--|---|--|------------------------------------|
| Output 3.             | Digitalisation of the system enhanced to increase A-VET accessibility for users, effectiveness of public-private collaboration and quality of training/advisory services | 1.3.1. / Efficiency of the existing digital extension platforms increased (target: www.vet.ge and https://wbl.ge/ are integrated)<br>1.3.2. / # of digital tools introduced in A-VET system (baseline: 0; target: 3)<br>1.3.3 / # of users of digital platforms and applications (baseline: 14 000, target: 25 000)<br>1.3.4. # of VET institutions with 360degree system of assessment introduced (baseline:0, target: 10) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Training related data.</li> <li>- Audio-visual materials of public events.</li> </ul> | A: The SA lives up to expectations |

| Outcome 2: Rural youth, women and men learn and apply relevant agricultural knowledge and skills, which are responding to the market needs. |   |  |   |  |
|---|---|--|---|--|
| Output  | A-VET graduate students acquire applicable skills                                   | 2.1.1 / # of A-VET graduates applying acquired skills (baseline: 0, target: 1'260; 30% women)<br>2.1.2 / % of A-VET graduates applying acquired skills (Baseline: 0; Target: 70%, 30% women).<br>2.1.3 / # of regions with skills and knowledge development support measures integrated in development priorities of rural areas (baseline:0, target: 2)<br>2.1.4. # of skills development programmes and initiatives introduced at rural areas (baseline: 0, target: 3) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Criteria, statistics and related information on inclusion of vulnerable groups in VET system</li> </ul>  |  |
| Output  | Recipients of extension services obtain applicable knowledge in new technologies    | 2.2.1 / # of ICC clients applying new (innovative) technologies (baseline: 0; target: 120; women: 30%).<br>2.2.2 / % of ICC clients applying new technologies (baseline: 0; target: 5%, Women: 30%).<br>2.2.3 / # of extension packages developed / diversified and applied by farmers (baseline: 0, target: 8)  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Diversified extension services and training related data</li> <li>- Agri-educational resources</li> </ul>  |  |
| Output  | Satisfaction with modernized A-VET system is increased among trainees and employers | 2.3.1 / # of A-VET graduates satisfied with acquired skills (baseline: 0; target: 1'260; women: 30%).<br>2.3.2 / % of A-VET graduates satisfied with acquired skills (baseline: 50%; target: 70%; women: 30%)<br>2.3.3 / # of ICC clients satisfied with acquired skills (Baseline: 5035 ; Target: 10'000 women: 30%)<br>2.3.4 / % of ICC clients satisfied with acquired skills (Baseline: 0%; target: 70% women: 30%).   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Skills and knowledge system development related information, documents, analysis, teaching curricula</li> <li>- Renewed rural development strategies and related resources</li> </ul> <p>Research related data</p> | A: Young people will stay in rural areas and show interest in development. |

|  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| <b>Output 2.1: A-VET graduate students acquire applicable skills</b>   |   |  |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.1. Support VET graduates' transition to the labour market including self-employment.</li> <li>1.2. Support SA to introduce initiatives for NEETs inclusion in VET.</li> <li>1.3. Put in place international college partnerships and conduct exchange programs.</li> <li>1.4. Support college business models (running of economic activities) applying good practices.</li> <li>1.5. Expand the SASC approach to other regions in Georgia.</li> <li>1.6. Identify skills development needs for rural professions such as forestry, aquaculture and land/water management.</li> <li>1.7. Support international exchange with international best practices.</li> <li>1.8. Promote VET and extension for vulnerable groups</li> <li>1.9. Support to the Skills Agency to introduce social inclusion fund and piloting in one college.</li> </ol>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Technical expertise in entrepreneurship and labour market integration</li> <li>- Fin. Rec. for training and coaching, job fairs resources to conduct analysis and studies and to organize meetings, etc</li> </ul>                               |  |
| <b>Output 2.2: Recipients of extension services get applicable knowledge in new technologies</b>   |   |  |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2.1. Support entrepreneurial training, coaching and other services for students and farmers</li> <li>2.2. Support elaboration of internship mechanisms between VET and Extension</li> <li>2.3. Support to develop/revise standards for extension officers and extension providers</li> <li>2.4. Streamline green economy sector skills, including the development of new and revision of existing qualifications and relevant VET and extension delivery capacities.</li> <li>2.5. Revise existing and develop new curricula in the agricultural sector as needed.</li> <li>2.6. Appraisal of the needs and revision of rural economy related qualifications, particularly for niche products</li> <li>2.7. Identify skills needs and the development of curricula and training programs for niche products and additional subjects enhancing rural development (rural tourism, rural construction, land management, etc.)</li> <li>2.8. Support strengthening capacity of rural actors (e.g., Local authorities, thinks thanks and private sector) on rural services</li> <li>2.9. Facilitate participation of various actors (including municipality), at different levels for rural development and planning.</li> <li>2.10. Promote environmental and climate smart agriculture good practices in Agriculture and Rural economy.</li> </ol> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Technical expertise in regional development, AE and climate smart agriculture,</li> <li>- Financial resources to conduct analysis and studies, to organize meetings, to provide support, for travelling and to ensure logistics, etc.</li> </ul> |  |
| <b>Output 2.3: Satisfaction with modernized A-VET system is increased among trainees and employers</b>   |   |  |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3.1. Support to diversification of extension services in compliance with the home-based training concept.</li> <li>3.2. Support strengthening regional extension services for additional competences (beyond agriculture) in areas of knowledge and skills</li> <li>3.3. Appraisal and if needed, revision of rural economy related qualifications.</li> <li>3.4. Support the SA to outreach ethnic minorities in at least two regions of Georgia for their enhance participation in VET</li> </ol>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Technical expertise in regional development, AE and rural development</li> <li>- External expertise in technical fields of rural economy</li> </ul>  |  |



### Annex 3: Funding Situation of Skills Agency

| N   | Title   | 2022 (GEL)       | 2023 (GEL)       | 2024 (GEL)        |
|-----|---|------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| 1   | ADB   | Please see below |                  |                   |
| 2   | Agency staff  | 2,250,500        | 2,522,000        | 2,648,000         |
| 3   | Agency programmes:  | <b>7,000,000</b> | <b>8,968,000</b> | <b>10,650,000</b> |
| 3.1 | Student and pre-student service development support   | 2,730,000        | 3,068,000        | 3,569,000         |
| 3.2 | Financing VET training and retraining programmes  | 2,800,000        | 3,000,000        | 3,601,000         |
| 3.3 | Partnership and qualifications development support  | 421,200          | 1,000,000        | 1,200,000         |
| 3.4 | Innovative learning teaching support and innovative management at VET institutions  | 748,800          | 1,500,000        | 1,800,000         |
| 3.5 | Awareness raising support for stakeholders regarding VET and Skills Agency activities   | 300,000          | 400,000          | 480,000           |
| 3   | Grants  |                  |                  |                   |
| 3.1 | PROJECT "The New VET Law Implementation and Further Development and Strengthening Effective Public-Private Partnership in VET System in Georgia" (UNDP) | 1,020,200        |                  |                   |

| N   | Title  | 2022 USD | 2023 USD | 2024 USD |
|-----|--|----------|----------|----------|
| 3.2 | PROJECT "Creating Better Life-Long Learning Opportunities through Local Partnerships" (UNDP) | 201,966  | 37,030   |          |

| Consulting Service individuals | 2022 (in USD)    |               | 2023 (in USD)  |               | 2024 (in USD)  |               |
|--------------------------------|------------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|
|                                | ADB Share        | GEO Gov share | ADB Share      | GEO Gov share | ADB Share      | GEO Gov share |
| International consultants      | 374,233          | 71,822        | 248,297        | 47,653        | 27,720         | 5,320         |
| PIU STAFF (project management) | 464,640          | 10,854        | 424,140        | 6,480         | 424,140        | 6,480         |
| National Consultants           | 167,924          | 1,698         | 173,270        | 1,752         | 81,874         | 2,819         |
| <b>Total</b>                   | <b>1,006,797</b> | <b>84,374</b> | <b>845,707</b> | <b>55,885</b> | <b>533,734</b> | <b>14,619</b> |





## Annex 4: International agencies engaging in VET

|                    | # | Project Name  | Development Partner     | Duration    | Focus Areas  |
|--------------------|---|---|-------------------------|-------------|--|
| Ongoing projects   | 1 | Skills Development and Matching for Labour Market Needs   | EU                      | 2019 - 2023 | Enhance Georgia's economic resilience and sustainable growth through human capital development and skills matching.  |
|                    | 2 | Modernization of VET system related to agriculture in Georgia (VET Phase 2)                                       | UNDP/SDC                | 2018-2022   | Support policy development and institutional strengthening in Agriculture VET. Support elimination of educational dead-ends for VET students.  |
|                    | 3 | Better skills for Jobs  | ADB                     | 2020-2025   | Support Skills development in Georgian students/adults by rehabilitating existing TVET- Schools; Private sector engagement support.  |
|                    | 4 | THE USAID INDUSTRY-LED SKILLS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM/<br>დამსაქმებლები პროფესიული განათლებისთვის (employers for VET) | USAID                   | 2021-2025   | Reduce unemployment and support sustainable economic growth by building a pipeline between skills training and high-value employment opportunities.  |
| Completed projects | 5 | Creation of the TVET hub for Infrastructure & Logistics, Through PPP partnerships, international Collaboration    | KfW / German Government | 2019 - 2020 | Establish Center of Excellence with the aim to expand the capacity of the VET-sector and provide contribution to quality enhancement, support PPP partnerships, equipment of TVET colleges.  |
|                    | 6 | Strengthening Teacher Quality in Vocational Education   | UK GGF/World Bank       | 2019-2020   | Raise the quality of VET through improved teacher management and professional development (including development of VET teachers' professional development scheme).  |
|                    | 7 | Technical Assistance for VET Development  | UK GGF                  | 2018-2020   | Provide effective, efficient and inclusive VET and uptake of it through new and diversified financing mechanisms; Increase the attractiveness of vocational education and training; Improve English language skills of VET students. |
|                    | 8 | Private Sector Development and Technical Vocational Education and Training  | GIZ                     | 2017-2020   | Promote dual oriented TVET in selected sectors relevant for employment. Involve the private sector in vocational training.   |

## Annex 5: List of professions in the agricultural sector 2022

- Farmer (plant growers and animal keepers & beekeeper are sub professions);
- Fruit & vegetable processor
- Wine production & wine making
- Horticulturist
- Milk processor
- Veterinary nurse (no enrollment)
- Bio Farmer
- Agro Mechanisation (part of the engineering sector)
- Gardener
- Alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages producer
- Fruit Growing
- Beekeeping
- Cattel breeding
- Dairy production

### Professions not yet fully established:

- Meat processor
- Horse Farmer

### Short term training/retraining programs:

|    | Short term program  | Authorized/Supported by              |
|----|---|--------------------------------------|
| 1  | Nut production program 50 days (2015)                                       |                                      |
| 2  | Beekeeping program 65 days (2016)   |                                      |
| 3  | Potato production program 20 days (2017)                                    |                                      |
| 4  | Plant protection 54 days (2017)   | implemented in 2 vocational colleges |
| 5  | Blueberry production program (15 Days 2017)                                 |                                      |
| 6  | Blackberry and Raspberry production program 22 Days 2018)                   | Implemented by 1 NGO                 |
| 7  | Cow food, feed and nutrition 46 days( 2018)                                 |                                      |
| 8  | Kiwi production program (20 days 2017)                                      |                                      |
| 9  | Food safety specialist in meat production 5 days (2019)                     |                                      |
| 10 | Good Agricultural Practice Small / Family poultry production 30 days (2019) |                                      |
| 11 | Cheese Making Master 40 days (2019)   | implemented in 1 vocational college  |
| 12 | Corn production technology 10 days (2020)                                   |                                      |
| 13 | Viticulture course Racha  |                                      |

|    |   |   |
|----|---|---|
|    | Lechkhumi for Kveo Svaneti 17 days (2020)   |   |
| 14 | Winemaking course<br>18 days (2020)   |   |
| 15 | Biological Cultivation and production of garden and vegetable products (6 weeks)    | Authorized  |
| 16 | Poultry breeding and feeding (7 weeks)  | Authorized  |
| 17 | Fruit orchard cultivation and care (7 weeks)  | Authorized  |
| 18 | Care and feeding of agricultural animals (12 weeks)                                 | Authorized  |
| 19 | Bee care (9 weeks)  | Authorized  |
| 20 | Fruit formation (12 weeks)  | Authorized  |
| 21 | Receiving of bee products (12 weeks)  | Authorized  |
| 22 | Care and cultivation of berries (12 weeks)  | Authorized  |
| 23 | Cultivation of decorative plants (6 weeks)  | Authorized  |
| 24 | Tractor operation and driving (6 weeks)   | Authorized  |
| 25 | Farm management (10 weeks)  | Authorized  |
| 26 | Winery factory operator-mechanic training-retraining (9 weeks)                      | Authorized  |
| 27 | Distillation of alcohol beverages (6 weeks)   | Authorized  |
| 28 | Qvevri (pitcher) care upkeep and qvevri wine making (8 weeks)                       | (in the process of authorization)                 |
| 29 | Plant protection (Digital version will be elaborated)(9 weeks)                      | (in the process of authorization)                 |
| 30 | Tea cultivation (6 weeks)   |   |
| 31 | Training of company instructors (6 weeks)   |   |
| 32 | Food safety in agricultural production (Digital version will be elaborated as well) | (in the process of elaboration and authorization) |
| 33 | Wine making and testing   | (Elaborated and will be authorized)               |
| 34 | Wine making and production  | (in the process of elaboration and authorization) |
| 35 | Vine cultivation and care (viticulture)   | (in the process of elaboration and authorization) |
| 36 | Vine cultivation and agronomy   | (in the process of elaboration and authorization) |
| 37 | Industrial hygiene management   | (in the process of elaboration and authorization) |
| 38 | Equine feeding and concentrate food production                                      | (in the process of elaboration and authorization) |
| 39 | Tractor Equipment unit and their technical maintenance                              | Elaborated and will be authorized                 |

|    |                                    |                       |
|----|------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 40 | Cattel health                      | Not for authorization |
| 41 | Organic farming                    |                       |
| 42 | Georgian wheat product processing; | GFA                   |
| 43 | Fruit Growing;                     | GFA                   |
| 44 | Gardening;                         | GFA                   |
| 45 | Fishery for cold waters;           | GFA                   |
| 46 | Fishery;                           | GFA                   |
| 47 | Milk processing;                   | GFA                   |
| 48 | Beekeeping;                        | GFA                   |
| 49 | Agro-Journalism;                   | GFA                   |
| 50 | Poultry                            | GFA                   |

## Annex 6: Enrolment and graduation in A-VET in 2018 and 2021

| Name of the college  | Qualification   | Level                           | 2018 Enrolment | 2018 Graduates | 2021 Enrolment |
|--|---|---------------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| <b>VET Colleges and Universities</b>   |   |                                 |                |                |                |
| <u>LEPL - Community College "Opizari"</u>   Akhaltsikhe, Samtskhe-Javakheti    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plant processor</li> <li>Veterinary assistant</li> <li>Agro-mechanization</li> <li>Forestry</li> <li>Farmer</li> <li>Meat processing</li> </ul>                                      | III, IV, V, Short term training | 74             | 61             | 79             |
| <u>LEPL - Community College Aisi Kachreti</u> , Kakheti                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Veterinary assistant</li> <li>Winegrower</li> <li>Winemaker</li> <li>Beekeeper</li> <li>Fruit/Vegetable processing</li> <li>Veterinary assistant</li> <li>Forestry</li> </ul>        | III, IV, V, WBL                 | 186            | 178            | 110            |
| <u>LEPL - Vocational College "Erkvani"</u>   Ambrolauri, Ratcha                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Beekeeping</li> </ul>  | WBL                             | 7              | 6              | -              |
| <u>N(N)PL - Vocational College "Prestige"</u>   Telavi, Kakheti                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Winemaking</li> <li>Forestry</li> </ul>  | III, WBL                        | 15             | 20             | 30             |
| <u>LEPL - Shota Meskhia Zugdidi State University</u>   Senaki, Samegrelo       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gardening</li> <li>Farmer</li> <li>Beekeeping g</li> </ul>   | III, IV                         | 9              | 18             | 32             |
| <u>LEPL - Community College "Iberia"</u>   Kutaisi/Baghdadi, Imereti           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plant grower/Tea processing</li> </ul>   | IV                              | -              | -              | 11             |
| <u>LEPL - Vocational College "Tetnaldi"</u>   Mestia, Svaneti                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Forestry</li> </ul>  | IV                              | -              | -              | 10<br>14       |
| <u>LEPL - Ilya Tsinamdzghvrishvili Community College</u> Mtskheta Municipality | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Milk producing</li> <li>Forestry</li> <li>Tractor driver</li> <li>Winery</li> <li>Horticulture</li> <li>Beekeeping</li> <li>Fruit/Vegetable processing</li> <li>Beverages</li> </ul> | III, IV, V                      | 27             | 20             | 77             |
| <u>LEPL - Batumi Shota Rustaveli State University</u>   Batumi, Adjara         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Beekeeping</li> <li>Forestry</li> <li>Gardening</li> </ul>   | III, IV                         | 21             | 12             | 34             |
| <u>LEPL - Vocational College "Black Sea"</u>   Batumi, Adjara                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Beekeeping</li> <li>Occupational safety and environmental technologies</li> </ul>  | V, WBL                          | -              | -              | 20             |
| <u>LEPL - Community College "Akhali Talgha"</u>   Kobuleti, Adjara             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Beekeeping</li> <li>Gardening</li> <li>Forestry</li> </ul>   | III, IV                         | 39             | 37             | 67             |
| <u>LEPL - Iakob Gogebashvili Telavi State University</u>   Telavi, Kakheti     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Forestry</li> <li>Winery</li> </ul>  | III, IV                         | -              | 88             | -              |

|  |   |                              |            |            |            |
|--|---|------------------------------|------------|------------|------------|
| <u>N(N)PL - Vocational College "Horizonti"   Ozurgeti, Guria</u>                                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plant protection</li> <li>• Fruit growing</li> <li>• Garden design</li> </ul>  | IV                           | -          | -          | 38         |
| <u>N(N)PL - Vocational College "Gantiadi"   Gori, Shida Kartli</u>                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fruit/Vegetable processing</li> <li>• Beekeeping</li> <li>• Gardening</li> <li>• Horticulture</li> <li>• Fruit growing</li> </ul>                              | III, Short term training     | 7          | 7          | 40         |
| <u>LEPL - Vocational College "Pazisi"   Poti, Samegrelo</u>                                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fish producing</li> <li>• Fish Farmer</li> <li>• Laboratory work in fisheries</li> <li>• Fish storage and distribution</li> <li>• Agromechanization</li> </ul> | III, IV, Short term training | 79         | 36         | 37         |
| <u>LEPL - Vocational College "Lakada"   Tsalenjikha/Jvari, Samegrelo</u>                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fruit growing</li> </ul>   | IV                           |            |            | 13         |
| <u>LEPL - Vocational College "Modusi"   Marneuli, Kvemo Kartli</u>                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Horticulture</li> </ul>  | III                          |            |            | 13         |
| <u>LEPL - Community College "Spektri"   Tbilisi</u>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Environment safety</li> <li>• Food safety control</li> </ul>   | IV                           | 29         | -          | 31         |
| <u>LLC - Swiss Agricultural School Caucasus   Dmanisi, Kvemo Kartli</u>                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Livestock farming</li> <li>• Dairy production</li> </ul>   |                              |            |            | 10         |
| <u>LLC Community College AMAGI   Gori, Shida Kartli</u>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Veterinary</li> </ul>  | V                            |            |            | 20         |
| <u>N(N)LE - Georgian Patriarchate Community College of Decorative Gardening   Tbilisi</u>        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gardening</li> </ul>   | IV                           |            |            | 57         |
| <u>LEPL - Samtskhe-Javakheti State University   Akhaltsikhe, Akhalkalaki, Samtskhe-Javakheti</u> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Forestry</li> </ul>  | IV                           | -          | -          | 7          |
| <u>LEPL - Georgian Technical University Jikhaishi Branch, Imereti</u>                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Beekeeping</li> <li>• Winery</li> </ul>  | III                          | 30         | 19         |            |
| <b>TOTAL A-VET students in Georgia</b>   |   |                              | <b>523</b> | <b>502</b> | <b>740</b> |

## Annex 7: Mapping donor funded projects in agricultural extension



- Red cards: Stakeholders agriculture
- Green cards: Stakeholders VET,
- White cards: Various stakeholders

### Conclusions

- No stakeholders with low or negative interest and high influence that could be a potential threat to the project.
- Interest and influence of private sector still relatively low. Aim is to increase interest and influence PS: Creation of SSOs is a good foundation for this.

## Annex 8: Risk Analysis

| # | Description  | Type                        | Likelihood of incidence<br>(1 low – 5 high) | Impact of incidence<br>(1 low – 5 high)            | Countermeasures / Mngt response   | Owner                             |
|---|--|-----------------------------|---|--|---|-----------------------------------|
| 1 | Enforcement of VET legislation (law, by-laws, regulations, strategy) delays.                               | Institutional and technical | Medium: 3                                   | Medium: 3  | <b>Mitigation measures:</b> Support in execution, advocacy with key stakeholders, support to colleges for economic activities, sharing best practices. Use tools under its mandated to support proper enforcement.  | Project Manager<br>Skills Agency  |
| 2 | Interpretation of the new VET strategy creates confusion and misunderstanding.                             | Institutional and technical | Medium: 3                                   | Medium 3   | <b>Mitigation measures:</b> Close collaboration with and support of new structures. Organisation of sensitization and information events.   | Project manager                   |
| 3 | New structures (Skills Agency, SSOs) are unable to meet expectations                                       | Institutional               | Medium: 3                                   | High: 4  | <b>Mitigation measures:</b> Training and coaching of new structures; bring in external expertise, international exchange. Development of guidelines and tools for support. Financial support to new structures.   | Project Manager                   |
| 4 | Financial sustainability of Skills Agency and SSO (including their services (WBL, etc.) cannot be achieved | Institutional               | High: 5                                     | Medium: 3  | <b>Mitigation measures:</b> Management advise to SA and Agro Duo, Support to develop Agro Duo business plan and fund raising concept (e.g fee based membership and service schemes)   | Project Manager                   |
| 5 | Transformation of colleges into Skills Hubs fails  | institutional               | High: 4                                     | High: 4  | <b>Mitigation measures:</b> Support to Skills agency, Use SASC as role model for other colleges. Analysis of potential and needs of individual colleges to become Skills Hubs. Development of a methodology to help transformation. Training and coaching of college administration. Support colleges to develop economic activities. | Project Manager,<br>Skills Agency |
| 6 | Lack of qualified, education managers, teachers and EO leads to low quality services                       | technical                   | High: 4                                     | High: 4  | <b>Mitigation measures:</b> Special emphasis on TOT and on strengthening knowledge platforms. Scaling up teacher/EO training. Advocacy for better employment conditions for teachers/EO.  | Project Manager,<br>Skills Agency |
| 7 | Low interest of youth in agricultural professions.   | Social                      | Medium: 2:                                  | Impact: low participation in trainings.<br>High: 4 | <b>Mitigation measures:</b> Promoting entrepreneurship skills, and agrobusiness; teaching of modern technologies and mechanization. Conduct information events. Link agriculture to rural development.  | Project Manager                   |



| #  | Description   | Type          | Likelihood of incidence<br>(1 low – 5 high) | Impact of incidence<br>(1 low – 5 high)                              | Countermeasures / Mngt response   | Owner                             |
|----|---|---------------|---|--|---|-----------------------------------|
| 8  | Limited cooperation between A-VET colleges and ICCs results in poor linkages of VET and AE and duplication of activities. | Institutional | Medium: 2                                   | Medium: 3  | <b>Mitigation measures:</b><br>Support development of Micro AKIS in pilot regions and implementation of AKIS recommendations. Direct interventions at regional level. Organisation of joint trainings for both target groups. Advocacy work. Use SASC as role model and case study. | Project Manager<br><br>MoES, MEPA |
| 9  | Climate change has an impact on agricultural productivity.  | Environmental | Medium: 3                                   | Impact: Negative environmental impact<br><b>High: 4</b>              | <b>Mitigation measures:</b> Integration of green skills, modern technologies and climate smart agriculture into curricula, Environmental issues will be integrated in various A-Vet modules.  | Project Manager                   |
| 10 | Negative impact of conflicts (local, regional) and related economic downfall on livelihoods.                              | Political     | High: 4                                     | Impact of Ukraine war will impact on livelihoods<br><b>Medium: 3</b> | <b>Mitigation measures:</b> Close monitoring of situation.  | Project Manager                   |

## Annex 9: Stakeholder analysis

| Stakeholder (please indicate a group and/or single out institutions when relevant/known and group them per the following belonging: government agencies, private sector international partners (donors/donor funded projects)) | Role in the domain of intervention (statutory function)  | Role in relation to the project implementation (please describe a role and categorize the importance with the following markers essential, critical, and important)  | Actions within the project to strengthen capacities of a particular stakeholder  |
|--|--|--|--|
| <b>Government Agencies</b>   |  |  |  |
| Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture (MEPA)  | Carries the overall responsibility for the fields of environment, agriculture and rural development including the implementation of state policy state management and control of the use of natural resources. Has the overall responsibility for agricultural extension.                  | <b>Project Board member.</b> Oversees the overall strategic direction of the project, approves progress, and provides guidance on policy and direction of the project.<br>→ Critical   | By strengthening systems, framework conditions and subordinate institutions responsible for agricultural extension, MEPA will also be strengthened |
| Ministry of Education and Science (MoES)   | Carries the overall responsibility for VET and continues to be responsible for strategy development, data analysis, monitoring VET policy and funding, promoting equity and accessibility, and promoting and marketing VET.  | <b>Project Board member.</b> Oversees the overall strategic direction of the project, approves progress, and provides guidance on policy and direction of the project.<br>→ Critical   | By strengthening framework conditions and supporting strategy implementation for VET the MoES will also be strengthened                            |
| National Center for Educational Quality Enhancement (NCEQE)  | Is responsible for accrediting and licensing of vocational education, training and retraining programs, authorization of VET institutions and monitoring of VET institutions for meeting the authorization standards.  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Quality assurance</li> <li>- Development of curricula</li> <li>- Assess VET programs with international standards</li> </ul> → Important  | By supporting the implementation of new authorization standards through capacity enhancement of VET providers.                                     |
| Education Management Information System (EMIS)   | Is responsible for the collection and safeguarding of education data.  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provides information about professional students:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Enrolments</li> <li>✓ Number of students in professions</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Provides information about professional teachers</li> </ul> → Important | EMIS is not directly involved in the project but provides data and VET statistics/information for decision making of project partners.             |
| Regional Development Agency (RDA)  | The RDA implements rural development programmes of the MEPA and provides grants, agro insurance, agro credits, and subsidized interest rates on agriculture loans through partner financial institutions for RSMS in the agriculture sector. It is responsible for agricultural extension. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Strengthen the capacity of RICC/ICCs</li> <li>- Develop/revise standards for extension officers and extension providers.</li> </ul> → Critical  | Financial support for the implementation of activities listed in the column on the left. Technical support & training/ coaching.                   |

| Stakeholder (please indicate a group and/or single out institutions when relevant/known and group them per the following belonging: government agencies, private sector international partners (donors/donor funded projects)) | Role in the domain of intervention (statutory function)  | Role in relation to the project implementation (please describe a role and categorize the importance with the following markers essential, critical, and important)   | Actions within the project to strengthen capacities of a particular stakeholder  |
|--|--|---|--|
| (Regional) Information and Consultation Centre (RICCs, ICCs)   | Responsible for the provision of state extension services and consultancy to farmers.  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Strengthening capacity of rural actors</li> <li>- Facilitate participation of rural actors</li> <li>- Explore and assess the actors in their local skills ecosystem (Micro AKIS) to enhance collaboration<br/>→ Essential</li> </ul>                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Training and coach administrative and technical staff</li> <li>- Setting up a network for exchange and learning</li> <li>- Strengthen digital implementation capacity</li> </ul>  |
| Environmental Information and Education Centre (EIEC)  | Promotes environmental and agricultural education in Georgian society and raises public awareness; Ensure access to information on environment and agriculture   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Enhance collaboration and creation of synergies among actors (Implement AKIS recommendations)</li> <li>- Scaling up of the VET teachers and extension officers pre- and in-service training<br/>→ Essential</li> </ul>                                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Secondment of staff to provide technical advice and support for the implementation of project activities and for coaching and training of staff with the possibility that seconded staff will be integrated in the Skills Agency at the end of the project.</li> <li>- Funding of activities listed in the column on the left.</li> <li>- Technical support for the implementation of activities listed in the column on the left.</li> </ul> |
| Municipal administrations  | Municipal administrations implement state policies in local and rural development areas, foster local economic development activities, provide services within the selected state programs, and facilitate liaison with of rural actors (public, private sector, NGOs) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Development and implementation of rural skills development support programmes and strategies</li> <li>- Embed smart specialization in skills development system<br/>→ Important</li> </ul>   | By assisting them to elaborate and implement skills development support conditions and by coaching relevant departments (e.g., analysis and policy units).   |
| Public VET colleges (including their staff)  | Responsible for the provision of VET   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provision of training and advisory services<br/>→ Essential</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Training and coaching administrative and technical staff</li> <li>- Setting up a network for exchange and learning</li> <li>- Strengthen digital implementation capacity</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Public/private partnerships</b>   |  |   |  |
| Skills Agency (SA)   | Promotes the development of modern skills tailored to the needs of the country's economy, promotes inclusive VET and development tailored to the needs of the individual, and promoting the  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provision of entrepreneurial training</li> <li>- Support integration of graduates into labour market</li> <li>- integration of vulnerable groups into VET</li> <li>- Development of new Curricula</li> <li>- Digitalisation, incl. automatization</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Secondment of staff to provide technical advice and support for the implementation of project activities and for coaching and training of staff with the possibility that seconded staff</li> </ul>   |

| Stakeholder (please indicate a group and/or single out institutions when relevant/known and group them per the following belonging: government agencies, private sector international partners (donors/donor funded projects) | Role in the domain of intervention (statutory function)  | Role in relation to the project implementation (please describe a role and categorize the importance with the following markers essential, critical, and important)   | Actions within the project to strengthen capacities of a particular stakeholder  |
|---|--|---|--|
|   | internationalization of human capital development policy.  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Production and dissemination of teaching materials</li> <li>- Strengthen the technical capacity of SSOs</li> <li>- Harmonisation of the regulatory framework</li> <li>- scaling up of the VET teachers and extension officers pre-and in-service training</li> <li>- Internationalisation of VET</li> </ul> <p><b>Project Board member.</b> Oversees the overall strategic direction of the project, approves progress, and provides guidance on policy and direction of the project.</p> <p>→ Essential</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- will be integrated in the Skills Agency at the end of the project.</li> <li>- Funding of activities listed in the column on the left.</li> <li>- Technical support to increase the scale of interventions and implement activities</li> </ul> |
| STT providers   | Provide education services, consultancy, and training to public.   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provision of sector-led A-VET trainings</li> <li>- Capacity development of public institutions</li> <li>- Capacity development of VET teachers and instructors</li> </ul> <p>→ Important</p>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Strengthen consultancy provision capacity for better serving the farmers and adults in agricultural training</li> </ul>   |
|   |  |   |  |
| <b>Private sector</b>   |  |   |  |
| Sector Skills Organization (SSOs)   | Non-entrepreneurial, non-commercial legal entities representing the private sector in a specific sector to define skills needs, develop occupational standards, and organise the private sector and implement the VET policy in close cooperation with the SA. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Advancement of WBL ecosystem &amp; regulations</li> <li>- Enhancement of teachers' &amp; instructors' skills for WBL</li> <li>- Enhance collaboration colleges – companies</li> <li>- Development of teaching enterprises</li> <li>- Development of blending learning opportunities for AE</li> <li>- Develop qualification profiles, curricula, and student assessment models</li> </ul> <p>→ Essential</p>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Funding of activities listed in the column on the left.</li> <li>- Technical support to increase sustainability, scale-up services, increase members, etc.</li> </ul>   |
| Chambers/Associations   | The Georgian Chamber of Commerce and Industry is the co-founder of the Skills Agency. The main function pertinent to VET   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Motivate the private sector to engage in vocational education</li> <li>- Facilitate the practice of VET students in a training enterprise</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Support activities dedicated to strengthening private sector and vocational education cooperation</li> </ul>  |

| Stakeholder (please indicate a group and/or single out institutions when relevant/known and group them per the following belonging: government agencies, private sector international partners (donors/donor funded projects)) | Role in the domain of intervention (statutory function)   | Role in relation to the project implementation (please describe a role and categorize the importance with the following markers essential, critical, and important)  | Actions within the project to strengthen capacities of a particular stakeholder  |
|--|---|--|--|
|  | <p>areas is to stimulate the private sector engagement in vocational education.</p> <p>Sectoral associations play a crucial role in establishing SSO-s.</p>   | <p>- Promotes the In-company's instructor training program<br/>→ Important</p>   | <p>- Strengthen the competencies of In-company instructors in teaching skills</p>  |
| <b>Service providers</b>   |   |  |  |
| Swiss Agricultural School Caucasus (SASC)  | <p>Is an unprecedented, non-profit private initiative in the Georgian VET education systems to serve as an example of a nationwide agricultural educational structure, specialised in cattle breeding, dairy, and cheese processing.</p>  | <p>To serve as a role model for the setting up of skills hubs. Brings in international experience. Will expand its approach to different project regions. Organises international exchanges<br/>Expand college business model<br/>→ critical</p>   | <p>- Receives financial support to develop additional services for farmers<br/>- Benefits from training and technical support<br/>- Creating the skills hub</p>  |
| Private extension services (NGOs)  | <p>The non-governmental sector is highly focused on imparting knowledge to farmers, sharing international experience, introducing / disseminating best practices, creating success stories, introducing innovations, strengthening sectoral associations in the regions, and developing human capital in the agricultural sector. Their activities are regulated by the charter of the organization as well as the law on non-governmental organizations.</p> | <p>Provide advisory services and training to farmers<br/>→ critical</p>  | <p>Training and advice to their staff. Participate in training and information days. Receive information materials.</p>  |
| <b>Farmers Associations</b>  |   |  |  |
| Agro Duo   | <p>First SSO to be involved in VET (created during the VET UNDP/SDC VET project phase 2)</p>  | <p>- Advancement of WBL ecosystem &amp; regulations<br/>- Enhancement of teachers' &amp; instructors' skills for WBL<br/>- Enhance collaboration between colleges and companies<br/>- Development of teaching enterprises<br/>- Development of blending learning opportunities for AE<br/>- Develop qualification profiles, curricula, and student assessment models<br/>→ Essential</p> | <p>- Secondment of staff to provide technical advice and support for the implementation of project activities and for coaching and training of staff with the possibility that seconded staff will be integrated in Agro Duo at the end of the project.<br/>- Funding of activities listed in column on the left and of part of the operation costs.<br/>- Technical support to increase sustainability, scale-up services, increase members, etc.</p> |

| Stakeholder (please indicate a group and/or single out institutions when relevant/known and group them per the following belonging: government agencies, private sector international partners (donors/donor funded projects)) | Role in the domain of intervention (statutory function)   | Role in relation to the project implementation (please describe a role and categorize the importance with the following markers essential, critical, and important)              | Actions within the project to strengthen capacities of a particular stakeholder   |
|--|---|--|---|
| Georgian Farmers Association (GFA) (biggest farmers association)   | Is there to unite the voice of farmers throughout Georgia to improve and popularize their living standards by increasing Georgia's agricultural productivity, increasing competitiveness, and appreciating the contribution of farmers to the development of the Georgian economy.                    | - Currently responsible for all services listed under Agro Duo. Will hand over these services gradually to Agro Duo<br>→ Essential   | - Technical & financial support for the implementation of activities listed above under Agro Duo<br>- Technical support to increase sustainability, scale-up services, increase members, etc.   |
| Farmer Associations  | Represent bigger or smaller groups of farmers. Provide information and training to their members and represent their interests.   | Members of the SSO Agro Duo.<br>→ Important  | As members of Agro Duo, they benefit from training and advise.  |
| Farmers Consultancy Boards   | Advocate farmers' interest in rural areas, support ICCs to identify needs and develop responding service portfolios and packages  | Provide support in identification of needs and development of extension packages<br>→ Important  | Support in institutionalization and linkages with Agropur to improve the representation of farmers in agroduo   |
| <b>Beneficiaries</b>   |   |  |   |
| Students   | Secondary school leavers that opt for VET in agriculture  | Project beneficiary<br>→ Important   | Acquisition of knowledge and skills.  |
| Farmers  | Smallholder farmers who intend to enhance existing knowledge and skills, and diversify economic activities  | Project beneficiary<br>→ Important   | Acquisition of technical knowledge and skills.  |
| Ethnic minorities  | Secondary school leavers of selected municipalities   | Project beneficiary<br>→ Important   | Access to VET education and AE  |
| <b>International partners</b>  |   |  |   |
| UNDP   | UNDP is supporting Georgia to establish a modern system of VET in agriculture and introducing an advisory system for farmers. The project is implemented in close partnership with the Georgian government – MEPA and MoES - and in cooperation with educational institutions and the private sector. | <b>Implementing partner</b><br>Responsible for coordination of all project activities and ensuring its successful implementation. Project Board member and chair.<br>→ Essential | As a result of UNDP's improved capacities of managing VET project over the past 10 years, its capacities and position are strengthened to engage in policy dialogue with national and other development partners to enhance the leverage on reducing poverty and inequalities in line with Agenda 2030. |

| Stakeholder (please indicate a group and/or single out institutions when relevant/known and group them per the following belonging: government agencies, private sector international partners (donors/donor funded projects)) | Role in the domain of intervention (statutory function)  | Role in relation to the project implementation (please describe a role and categorize the importance with the following markers essential, critical, and important)  | Actions within the project to strengthen capacities of a particular stakeholder   |
|--|--|--|---|
| Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC)  |  | <p><b>Donor</b><br/> <b>Project Board member.</b> Oversees the overall strategic direction of the project, approves progress, and provides guidance on policy and direction of the project.<br/> → Essential</p> | SDC's strategic objectives of inclusive economic development will be achieved   |
| Relevant donors/donor funded projects (USAID GIZ,ADB,EU, etc.)   | Implement technical assistance programmes and provide support to the MoES and SA through the implementation of state policy and of Vocation Education Strategy | Stakeholders that implement similar activities   | As a result, UNDP's and SDC's active engagement in policy dialogue related to skills development, collaboration, and alignment of the priorities of other donors is improved. |

## Annex 10: Fragility assessment

| Political fragility  |  |   |   |   |
|--|--|---|---|---|
| Fields of observation (FO)   | What are the issues at stake and related risks (impact, effects of fragility) in the FO?   | What are the root causes of fragility in the FO?  | What are existing coping capacities in the FO?  | What are entry points for Switzerland to reduce or mitigate risks and strengthen coping capacities in the FO? |
| <b>Governance and state institutions:</b> accountability of public institutions (duty bearers), existence of oversight mechanisms as well as availability, accessibility, affordability and quality of public services   | <p>Immature state/new entities, new system</p> <p>While expectations are very high, the new Institutions and their sustainability are a matter of concern.</p>   | Lack of experience of the Georgian society to build strong institutions   | The Project possesses multiple tools of intervention aimed at mitigating the risks  |   |
| <b>Human rights<sup>†</sup>, justice and rule of law:</b> Respect for international human rights norms and standards and the prevalence of rule of law (e.g. separation of powers; independence of judiciary; access to justice and equality before the law; public oversight; access to remedies and effective responses to rights violations.) | <p>Access to education is relatively limited for vulnerable groups, language and ethnic minorities. Limits for women to education – cultural peculiarities, young marriages; the dropout rate is high among young women.</p> <p>Cross-border communities also lack access to educational resources</p> | <p>Financial stability and solvency has a critical role in having access to education – poor people cannot afford educational-fees</p> <p>Cultural traditions (especially ethnic minorities) also affect the access of youth to education</p> | <p>project planst o support to overcome the barriers (pilot funds)</p> <p>SA 'social inclusion fund' – funds are limited to cover the entire country, although a pilot college scheme can be arranged</p> |   |
| <b>Gender equality and LNOB:</b> meaningful participation of all relevant stakeholders, incl. marginalized groups, in political, economic, social and cultural affairs and decision making   | <p>The inclusion of women has gradually rased during the last ten years (50/50 )</p> <p>Yet, there are many barriers for women and girls for a full-fledged integration into social life.</p>  |   | Provide the possibility for ethnic minorities to access the educational system on native language than learn the Georgian language for further VET education  |   |

<sup>†</sup> SDC guidance on human rights



## Economic fragility

| <i>Fields of observation (FO)</i>  | <i>What are the issues at stake and related risks (impact, effects of fragility) in the FO?</i>  | <i>What are the root causes of fragility in the FO?</i>  | <i>What are existing coping capacities in the FO?</i>   | <i>What are entry points for Switzerland to reduce or mitigate risks and strengthen coping capacities in the FO?</i> |
|--|--|--|---|--|
| <p><b>Labor market:</b><br/>Diversification of the economic sector, including share of formal versus informal sector and natural resources<br/>Dependency</p>  | <p>Studies show (tracer studies) that students, having graduated the VET institutions, have difficulties entering the labour market</p> <p>High demands for entering the labour market, job vacancies are not always accessible for graduates (nepotism)</p>   | <p>Lack of information for VET opportunities</p> <p>No branding of VET education – low public awareness, especially among young people</p> | <p>Explore possibilities for assisting graduates in entering the Market from VET colleges to work</p> <p>Put more emphasis on information exchange and enhance communication among businesses and VET colleges, so graduates have more chances to enter the market.</p> <p>WBL integration is a good method for the integration of students<br/>AGRO DUO might become a role-model for further replication</p> <p>STT- provide more trainings for marketing experience and entrepreneur skills for VET students</p> |  |
| <p><b>Jobs / decent work<sup>†</sup>:</b> quality of work (e.g. fair wages, safe and healthy working conditions, social security / social protection, guarantee of right to form and join trade unions) equal access to the labor market for all, including women and marginalized groups;</p> | <p>High unemployment rate (over 20%),</p> <p>The essence of the Decent work is not legally defined<br/>Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) standards are not observed</p> <p>Remuneration is a challenge (Robert)</p> <p>Workforce drain - qualified staff leaving the field /country</p>                           | <p>Low wages in education and agricultural sectors</p> <p>scarcity of safe and healthy working conditions</p>                              | <p>Assist in the creation of small self-employment possibilities for young farmers</p> <p>SA sets standards for WBL and promotes adopting the standard at the legislative level</p>   |  |
| <p><b>Education and vocational skills development (VSD):</b> inclusivity, accessibility to and quality of the education system, as well as to vocational skills development;</p>   | <p>Institutional framework is in place, nonetheless, despite significant finances already allocated, yet, the sector requires more investments</p> <p>Teaching materials (quality/novelty/) requires constant renewal</p> <p>Low remuneration for teachers– higher salaries will attract high qualified teachers</p> |  | <p>Create new resources for teachers capacity growth</p>  |  |

**Societal fragility**

| <i>Fields of observation (FO)</i>  | <i>What are the issues at stake and related risks (impact, effects of fragility) in the FO?</i>   | <i>What are the root causes of fragility in the FO?</i> | <i>What are existing coping capacities in the FO?</i> | <i>What are entry points for Switzerland to reduce or mitigate risks and strengthen coping capacities in the FO?</i> |
|--|---|---|---|--|
| <b>Space for civil society:</b> level of CSO repression and /or CSO participatory environment;             | <p>Low level of sustainability of CSOs, number of strong and established civil organizations is limited</p> <p>The problem of Representability – there are no civil institutions that might involve the majority of stakeholders and represent the sector</p> |   |   |  |
| <b>Public trust:</b> trust in the authorities and institutions as well as trust between population groups; | Newly established institutions lack public trust - SA has yet to prove high expectations of its mandate   |   |   |  |

**Fragility related to security**

| <i>Fields of observation (FO)</i>  | <i>What are the issues at stake and related risks (impact, effects of fragility) in the FO?</i> | <i>What are the root causes of fragility in the FO?</i> | <i>What are existing coping capacities in the FO?</i>                  | <i>What are entry points for Switzerland to reduce or mitigate risks and strengthen coping capacities in the FO?</i> |
|--|---|---|--|--|
| <b>Climate change:</b> exposure and vulnerability to climate change impacts (i.e. climate variability and longer-term changes in rainfall / temperature / frequency and intensity of climate and weather-related events, resource depletion, sea-level rise); adaptive capacity and infrastructure (adaptation plans, agricultural | Lack of skills and experience in the area of the National resource management                   |   | Put more emphasis on Climate-smart agriculture and modern technologies |  |

**Annex 11: List of participants during planning Workshop**

|                      | <b>Name</b>              | <b>Organization</b>        | <b>Region</b>       |
|----------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------|
| <b>UNDP / SDC /</b>  |                          |                            |                     |
|                      | Ms. Nino Edilashvili     | SDC                        |                     |
|                      | Ms. Elene Tskhakaia      | UNDP                       |                     |
|                      | Mr. George Nanobashvili  | UNDP                       |                     |
|                      | Ms. Nino Elbakidze       | UNDP                       |                     |
|                      | Ms. Mamuka Matiashvili   | UNDP                       |                     |
|                      | Ms. Tamar Sanikidze      | UNDP                       |                     |
|                      | Ms. Tea Gulua            | UNDP                       |                     |
|                      | Mr. Shalva Lazariashvili | UNDP                       |                     |
|                      | Ms. Tinatin Suladze      | UNDP                       |                     |
| <b>Public sector</b> |                          |                            |                     |
|                      | Valerian Gobronidze      | MoES                       |                     |
|                      | Natia Gvinjishvili       | MoES                       |                     |
|                      | Kakhaber Eradze          | NCEQE                      |                     |
|                      | Lasha Zivzivadze         | NCEQE                      |                     |
|                      | Tamar Kitiashvili        | Skills Agency              |                     |
|                      | Tamar Samkharadze        | Skills Agency              |                     |
|                      | Nino Revishvilil         | Skills Agency              |                     |
|                      | Gela Lomiashvili         | Skills Agency              |                     |
|                      | Nona Gudushauri          | VET College "Mermisi"      |                     |
|                      | Irakli Avaliani          | VET College "Iberia"       | Imereti             |
|                      | Tinatin Makharadze       | SASC                       | Kvemo Kartli        |
|                      | Nino Mtvarelidze         | VET College "Modusi"       | Kvemo Kartli        |
|                      | Nino Kavtaradze          | VET College "Modusi"       | Kvemo Kartli        |
|                      | Besik Ziraqashvili       | VET College "Aisi"         | Kakheti             |
|                      | Bela Avalaishvili        | VET College "Opizari"      | Samtkhe - Javakheti |
|                      | Nana Jolia               | VET College "Horizonti"    | Guria               |
|                      | Konstantine Dolidze      | VET College "Prestige"     | Kakheti             |
|                      | Kakhaber Kakhiashvili    | VET College "Gantiadi"     | Shida Kartli        |
|                      | Tamar Tedoradze          | VET College "Akhali Talga" | Adjara              |
|                      | Giorgi Gogitidze         | VET College "Black sea"    | Adjara              |
|                      | Madona Mikeladze         | Batumi State University    | Adjara              |
|                      | Nino Kelenjeridze        | Ak.Tsereteli University    | Imereti             |
|                      | Nino Bakuradze           | VET College "Fazisi"       | Samegrelo           |
|                      | Mr.Tengiz Kalandadze     | MEPA                       |                     |
|                      | Mr. George Misheladze    | Land management Agency     |                     |
|                      | Mr. Teimuraz Paichadze   | MEPA                       |                     |
|                      |                          |                            |                     |
|                      | Ms.Tamar Aladashvili     | EIEC                       |                     |
|                      | Ms. Natia Saralidze      | EIEC                       |                     |
|                      | Ms. Maia Javaxishvili    | MEPA                       |                     |
|                      | Ms. Natia Iordanishvili  | NFA                        |                     |
|                      | Mr. Ilia Tamarashvili    | RDA                        |                     |

|                             |   |                                      |
|-----------------------------|---|--------------------------------------|
| Mr. Lasha Shalamberidze     | RDA   |                                      |
| Ms. Nino Dekanoidze         | RDA   |                                      |
| Ms. Anuki kanteladze        | RDA/RICC (online)                                   | Racha, Ieckhumi and<br>Kvemo Svaneti |
| Ms. Nana Zubashvili         | RDA/RICC (online)                                   | Samtckhe-Javakheti                   |
| Mr. George Qvaraia          | RDA/RICC (online)                                   | Samegrelo Zemo<br>Svaneti            |
| Ms. Tea Kupradze            | RDA/RICC (online)                                   | Guria                                |
| <b>Private sector / NGO</b> |   |                                      |
| Mr. Nikoloz Meskhishvili    | GFA   |                                      |
| Ms. Tamuna Toria            | GFA   |                                      |
| Rusudan Gigashvili          | AgroDuo   |                                      |
| Nino Kharkhelauri           | Agro Duo  |                                      |
| Kakha Baidurashvili         | IDI   |                                      |
| Mariana Gorgoshia           | BAG   |                                      |
| Mr. Otar Revishvili         | NGO Institute for Change and<br>Innovation (online) | Guria                                |
| Ms. Maia Mikava             | NGO AFAD (online)                                   | Samegrelo Zemo<br>Svaneti            |
| Ms. Tamar Elbakidze         | NGO ApkhazIntercont (online)                        | Racha, Ieckhumi and<br>Kvemo Svaneti |
| Ms. Veriko Khomeriki        | TABCO   |                                      |
| <b>Experts</b>              |   |                                      |
| Ms. Gvantsa Meladze         | Proposal Development Team                           |                                      |
| Natia Jokhadze              | Proposal Development Team                           |                                      |
| Robert Lehmann              | Proposal Development Team                           |                                      |
| Marc Bloch                  | Proposal Development Team                           |                                      |

## Annex 12: Project Board TOR

### Terms of Reference (ToR) for the Project Board

#### „Modernization of VET System related to Agriculture in Georgia“ Project (VET Phase 3)

##### I. Background

All UNDP projects are governed by a multi-stakeholder board or committee established to review performance based on established monitoring and evaluation metrics and high-level implementation issues to ensure quality delivery of results.

The Project Board is the most senior, dedicated oversight body for a UNDP 'Development Project', which is defined in the PPM as an instrument where UNDP "Delivers outputs where UNDP has accountability for design, oversight and quality assurance of the entire project."

##### II. Duties and Responsibilities

The two prominent roles of the Project Board are as follows:

- 1) **High-level oversight of the project:** The Project Board reviews evidence of project performance based on monitoring, evaluation, and reporting, including progress reports, monitoring missions' reports, evaluations, risk logs, quality assessments, and the combined delivery report.

The Project Board oversees annual (and as-needed) assessments of any major risks to the programme or project, and related decisions/agreements on any management actions or remedial measures to address them effectively.

The Project Board carries the role of quality assurance of the project taking decisions informed by, among other inputs, the project quality assessment.

The Project Board reviews updates to the project risk log.

- 2) **Approval of key project execution decisions:** The Project Board has an equally important, secondary role in approving certain adjustments above provided tolerance levels, including substantive programmatic revisions (major/minor amendments), budget revisions, requests for suspension or extension and other major changes (subject to additional funding partner/donor requirements).

The Project Board is responsible for making management decisions by consensus when required, including the approval of project plans and revisions, and the project manager's tolerances.

The Project Board approves annual work plans and reviews updates to the project risk log.

The diagram below outlines the main entities involved (and their respective responsibilities) in the 'oversight/approval of key execution decisions' layer and the 'implementation' layer of the project structure.

Specific responsibilities of the Project Board include the following:

- Provide overall guidance and direction to the project, ensuring it remains within any specified constraints, and promote gender equality and social inclusion (LNOB) in the project implementation;
- Review project performance based on monitoring, evaluation and reporting, including standard quality assurance checks, progress reports, risk logs, spot checks/audit reports and the combined delivery report;

- Address any high-level project issues as raised by the project manager and project assurance;
- Provide guidance on emerging and/or pressing project risks and agree on possible mitigation and management actions to address specific risks (including ensuring compliance with UNDP's Social and Environmental Standards, Fraud/corruption, Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and Sexual Harassment);
- Agree or decide on project manager's tolerances as required, within the parameters set by UNDP (Manage Change in the PPM) and the donor, and provide direction and decisions for exceptional situations when the project manager's tolerances are exceeded;
- Advise on major and minor amendments to the project within the parameters set by UNDP and the donor;
- Agree or decide on a project suspension or cancellation, if required; (note that for GEF and GCF projects it is UNDP that decides to suspend or cancel and project and the Project Board is informed/consulted only).
- Provide high-level direction and recommendations to the project management unit to ensure that the agreed deliverables are produced satisfactorily according to plans.
- Receive and address project level grievance, including overseeing whatever specific compliance and stakeholder response (or grievance) mechanisms have been put in place so that individuals and communities potentially affected by the project have access to effective mechanisms and procedures for raising concerns about the social and environmental performance of the project<sup>13</sup>.
- Engage in the low value grant selection process where there is no Grant Selection Committee, as guided by the Low Value Grants – UNDP Operational Guide.

Additional responsibilities of the Project Board can include, but are not limited to, the following:

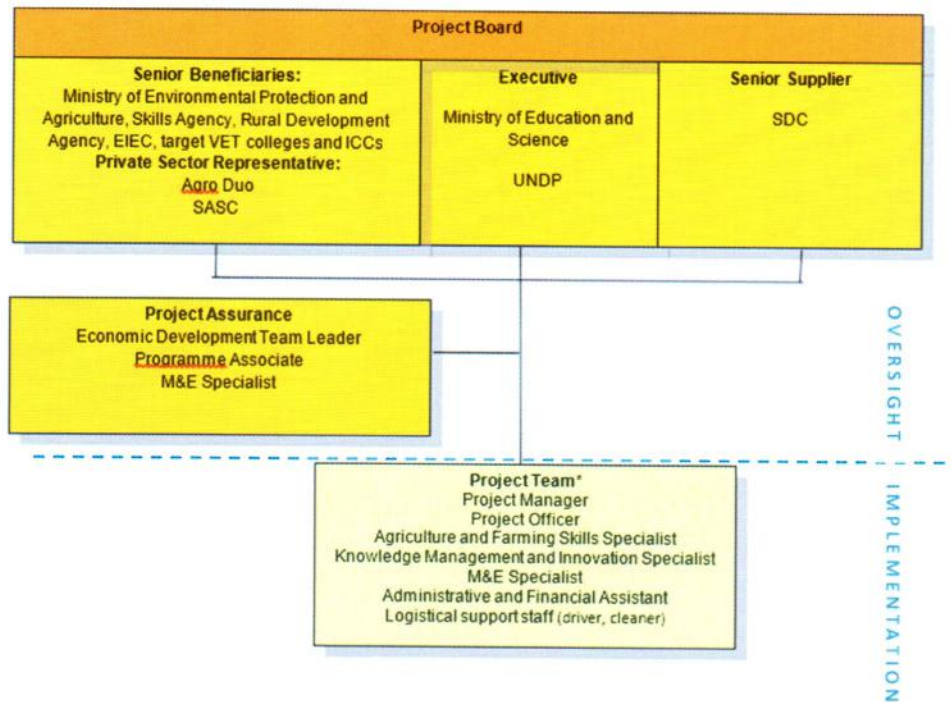
- Ensure coordination between the various donors and government-funded projects and programmes;
- Ensure coordination with multiple government agencies and their participation in project activities;
- Track and monitor co-financing for this project;
- Appraise the annual project implementation report, including the quality assessment rating report;

### III. Composition of the Project Board

As noted in the diagram below, every Project Board in a UNDP project has three categories of formal members. The role of every formal Project Board member must correspond to one of these three roles and be identified accordingly in the project documentation.

<sup>13</sup> The responsibilities of the board in this regard should follow UNDP's Social and Environmental Standards (SES) as codified in the PPM. It should be noted that while a project board can play a role in addressing or assisting with the compliance and stakeholder response (or grievance) mechanisms put in place for a given project (as part of their quality assurance and oversight function), this will be in addition to and does not substitute for UNDP's core responsibility to ensure compliance with the SES throughout the project management cycle as part of UNDP's Programming Quality Assurance system.

**Diagram 2: Project Organization Structure**



The three categories of Project Board members are the following:

- 1) **Project Director/Executive(s):** This is an individual(s) who represents ownership of the project and co-chairs the Project Board. The executive usually is the most senior national counterpart for nationally implemented projects (typically from the same entity as the Implementing Partner), and it must be UNDP for projects that are direct implementation (DIM), or both for nationally implemented projects, where UNDP provides support in implementation (NIM with CO support).. The Project Executive is the Deputy Minister of Education and Science and UNDP Resident Representative or Deputy Resident Representative.
- 2) **Beneficiary Representative(s):** This is an individual(s) representing the interests of those groups of stakeholders who will ultimately benefit from the project. Their primary function within the Board is to ensure the realization of project results from the perspective of project beneficiaries. Often representatives from civil society, industry associations, community groups or other government entities benefiting from the project can fulfil this role. If the project has a specific geographic focus, often representatives from the government entities in the targeted area/region will play this role. There can be multiple beneficiary representatives in a Project Board. The Beneficiary Representative(s) of this Board are: the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture and the Skills Agency.
- 3) **Development Partner(s):** Individuals representing the interests of the parties concerned that provide funding, strategic guidance and/or technical expertise to the project<sup>14</sup>. There can be multiple development partners representatives in a Project Board. The Development Partner representative is Regional Director of Cooperation (Swiss Cooperation Office for the South Caucasus).

<sup>14</sup> With the exception of responsible parties or any firms/entities engaged by the project to provide technical expertise with project funds

Where applicable, representatives from responsible parties to the project can (if requested) attend board meetings as observers. Since the chief responsibility of the Board is to provide high-level oversight of project implementation, to avoid any conflicts of interest, it is not appropriate for representatives of third party entities engaged by the project to provide services – whether responsible parties or contractors/service providers – to concurrently sit on the Board. Representatives of responsible parties can attend board meetings (as observers) but can have no official role in board decision-making. The same principle applies to the project manager who in attending and presenting at board meetings, does so in a non-voting capacity.

In cases where the inputs and guidance of responsible parties or other entities formally engaged in providing goods or services to the project are needed by the Board on a recurring basis, it is recommended to establish appropriate advisory or technical committees or working groups composed of those entities that can formally report to the Board, while ensuring the impartiality and integrity of board decisions happening independent of those bodies (see Section V of the ToR).

#### **IV. Project Board Protocols**

This Project Board will meet two times annually according to this provisional schedule, tentatively, in June and December.

Project Boards members cannot receive remuneration from project funds for their participation in the Board. However, it is allowable for board members to be reimbursed from project funds for certain reasonable, qualified expenses related to travel or lodging to attend board meetings.

All Project Board must have rules for quorum and documentation/minuting of board decisions. All board decisions and minutes should be kept by the project management unit and UNDP.

Unless otherwise specified, Project Board decisions are made by unanimous consensus. If a consensus cannot be reached within the Board, the final decision shall rest with the UNDP representative on the Project Board or a UNDP staff member with delegated authority as the programme manager.<sup>15</sup> Any ad hoc issues occurring in between Board meetings can be approved by Board members on No-objection basis electronically.

It is required that as per internationally recognized professional standards and principles of sound governance, conflicts of interest affecting board members in performing their duties must be formally disclosed if not avoidable. Where a board member has a specific personal conflict of interest with a given matter before the board, he/she must recuse oneself from their participation in a decision. No board member can vote or deliberate on a question in which he/she has a direct personal or pecuniary interest not common to other members of the board.

All board members should be presented with a ToR for the Project Board, which will include the responsibilities already outlined and indicate agreed board practices and logistics.

#### **V. Standard Outputs of Project Board Meetings**

In its oversight function, the Project Board will (at a minimum) review and assess the following project-related evidence at each meeting:

- Assessment of project progress to date against project output indicators (as documented in the project document results framework)
- Approval/review of annual work plans

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<sup>15</sup> UNDP has this special right since the ultimate legal and fiduciary accountability for a UNDP project, irrespective of modality, rests with UNDP and UNDP must (in line with its obligations to donors and to the Executive Board) be able to ensure that no action is taken by any body in a UNDP project that contravenes UNDP rules and regulations.



- Assessment of the relevant Monitoring & Evaluation mechanisms, including all evaluations<sup>16</sup>
- Review and assessment of the Project Risk Log (with updating/amendments as needed)
- Assessment of project spending, based on a review of the combined delivery report
- Review of required resources versus available funding (if applicable) and steps taken to reduce funding gap identified at the project design stage

This will be in addition to the review and approval of any required project execution decisions.

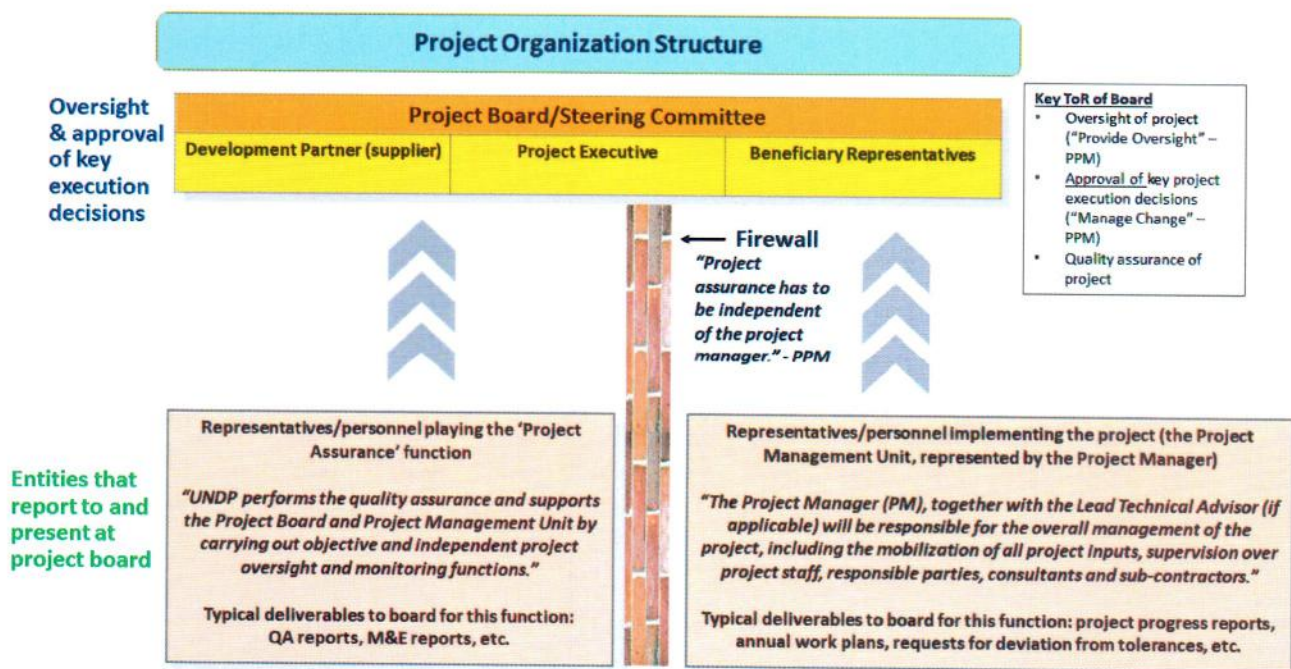
The output of every Project Board should be a written record (minutes) that captures the agenda and issues discussed and the agreed upon action items and decisions (if applicable). Each report should clearly document the members attending the meeting (as well as all participants in the meeting) and the modality used to agree on a certain action or decision (whether formal voting or no-objection or other mechanism). All records of board meetings should be documented and kept by UNDP in their quality assurance function (see next section).

## VI. Support Functions to the Project Board.

There are two main entities/functions outside the Project Board structure whose role is to report to the Project Board and support board members in effectively fulfilling their roles: project assurance and project management.

The diagram below explains the primary role of these two entities in the context of their support to Board operations. A description of these two entities follows.

Diagram 3: Project Organization Structure – Board Support Entities



**Project Assurance:** Project assurance is the responsibility of each Project Board member; however, UNDP has a distinct assurance role for all UNDP projects in carrying out objective and independent project oversight and monitoring functions. UNDP performs quality assurance and supports the Project Board (and Project Management Unit) by carrying out objective and independent project oversight and monitoring functions, including applying

<sup>16</sup> Including audit reports and spot checks.

UNDP's social and environmental management system to ensure the SES are applied through the project cycle. The Project Board cannot delegate any of its quality assurance responsibilities to the project manager.

Project assurance is totally independent of project execution.

A designated representative of UNDP playing the project assurance role is expected to attend all Project Board meetings and support board processes as a non-voting representative. It should be noted that while in certain cases UNDP's project assurance role across the project may encompass activities happening at several levels (e.g. global, regional), at least one UNDP representative playing that function must, as part of their duties, specifically attend board meetings and provide board members with the required documentation required to perform their duties.

The UNDP representative playing the main project assurance function is Economic Development Team Leader.

Project Support: The Project Manager (PM) (also called project coordinator) is the senior most representative of the Project Management Unit (PMU) and is responsible for the overall management of the project on behalf of the Implementing Partner, including the mobilization of all project inputs, supervision over project staff, responsible parties, consultants and sub-contractors. The project manager typically presents key deliverables and documents to the Board for review and approval, including progress reports, annual work plans, adjustments to tolerance levels and risk logs.

A designated representative of the PMU is expected to attend all board meetings and present the required progress reports and other documentation needed to support board processes as a non-voting representative.

The primary PMU representative attending board meetings is the Project Manager.

Annex 13: Letter of Agreement between UNDP and the Government for the Provision of Support Services

**STANDARD LETTER OF AGREEMENT BETWEEN UNDP AND GOVERNMENT**

**FOR THE PROVISION OF SUPPORT SERVICES**

Dear Mr. Gobronidze,

1. Reference is made to consultations between officials of Government of Georgia (hereinafter referred to as "Government") and officials of UNDP with respect to the provision of support services by the UNDP country office for nationally managed programmes and projects. UNDP and the Government hereby agree that the UNDP country office may provide such support services at the request of the Government through its institution designated in the relevant project document, as described below.

2. The UNDP country office may provide support services for assistance with reporting requirements and direct payment. In providing such support services, the UNDP country office shall ensure that the capacity of the Government-designated institution is strengthened to enable it to carry out such activities directly. The costs incurred by the UNDP country office in providing such support services shall be recovered from the administrative budget of the office.

3. The UNDP country office may provide the following support services for the activities of the project:

- (a) Identification and/or recruitment of personnel;
- (b) Identification and facilitation of training activities;
- (c) Procurement of goods and services;

4. The procurement of goods and services and the recruitment of personnel by the UNDP country office shall be in accordance with the UNDP regulations, rules, policies and procedures. Support services described in paragraph 3 above shall be detailed in an annex to the document, in the form provided in the Attachment hereto. If the requirements for support services by the country office change during the life of the programme the annex to the Agreement is revised with the mutual agreement of the UNDP resident representative and the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia.

5. The relevant provisions of the *UNDP standard basic assistance agreement with Republic of Georgia* (the "SBAA") signed on 1-Jul-1994, including the provisions on liability and privileges and immunities, shall apply to the provision of such support services. The Government shall retain overall responsibility for the nationally managed project through its designated institution. The responsibility of the UNDP country office for the provision of the support services described herein shall be limited to the provision of such support services detailed in the annex to the document.

6. Any claim or dispute arising under or in connection with the provision of support services by the UNDP country office in accordance with this letter shall be handled pursuant to the relevant provisions of the SBAA.

7. The manner and method of cost-recovery by the UNDP country office in providing the support services described in paragraph 3 above shall be specified in the annex to the document.
8. The UNDP country office shall submit progress reports on the support services provided and shall report on the costs reimbursed in providing such services, as may be required.
9. Any modification of the present arrangements shall be effected by mutual written agreement of the parties hereto.
10. If you are in agreement with the provisions set forth above, please sign and return to this office two signed copies of this letter. Upon your signature, this letter shall constitute an agreement between the Government and UNDP on the terms and conditions for the provision of support services by the UNDP country office for nationally managed programmes and projects.

Yours sincerely,

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Signed on behalf of UNDP  
Nick Beresford  
Resident Representative

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For the Government of Georgia:

Valerian Gobrodnidze  
Deputy Minister of Education and Science of Georgia

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Attachment

**DESCRIPTION OF UNDP COUNTRY OFFICE SUPPORT SERVICES**

1. Reference is made to consultations between the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia, the institution designated by the Government of Georgia and officials of UNDP with respect to the provision of support services by the UNDP country office for the nationally managed Project “Modernization of VET System Related to Agriculture in Georgia” (Project # 00113225), “the Project”.
2. In accordance with the provisions of the signed letter of agreement and the project document, the UNDP country office shall provide support services for the Project as described below.
3. Support services to be provided:

| Support services   | Schedule for the provision of the support services | Amount and method of reimbursement of UNDP (where appropriate) |
|--|--|--|
| 1. Payments, disbursements and other financial transactions                                | 2022 - 2025  | Cost-recovery for ISS based on UNDP Universal Price List       |
| 2. Recruitment of staff, project personnel and consultants                                 | 2022 - 2025  | Cost-recovery for ISS based on UNDP Universal Price List       |
| 3. Procurement of services and goods, including disposal                                   | 2022 - 2025  | Cost-recovery for ISS based on UNDP Universal Price List       |
| 4. Organization of training activities, conferences and workshops, including fellowships   | 2022 - 2025  | Cost-recovery for ISS based on UNDP Universal Price List       |
| 5. Travel authorization, visa requests, ticketing, and travel arrangements                 | 2022 - 2025  | Cost-recovery for ISS based on UNDP Universal Price List       |
| 6. Shipment, custom clearance, vehicle registration, and accreditation                     | 2022 - 2025  | Cost-recovery for ISS based on UNDP Universal Price List       |
| 7. Shipment, custom clearance, vehicle registration, and accreditation                     | 2022 - 2025  | Cost-recovery for ISS based on UNDP Universal Price List       |
| 8. Supervision of project implementation, monitoring and assistance in project evaluations | 2022 - 2025  | Cost-recovery for ISS based on UNDP Universal Price List       |

4. Description of functions and responsibilities of the parties involved:

UNDP will provide support services to Government as described in the paragraph 3 above in accordance with UNDP rules and procedures; it retains ultimate accountability for the effective implementation of the Project activities;

UNDP will be responsible for the provision of all Project inputs upon a formal request from Government. It will be responsible for administering resources in accordance with the specific objectives, and in keeping with the

key principles of transparency, competitiveness, efficiency and economy. The financial management and accountability for the resources allocated, as well as other activities related to the execution of the Project activities will be undertaken under the direct supervision of the UNDP Country Office.

Government will review and clear Annual Work Plans (AWP) and annual progress achieved through Annual Project Reviews based on the approved annual work plans and sign Combined Delivery Reports (CDRs) by the end of each quarter.

## Annex 14: Social and Environmental Screening Procedure (SESP)

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Project Information</b>                    |  |
| Project Title                                 | Modernization of Vocational Education and Training System related to Agriculture and Rural Development (Phase 3) |
| Project Number (i.e. Atlas project ID, PIMS+) | Award 00113225 / Output 00111493   |
| Location (Global/Region/Country)              | Georgia  |
| Project stage (Design or Implementation)      | Phase 3 (September 1, 2022 – September 1, 2025)  |
| Date  | 12-Sept-2022   |

### Part A. Integrating Programming Principles to Strengthen Social and Environmental Sustainability

#### QUESTION 1: How Does the Project Integrate the Programming Principles in Order to Strengthen Social and Environmental Sustainability?

##### *Briefly describe in the space below how the project mainstreams the human rights-based approach*

Access to education and vocational training opportunities should be a right for all groups of the population, regardless of social or economic affiliation or geographical location in the State of Georgia. To achieve this, the Project will pay special attention to the needs of different target groups and provide special services for vulnerable groups, including ethnic minorities, students with special educational needs, etc. However, access to the system by different target groups is still not guaranteed, mainly due to the lack of financial resources. The Project intends to establish a social inclusion fund and the project will pilot the fund in at least one college. It is hoped that this will encourage other donors to participate in inclusion activities on a larger scale.

##### *Briefly describe in the space below how the project is likely to improve gender equality and women's empowerment*

The project regularly tracks and analyses the incentives and disincentives for each gender in the different VET occupations. Tracking of gender participation is carried out at different stages of the VET implementation process: application, completion and (self-)employment, in order to analyse gender differences in VET and extension (including social and cultural aspects). The project will then work to increase women's participation.

A high proportion of women will be ensured by promoting equal opportunities at every stage of implementation, and training modules will be offered on topics of particular interest to women. Special qualification packages are being developed that are primarily aimed at women farmers (agro-tourism, direct agricultural sales).

The target population will be sensitised through vocational guidance and information campaigns so that women and men can make informed decisions regarding vocational training. At the same time, the project will explore further opportunities to use vocational training and counselling services for the economic empowerment of rural women. Project partners will be encouraged to improve gender equality.

The project will adopt a non-discriminatory approach and ensure proactive participation of women in the proposed activities - training, extension and coaching in agriculture.

##### *Briefly describe in the space below how the project mainstreams sustainability and resilience*

The efforts of phase 1 and 2 of the project have led to the creation of new national structures owned by the government and the private sector, which further contributes to the sustainability of the project. Project sustainability can be looked at from three angles.

**Institutional sustainability.** The involvement of national public and private actors in all phases of the project was already the case in phase 1 and 2 and led to the establishment of the SA and Agro Duo. These two institutions now have the main responsibility for VET (SA) and A-VET reforms' implementation. The strengthening of these two institutions will continue and they will lead the implementation of various project activities. Part of the project team will also be moved to the SA and work in its premises, while the UNDP team will be downsized and have a steering, coordinating and advisory role. The creation of this new structure for VET and extension (RDA as the new structure responsible for AE) will further enhance sustainability. The responsibility for the implementation of the project lies, as far as possible, with the national actors.

**Technical sustainability.** Training, re-training and extension services are sustainable if they meet the needs of the beneficiaries, if they have a direct impact on increasing productivity and income, if extension support for the proposed new technologies is locally available and if the investment costs for new technologies are affordable. The training programmes and extension packages developed over the past 10 years will be revised and consolidated as needed. This work will be carried out by national experts, and it is also important that newly developed vocational training and extension packages are nationally owned. Close involvement of Agro Duo will be pushed. An expansion of the programmes will also take place. It is important that training activities and services are operational, practical, holistic, modular, include a self-learning component and are delivered by qualified teachers and counsellors. Finally, the establishment of so-called Skills Hubs will also contribute to technical sustainability.

**Financial sustainability.** Increasing financial sustainability is the most difficult of the three aspects. It is unrealistic to expect that beneficiaries will be able to bear much of the cost of training and extension services, except for a very small group of large farmers. As far as VET services are concerned, it is also the responsibility of the government to provide young people with free or at least heavily subsidised training. The project will work to ensure that farmers are the backbone of Georgian society and investing in their training will have a positive impact on the whole country. The financial commitment of the MoES to VET has increased and is already commendable. The ratio of SA to the total VET spending of the MoES is 16% in 2022. As for MEPA's financial commitment, it is expected that the creation of RDA will also have a positive impact on the financial sustainability of extension activities.

***Briefly describe in the space below how the project strengthens accountability to stakeholders***

The steering mechanism of the project (i.e. the Project Board) will conduct regular project reviews to assess the performance of the project and review the work plans to ensure realistic budgeting during the project period.

The Project will produce bi-annual progress reports that will be shared and presented to all major stakeholders of the Project.

In the final year of the project, the project board will hold a project closure meeting to capture lessons learnt and discuss possibilities for scaling up the project, as well as share the project results and lessons learnt with relevant target groups.

**Part B. Identifying and Managing Social and Environmental Risks**

| QUESTION 2: What are the Potential Social and Environmental Risks?<br><i>Note: Complete SESP Attachment 1 before responding to Question 2.</i> | QUESTION 3: What is the level of significance of the potential social and environmental risks?<br><i>Note: Respond to Questions 4 and 5 below before proceeding to Question 5</i> |                              | QUESTION 6: Describe the assessment and management measures for each risk rated Moderate, Substantial or High |
|--|---|------------------------------|---|
| Risk Description<br>(Broken down by event, cause, impact)  | Impact and Likelihood (1-5)   | Significance (Low, Moderate) | Comments (optional)   |
|  |   |                              | <i>Description of assessment and management measures for risks rated as Moderate, Substantial or High</i>     |



|  |                | <i>Substantia<br/>l, High)</i> |  |   |
|--|----------------|--------------------------------|--|---|
| <b>Risk 1:</b> Duty-bearers (e.g. government agencies) do not have the capacity to meet their obligations in the project (P2).               | I = 2<br>L = 3 | LOW                            |  | Training and coaching of the staff of newly established partner structures; bring in external expertise and international exchange. Development of guidelines and tools for support, including financial support to new structures. |
| <b>QUESTION 4: What is the overall project risk categorization?</b>  |                |                                |  |   |
|  |                |                                |  |   |
| <i>Low Risk</i> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>  |                |                                |  |   |
| <i>Moderate Risk</i> <input type="checkbox"/>  |                |                                |  |   |
| <i>Substantial Risk</i> <input type="checkbox"/>   |                |                                |  |   |
| <i>High Risk</i> <input type="checkbox"/>  |                |                                |  |   |
| <b>QUESTION 5: Based on the identified risks and risk categorization, what requirements of the SES are triggered? (check all that apply)</b> |                |                                |  |   |
| Question only required for Moderate, Substantial and High Risk projects  |                |                                |  |   |
| <b><i>Is assessment required? (Check if "yes")</i></b>   |                | <input type="checkbox"/>       |  | <b><i>Status?<br/>(Completed,<br/>planned)</i></b>  |
| <i>if yes, indicate overall type and status</i>  |                | <input type="checkbox"/>       | Targeted assessment(s)   |   |
|  |                | <input type="checkbox"/>       | ESIA (Environmental and Social Impact Assessment)  |   |
|  |                | <input type="checkbox"/>       | SESA (Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment)   |   |
| <b><i>Are management plans required? (Check if "yes")</i></b>  |                | <input type="checkbox"/>       |  |   |
| <i>If yes, indicate overall type</i>   |                | <input type="checkbox"/>       | Targeted management plans (e.g., Gender Action Plan, Emergency Response Plan, Waste Management Plan, others) |   |
|  |                | <input type="checkbox"/>       | ESMP (Environmental and Social Management Plan which may include range of targeted plans)                    |   |
|  |                | <input type="checkbox"/>       | ESMF (Environmental and Social Management Framework)   |   |
| <b><i>Based on identified risks, which Principles/Project-level Standards triggered?</i></b>   |                |                                | <b>Comments (not required)</b>   |   |

|  |   |                          |  |
|--|---|--------------------------|--|
|  | <b>Overarching Principle: Leave No One Behind</b>                               |                          |  |
|  | <b>Human Rights</b>   | X                        |  |
|  | <b>Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment</b>                                  | <input type="checkbox"/> |  |
|  | <b>Accountability</b>   | <input type="checkbox"/> |  |
|  | <b>1. Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Natural Resource Management</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> |  |
|  | <b>2. Climate Change and Disaster Risks</b>                                     | <input type="checkbox"/> |  |
|  | <b>3. Community Health, Safety and Security</b>                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> |  |
|  | <b>4. Cultural Heritage</b>   | <input type="checkbox"/> |  |
|  | <b>5. Displacement and Resettlement</b>   | <input type="checkbox"/> |  |
|  | <b>6. Indigenous Peoples</b>  | <input type="checkbox"/> |  |
|  | <b>7. Labour and Working Conditions</b>   | <input type="checkbox"/> |  |
|  | <b>8. Pollution Prevention and Resource Efficiency</b>                          | <input type="checkbox"/> |  |

**Final Sign Off**

*Final Screening at the design-stage is not complete until the following signatures are included*

| <b>Signature</b>                                     | <b>Date</b> | <b>Description</b>  |
|--|-------------|---|
| QA Assessor<br>George Nanobashvili<br>ED Team Leader |             | UNDP staff member responsible for the project, typically a UNDP Programme Officer. Final signature confirms they have "checked" to ensure that the SESP is adequately conducted.  |
| QA Approver<br>Anna Chernyshova<br>DRR               |             | UNDP senior manager, typically the UNDP Deputy Country Director (DCD), Country Director (CD), Deputy Resident Representative (DRR), or Resident Representative (RR). The QA Approver cannot also be the QA Assessor. Final signature confirms they have "cleared" the SESP prior to submittal to the PAC. |
| PAC Chair<br>Anna Chernyshova<br>DRR                 |             | UNDP chair of the PAC. In some cases, PAC Chair may also be the QA Approver. Final signature confirms that the SESP was considered as part of the project appraisal and considered in recommendations of the PAC.   |

SESP Attachment 1. Social and Environmental Risk Screening Checklist

| <b>Checklist Potential Social and Environmental Risks</b>  |   |                        |
|--|---|------------------------|
| <p><b>INSTRUCTIONS:</b> The risk screening checklist will assist in answering Questions 2-6 of the Screening Template. Answers to the checklist questions help to (1) identify potential risks, (2) determine the overall risk categorization of the project, and (3) determine required level of assessment and management measures. Refer to the <a href="#">SES toolkit</a> for further guidance on addressing screening questions.</p> |   |                        |
| <b>Overarching Principle: Leave No One Behind</b>  |   | <b>Answer (Yes/No)</b> |
| <b>Human Rights</b>  |   |                        |
| P.1  | Have local communities or individuals raised human rights concerns regarding the project (e.g., during the stakeholder engagement process, grievance processes, public statements)?   | NO                     |
| P.2  | Is there a risk that duty-bearers (e.g., government agencies) do not have the capacity to meet their obligations in the project?  | YES                    |
| P.3  | Is there a risk that rights-holders (e.g., project-affected persons) do not have the capacity to claim their rights?  | NO                     |
| <i>Would the project potentially involve or lead to?</i>   |   |                        |
| P.4  | adverse impacts on enjoyment of the human rights (civil, political, economic, social, or cultural) of the affected population and particularly of marginalized groups?  | NO                     |
| P.5  | inequitable or discriminatory impacts on affected populations, particularly people living in poverty or marginalized or excluded individuals or groups, including persons with disabilities? <sup>17</sup>  | NO                     |
| P.6  | restrictions in availability, quality of and/or access to resources or basic services, in particular to marginalized individuals or groups, including persons with disabilities?  | NO                     |
| P.7  | exacerbation of conflicts among and/or the risk of violence to project-affected communities and individuals?  | NO                     |
| <b>Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment</b>   |   |                        |
| P.8  | Have women's groups/leaders raised gender equality concerns regarding the project, (e.g., during the stakeholder engagement process, grievance processes, public statements)?   | NO                     |
| <i>Would the project potentially involve or lead to?</i>   |   |                        |
| P.9  | adverse impacts on gender equality and/or the situation of women and girls?   | NO                     |
| P.10   | reproducing discriminations against women based on gender, especially regarding participation in design and implementation or access to opportunities and benefits?   | NO                     |
| P.11   | limitations on women's ability to use, develop and protect natural resources, considering different roles and positions of women and men in accessing environmental goods and services?<br><i>For example, activities that could lead to natural resources degradation or depletion in communities who depend on these resources for their livelihoods and well being</i> | NO                     |
| P.12   | exacerbation of risks of gender-based violence?<br><i>For example, through the influx of workers to a community, changes in community and household power dynamics, increased exposure to unsafe public places and/or transport, etc.</i>   | NO                     |
| <b>Sustainability and Resilience:</b> Screening questions regarding risks associated with sustainability and resilience are encompassed by the Standard-specific questions below   |   |                        |
| <b>Accountability</b>  |   |                        |

<sup>17</sup> Prohibited grounds of discrimination include race, ethnicity, sex, age, language, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, political or other opinion, national or social or geographical origin, property, birth or other status including as an indigenous person or as a member of a minority. References to "women and men" or similar is understood to include women and men, boys and girls, and other groups discriminated against based on their gender identities, such as transgender and transsexual people.

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| <i>Would the project potentially involve or lead to:</i>                                 |  |    |
| P.13   | exclusion of any potentially affected stakeholders, in particular marginalized groups and excluded individuals (including persons with disabilities), from fully participating in decisions that may affect them?  | NO |
| P.14   | grievances or objections from potentially affected stakeholders?   | NO |
| P.15   | risks of retaliation or reprisals against stakeholders who express concerns or grievances, or who seek to participate in or to obtain information on the project?  | NO |
| <b>Project-Level Standards</b>   |  |    |
| <b>Standard 1: Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Natural Resource Management</b> |  |    |
| <i>Would the project potentially involve or lead to:</i>                                 |  |    |
| 1.1  | adverse impacts to habitats (e.g., modified, natural, and critical habitats) and/or ecosystems and ecosystem services?<br><i>For example, through habitat loss, conversion or degradation, fragmentation, hydrological changes</i>   | NO |
| 1.2  | activities within or adjacent to critical habitats and/or environmentally sensitive areas, including (but not limited to) legally protected areas (e.g., nature reserve, national park), areas proposed for protection, or recognized as such by authoritative sources and/or indigenous peoples or local communities? | NO |
| 1.3  | changes to the use of lands and resources that may have adverse impacts on habitats, ecosystems, and/or livelihoods? (Note: if restrictions and/or limitations of access to lands would apply, refer to Standard 5)  | NO |
| 1.4  | risks to endangered species (e.g., reduction, encroachment on habitat)?  | NO |
| 1.5  | exacerbation of illegal wildlife trade?  | NO |
| 1.6  | introduction of invasive alien species?  | NO |
| 1.7  | adverse impacts on soils?  | NO |
| 1.8  | harvesting of natural forests, plantation development, or reforestation?   | NO |
| 1.9  | significant agricultural production?   | NO |
| 1.10   | animal husbandry or harvesting of fish populations or other aquatic species?   | NO |
| 1.11   | significant extraction, diversion or containment of surface or ground water?<br><i>For example, construction of dams, reservoirs, river basin developments, groundwater extraction</i>   | NO |
| 1.12   | handling or utilization of genetically modified organisms/living modified organisms? <sup>18</sup>   | NO |
| 1.13   | utilization of genetic resources? (e.g., collection and/or harvesting, commercial development) <sup>19</sup>   | NO |
| 1.14   | adverse transboundary or global environmental concerns?  | NO |
| <b>Standard 2: Climate Change and Disaster Risks</b>                                     |  |    |
| <i>Would the project potentially involve or lead to?</i>                                 |  |    |
| 2.1  | areas subject to hazards such as earthquakes, floods, landslides, severe winds, storm surges, tsunamis, or volcanic eruptions?   | NO |
| 2.2  | outputs and outcomes sensitive or vulnerable to potential impacts of climate change or disasters?<br><i>For example, through increased precipitation, drought, temperature, salinity, extreme events, earthquakes</i>  | NO |
| 2.3  | increases in vulnerability to climate change impacts or disaster risks now or in the future (also known as maladaptive or negative coping practices)?  | NO |

<sup>18</sup> See the [Convention on Biological Diversity](#) and its [Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety](#).

<sup>19</sup> See the [Convention on Biological Diversity](#) and its [Nagoya Protocol](#) on access and benefit sharing from use of genetic resources.

|   |  |    |
|---|--|----|
| <i>For example, changes to land use planning may encourage further development of floodplains, potentially increasing the population's vulnerability to climate change, specifically flooding</i> |  |    |
| 2.4   | increases of greenhouse gas emissions, black carbon emissions or other drivers of climate change?  | NO |
| <b>Standard 3: Community Health, Safety and Security</b>  |  |    |
| <i>Would the project potentially involve or lead to?</i>  |  |    |
| 3.1   | construction and/or infrastructure development (e.g., roads, buildings, dams)? (Note: the GEF does not finance projects that would involve the construction or rehabilitation of large or complex dams)  | NO |
| 3.2   | air pollution, noise, vibration, traffic, injuries, physical hazards, poor surface water quality due to runoff, erosion, sanitation?   | NO |
| 3.3   | harm or losses due to failure of structural elements of the project (e.g., collapse of buildings or infrastructure)?   | NO |
| 3.4   | risks of water-borne or other vector-borne diseases (e.g., temporary breeding habitats), communicable and noncommunicable diseases, nutritional disorders, mental health?  | NO |
| 3.5   | transport, storage, and use and/or disposal of hazardous or dangerous materials (e.g., explosives, fuel and other chemicals during construction and operation)?  | NO |
| 3.6   | adverse impacts on ecosystems and ecosystem services relevant to communities' health (e.g., food, surface water purification, natural buffers from flooding)?  | NO |
| 3.7   | influx of project workers to project areas?  | NO |
| 3.8   | engagement of security personnel to protect facilities and property or to support project activities?  | NO |
| <b>Standard 4: Cultural Heritage</b>  |  |    |
| <i>Would the project potentially involve or lead to?</i>  |  |    |
| 4.1   | activities adjacent to or within a Cultural Heritage site?   | NO |
| 4.2   | significant excavations, demolitions, movement of earth, flooding, or other environmental changes?   | NO |
| 4.3   | adverse impacts to sites, structures, or objects with historical, cultural, artistic, traditional, or religious values or intangible forms of culture (e.g., knowledge, innovations, practices)? (Note: projects intended to protect and conserve Cultural Heritage may also have inadvertent adverse impacts) | NO |
| 4.4   | alterations to landscapes and natural features with cultural significance?   | NO |
| 4.5   | utilization of tangible and/or intangible forms (e.g., practices, traditional knowledge) of Cultural Heritage for commercial or other purposes?  | NO |
| <b>Standard 5: Displacement and Resettlement</b>  |  |    |
| <i>Would the project potentially involve or lead to?</i>  |  |    |
| 5.1   | temporary or permanent and full or partial physical displacement (including people without legally recognizable claims to land)?   | NO |
| 5.2   | economic displacement (e.g., loss of assets or access to resources due to land acquisition or access restrictions – even in the absence of physical relocation)?   | NO |
| 5.3   | risk of forced evictions? <sup>20</sup>  | NO |
| 5.4   | impacts on or changes to land tenure arrangements and/or community-based property rights/customary rights to land, territories and/or resources?   | NO |
| <b>Standard 6: Indigenous Peoples</b>   |  |    |
| <i>Would the project potentially involve or lead to?</i>  |  |    |
| 6.1   | areas where indigenous peoples are present (including project area of influence)?  | NO |

<sup>20</sup> Forced eviction is defined here as the permanent or temporary removal against their will of individuals, families or communities from the homes and/or land which they occupy, without the provision of, and access to, appropriate forms of legal or other protection. Forced evictions constitute gross violations of a range of internationally recognized human rights.

|  |  |    |
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| 6.2  | activities located on lands and territories claimed by indigenous peoples?   | NO |
| 6.3  | impacts (positive or negative) to the human rights, lands, natural resources, territories, and traditional livelihoods of indigenous peoples (regardless of whether indigenous peoples possess the legal titles to such areas, whether the project is located within or outside of the lands and territories inhabited by the affected peoples, or whether the indigenous peoples are recognized as indigenous peoples by the country in question)?<br><i>If the answer to screening question 6.3 is "yes", then the potential risk impacts are considered significant, and the project would be categorized as either Substantial Risk or High Risk</i> | NO |
| 6.4  | the absence of culturally appropriate consultations carried out with the objective of achieving FPIC on matters that may affect the rights and interests, lands, resources, territories, and traditional livelihoods of the indigenous peoples concerned?  | NO |
| 6.5  | the utilization and/or commercial development of natural resources on lands and territories claimed by indigenous peoples?   | NO |
| 6.6  | forced eviction or the whole or partial physical or economic displacement of indigenous peoples, including through access restrictions to lands, territories, and resources?<br><i>Consider, and where appropriate ensure, consistency with the answers under Standard 5 above</i>   | NO |
| 6.7  | adverse impacts on the development priorities of indigenous peoples as defined by them?  | NO |
| 6.8  | risks to the physical and cultural survival of indigenous peoples?   | NO |
| 6.9  | impacts on the Cultural Heritage of indigenous peoples, including through the commercialization or use of their traditional knowledge and practices?<br><i>Consider, and where appropriate ensure, consistency with the answers under Standard 4 above.</i>  | NO |
| <b>Standard 7: Labour and Working Conditions</b>   |  |    |
| <i>Would the project potentially involve or lead to: (note: applies to project and contractor workers)</i> |  |    |
| 7.1  | working conditions that do not meet national labour laws and international commitments?  | NO |
| 7.2  | working conditions that may deny freedom of association and collective bargaining?   | NO |
| 7.3  | use of child labour?   | NO |
| 7.4  | use of forced labour?  | NO |
| 7.5  | discriminatory working conditions and/or lack of equal opportunity?  | NO |
| 7.6  | occupational health and safety risks due to physical, chemical, biological, and psychosocial hazards (including violence and harassment) throughout the project life cycle?  | NO |
| <b>Standard 8: Pollution Prevention and Resource Efficiency</b>  |  |    |
| <i>Would the project potentially involve or lead to?</i>   |  |    |
| 8.1  | the release of pollutants to the environment due to routine or non-routine circumstances with the potential for adverse local, regional, and/or transboundary impacts?   | NO |
| 8.2  | the generation of waste (both hazardous and non-hazardous)?  | NO |
| 8.3  | the manufacture, trade, release, and/or use of hazardous materials and/or chemicals?   | NO |
| 8.4  | the use of chemicals or materials subject to international bans or phase-outs?<br><i>For example, DDT, PCBs and other chemicals listed in international conventions such as the <u>Montreal Protocol</u>, <u>Minamata Convention</u>, <u>Basel Convention</u>, <u>Rotterdam Convention</u>, <u>Stockholm Convention</u></i>  | NO |
| 8.5  | the application of pesticides that may have a negative effect on the environment or human health?  | NO |
| 8.6  | significant consumption of raw materials, energy, and/or water?  | NO |

## Annex 15: Project Quality Assurance Report

|                           |  |
|---------------------------|--|
| Form Status: Approved     |  |
| Overall Rating:           | Highly Satisfactory  |
| Decision:                 | Approve: The project is of sufficient quality to continue as planned. Any management actions must be addressed in a timely manner. |
| Portfolio/Project Number: | 00113225   |
| Portfolio/Project Title:  | VET-Phase 3  |
| Portfolio/Project Date:   | 2022-09-01 / 2025-08-31  |

Strategic Quality Rating: Highly Satisfactory

1. Does the project specify how it will contribute to higher level change through linkage to the programme's Theory of Change?

3: The project is clearly linked to the programme's theory of change. It has an explicit change pathway that explains how the project will contribute to outcome level change and why the project's strategy will likely lead to this change. This analysis is backed by credible evidence of what works effectively in this context and includes assumptions and risks.

2: The project is clearly linked to the programme's theory of change. It has a change pathway that explains how the project will contribute to outcome-level change and why the project strategy will likely lead to this change.

1: The project document may describe in generic terms how the project will contribute to development results, without an explicit link to the programme's theory of change.

Evidence: Section 2/Strategy well elaborates on the expected changes at macro, meso and micro levels and their pathways.

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| No documents available. |           |             |             |

2. Is the project aligned with the UNDP Strategic Plan?

3: The project responds to at least one of the development settings as specified in the [Strategic Plan](#)<sup>1</sup> and adapts at least one [Signature Solution](#)<sup>2</sup>. The project's RRF includes all the relevant SP output indicators. (all must be true)

2: The project responds to at least one of the development settings as specified in the [Strategic Plan](#)<sup>4</sup>. The project's RRF includes at least one SP output indicator, if relevant. (both must be true)

1: The project responds to a partner's identified need, but this need falls outside of the UNDP Strategic Plan. Also select this option if none of the relevant SP indicators are included in the RRF.

Evidence: The project is linked to SP 2022-2025 Output 1.3 Access to basic services and financial and non-financial assets and services improved to support productive capacities for sustainable livelihoods and jobs to achieve prosperity. The project contributes to the achievement of SP indicators 1.3.1 Number of people accessing basic services and 1.3.3 Number of people accessing non-financial assets.

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No documents available.

3. Is the project linked to the programme outputs? (i.e., UNDAF Results Group Workplan/CPD, RPD or Strategic Plan IRRF for global projects/strategic interventions not part of a programme)

Yes

No

Evidence: Yes, the linkages to the UNSDCF, CPD and SP are indicated in the cover page, as well as Results Framework (Logframe).

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No documents available.

Relevant

Quality Rating: Highly Satisfactory

4. Do the project target groups leave furthest behind?

3: The target groups are clearly specified, prioritising discriminated, and marginalized groups left furthest behind, identified through a rigorous process based on evidence.

2: The target groups are clearly specified, prioritizing groups left furthest behind.

1: The target groups are not clearly specified.

Evidence: Target groups, as well as beneficiaries and target regions (geographical coverage) is provided in sections 3.3, 3.4 and 3.5.

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5. Have knowledge, good practices, and past lessons learned of UNDP and others informed the project design?



- 3: Knowledge and lessons learned backed by credible evidence from sources such as evaluation, corporate policies/strategies, and/or monitoring have been explicitly used, with appropriate referencing, to justify the approach used by the project.
- 2: The project design mentions knowledge and lessons learned backed by evidence/sources but have not been used to justify the approach selected.
- 1: There is little, or no mention of knowledge and lessons learned informing the project design. Any references made are anecdotal and not backed by evidence.

Evidence: The project represents 3rd phase of already successful VET project. As Sections 1.8/ "The UNDP/SDC collaboration in VET and extension: results of phase 2" and 1.9/"Lessons Learnt" suggest that the project is based on and follows-up the achievements of the previous phase and lessons learned from the this phase are fully incorporated in its design.

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6. Does UNDP have a clear advantage to engage in the role envisioned by the project vis-à-vis national / regional / global partners and other actors?

- 3: An analysis has been conducted on the role of other partners in the area where the project intends to work, and credible evidence supports the proposed engagement of UNDP and partners through the project, including identification of potential funding partners. It is clear how results achieved by partners will complement the project's intended results and a communication strategy is in place to communicate results and raise visibility vis-à-vis key partners. Options for south-south and triangular cooperation have been considered, as appropriate. (all must be true)
- 2: Some analysis has been conducted on the role of other partners in the area where the project intends to work, and relatively limited evidence supports the proposed engagement of and division of labour between UNDP and partners through the project, with unclear funding and communications strategies or plans.
- 1: No clear analysis has been conducted on the role of other partners in the area that the project intends to work. There is risk that the project overlaps and/or does not coordinate with partners' interventions in this area. Options for south-south and triangular cooperation have not been considered, despite its potential relevance.

Evidence: The project has conducted stakeholder analysis (see annex 10), as well as mapping of all donor funding projects in the extension sector (Annex 7).

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Principled

Quality Rating: Satisfactory

7. Does the project apply a human rights-based approach?

3: The project is guided by human rights and incorporates the principles of accountability, meaningful participation, and non-discrimination in the project's strategy. The project upholds the relevant international and national laws and standards. Any potential adverse impacts on enjoyment of human rights were rigorously identified and assessed as relevant, with appropriate mitigation and management measures incorporated into project design and budget. (all must be true)

2: The project is guided by human rights by prioritizing accountability, meaningful participation and non-discrimination. Potential adverse impacts on enjoyment of human rights were identified and assessed as relevant, and appropriate mitigation and management measures incorporated into the project design and budget. (both must be true)

1: No evidence that the project is guided by human rights. Limited or no evidence that potential adverse impacts on enjoyment of human rights were considered.

Evidence: Though project does not explicitly mentioned human rights based approach, it is guided by human rights principles and Inclusiveness and leaving no one behind approach (see section 4/ Cross-cutting Issues)

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8. Does the project use gender analysis in the project design?

3: A participatory gender analysis has been conducted and results from this gender analysis inform the development challenge, strategy and expected results sections of the project document. Outputs and indicators of the results framework include explicit references to gender equality, and specific indicators measure and monitor results to ensure women are fully benefitting from the project. (all must be true)

2: A basic gender analysis has been carried out and results from this analysis are scattered (i.e., fragmented and not consistent) across the development challenge and strategy sections of the project document. The results framework may include some gender sensitive outputs and/or activities but gender inequalities are not consistently integrated across each output. (all must be true)

1: The project design may or may not mention information and/or data on the differential impact of the project's development situation on gender relations, women and men, but the gender inequalities have not been clearly identified and reflected in the project document.

Evidence: Section 4/Cross-Cutting Issues dedicates a special section to mainstreaming gender equality principles in the project.

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9. Did the project support the resilience and sustainability of societies and/or ecosystems?

3: Credible evidence that the project addresses sustainability and resilience dimensions of development challenges, which are integrated in the project strategy and design. The project reflects the interconnections between the social, economic and environmental

dimensions of sustainable development. Relevant shocks, hazards and adverse social and environmental impacts have been identified and rigorously assessed with appropriate management and mitigation measures incorporated into project design and budget. (all must be true)

2: The project design integrates sustainability and resilience dimensions of development challenges. Relevant shocks, hazards and adverse social and environmental impacts have been identified and assessed, and relevant management and mitigation measures incorporated into project design and budget. (both must be true)

1: Sustainability and resilience dimensions and impacts were not adequately considered.

Evidence: Social and environmental impacts have been identified and assessed in sESP.

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No documents available.

10. Has the Social and Environmental Screening Procedure (SESP) been conducted to identify potential social and environmental impacts and risks? The SESP is not required for projects in which UNDP is Administrative Agent only and/or projects comprised solely of reports, coordination of events, trainings, workshops, meetings, conferences and/or communication materials and information dissemination. [if yes, upload the completed checklist. If SESP is not required, provide the reason for the exemption in the evidence section.]

Yes

No

SESP not required because project consists solely of (Select all exemption criteria that apply)

1: Preparation and dissemination of reports, documents and communication materials

2: Organization of an event, workshop, training

3: Strengthening capacities of partners to participate in international negotiations and conferences

4: Partnership coordination (including UN coordination) and management of networks

5: Global/regional projects with no country-level activities(e.g activities such as knowledge management, inter-governmental processes)

6: UNDP serves as Administrative Agent

7: Development Effectiveness projects and Institutional Effectiveness projects

Evidence: SESP attached.

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| # | File Name | Risk Category | Risk Requirements | Document Status | Modified By | Modified On |
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Management & Monitoring

Quality Rating: Satisfactory

11. Does the project have a strong results framework?

3: The project's selection of outputs and activities are at an appropriate level. Outputs are accompanied by SMART, results-oriented indicators that measure the key expected development changes, each with credible data sources and populated baselines and targets, including gender sensitive, target group focused, sex-disaggregated indicators where appropriate. (all must be true)

2: The project's selection of outputs and activities are at an appropriate level. Outputs are accompanied by SMART, results-oriented indicators, but baselines, targets and data sources may not yet be fully specified. Some use of target group focused, sex-disaggregated indicators, as appropriate. (all must be true)

1: The project's selection of outputs and activities are not at an appropriate level; outputs are not accompanied by SMART, results-oriented indicators that measure the expected change and have not been populated with baselines and targets; data sources are not specified, and/or no gender sensitive, sex-disaggregation of indicators. (if any is true)

Evidence: The project has strong results framework measuring results at impact, outcome and output levels. Indicators are SMART.

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No documents available.

12. Is the project's governance mechanism clearly defined in the project document, including composition of the project board?

3: The project's governance mechanism is fully defined. Individuals have been specified for each position in the governance mechanism (especially all members of the project board.) Project Board members have agreed on their roles and responsibilities as specified in the terms of reference. The ToR of the project board has been attached to the project document. (all must be true)

2: The project's governance mechanism is defined; specific institutions are noted as holding key governance roles, but individuals may not have been specified yet. The project document lists the most important responsibilities of the project board, project director/manager and quality assurance roles. (all must be true)

1: The project's governance mechanism is loosely defined in the project document, only mentioning key roles that will need to be filled at a later date. No information on the responsibilities of key positions in the governance mechanism is provided.

Evidence: The project's governance mechanism is clearly defined in the section 7/ Management Arrangements.

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13. Have the project risks been identified with clear plans stated to manage and mitigate each risk?

3: Project risks related to the achievement of results are fully described in the project risk log, based on comprehensive analysis drawing on the programme's theory of change, Social and Environmental Standards and screening, situation analysis, capacity assessments and other analysis such as funding potential and reputational risk. Risks have been identified through a consultative process with key internal and external stakeholders, including consultation with the UNDP Security Office as required. Clear and complete plan in place to manage and mitigate each risk, including security risks, reflected in project budgeting and monitoring plans. (both must be true)

2: Project risks related to the achievement of results are identified in the initial project risk log based on a minimum level of analysis and consultation, with mitigation measures identified for each risk.

1: Some risks may be identified in the initial project risk log, but no evidence of consultation or analysis and no clear risk mitigation measures identified. This option is also selected if risks are not clearly identified, no initial risk log is included with the project document and/or no security risk management process has taken place for the project.

Evidence: The project has identified risks that may adversely impact project implementation (see Risk log/Annex 9)

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Efficient

Quality Rating: Exemplary

14. Have specific measures for ensuring cost-efficient use of resources been explicitly mentioned as part of the project design? This can include, for example:

- i) Using the theory of change analysis to explore different options of achieving the maximum results with the resources available.
- ii) Using a portfolio management approach to improve cost effectiveness through synergies with other interventions.
- iii) Through joint operations (e.g., monitoring or procurement) with other partners.
- iv) Sharing resources or coordinating delivery with other projects.
- v) Using innovative approaches and technologies to reduce the cost of service delivery or other types of interventions.

Yes

No

Evidence: Though project does not explicitly mentions cost-efficiency considerations, the project will improve cost effectiveness through synergies with the other projects of Economic Development portfolio (e.g. sharing office space, logistics, etc)

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15. Is the budget justified and supported with valid estimates?

3: The project's budget is at the activity level with funding sources, and is specified for the duration of the project period in a multi-year budget. Realistic resource mobilisation plans are in place to fill unfunded components. Costs are supported with valid estimates using benchmarks from similar projects or activities. Cost implications from inflation and foreign exchange exposure have been estimated and incorporated in the budget. Adequate costs for monitoring, evaluation, communications and security have been incorporated.

2: The project's budget is at the activity level with funding sources, when possible, and is specified for the duration of the project in a multi-year budget, but no funding plan is in place. Costs are supported with valid estimates based on prevailing rates.

1: The project's budget is not specified at the activity level, and/or may not be captured in a multi-year budget.

Evidence: The project budget is detailed, broken down by outputs, activities and by years.

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No documents available.

16. Is the Country Office / Regional Hub / Global Project fully recovering the costs involved with project implementation?

3: The budget fully covers all project costs that are attributable to the project, including programme management and development effectiveness services related to strategic country programme planning, quality assurance, pipeline development, policy advocacy services, finance, procurement, human resources, administration, issuance of contracts, security, travel, assets, general services, information and communications based on full costing in accordance with prevailing UNDP policies (i.e., UPL, LPL.)

2: The budget covers significant project costs that are attributable to the project based on prevailing UNDP policies (i.e., UPL, LPL) as relevant.

1: The budget does not adequately cover project costs that are attributable to the project, and UNDP is cross-subsidizing the project.

Evidence: Yes, the project will recover DPC costs.

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Effective

Quality Rating: Highly Satisfactory

17. Have targeted groups been engaged in the design of the project?

3: Credible evidence that all targeted groups, prioritising discriminated and marginalized populations that will be involved in or affected by the project, have been actively engaged in the design of the project. The project has an explicit strategy to identify, engage and ensure the meaningful participation of target groups as stakeholders throughout the project, including through monitoring and decision-making (e.g., representation on the project board, inclusion in samples for evaluations, etc.)

- 2: Some evidence that key targeted groups have been consulted in the design of the project.
- 1: No evidence of engagement with targeted groups during project design.
- Not Applicable

Evidence: As section 2.2 "Process of developing the proposal" suggests, the project design was participatory, including various stakeholders. List of stakeholders is provided in Annex 12 and includes representatives of the government (MEPA, MoES), VET colleges and universities, private sector and NGOs. The design was finally validated by the project's main partners, MEPA, MoES, SA, Agro Duo, GFA, SDC and UNDP.

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No documents available.

18. Does the project plan for adaptation and course correction if regular monitoring activities, evaluation, and lesson learned demonstrate there are better approaches to achieve the intended results and/or circumstances change during implementation?

- Yes
- No

Evidence: The Project Board will serve as a mechanism for addressing changes in the project in case the context changes, also for capturing lessons learned and evaluation of the project results.

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19. The gender marker for all project outputs are scored at GEN2 or GEN3, indicating that gender has been fully mainstreamed into all project outputs at a minimum.

- Yes
- No

Evidence: The project is GEN2

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Sustainability & National Ownership

Quality Rating: Satisfactory

20. Have national / regional / global partners led, or proactively engaged in, the design of the project?

3: National partners (or regional/global partners for regional and global projects) have full ownership of the project and led the process of the development of the project jointly with UNDP.

2: The project has been developed by UNDP in close consultation with national / regional / global partners.

1: The project has been developed by UNDP with limited or no engagement with national partners.

Evidence: See answer to Q.17.

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21. Are key institutions and systems identified, and is there a strategy for strengthening specific / comprehensive capacities based on capacity assessments conducted?

3: The project has a strategy for strengthening specific capacities of national institutions and/or actors based on a completed capacity assessment. This strategy includes an approach to regularly monitor national capacities using clear indicators and rigorous methods of data collection, and adjust the strategy to strengthen national capacities accordingly.

2: A capacity assessment has been completed. There are plans to develop a strategy to strengthen specific capacities of national institutions and/or actors based on the results of the capacity assessment.

1: Capacity assessments have not been carried out.

Not Applicable

Evidence: The project has conducted HACT assessments of its partners in the previous phase. Assessments will be conducted for new partners.

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22. Is there is a clear strategy embedded in the project specifying how the project will use national systems (i.e., procurement, monitoring, evaluations, etc.) to the extent possible?



- Yes
- No
- Not Applicable

Evidence: The project is NIM with CO support and therefore, UNDP will use its own systems for procurement, M&E, etc

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23. Is there a clear transition arrangement / phase-out plan developed with key stakeholders in order to sustain or scale up results (including resource mobilisation and communications strategy)?

- Yes
- No

Evidence: The project has developed sustainability plan (see section 6/ Sustainability and Scale up)

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QA Summary/LPAC Comments