



Background

Through the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) funding, People 1st International have been engaged in a cross-regional intervention to provide businesses with the HR skills required to effectively manage their business.

The EBRD emphasises economic inclusion for development, measuring how economic institutions and education systems provide equal opportunities. Businesses face barriers when employing youth due to high unemployment and education gaps, impacting transitions to work. SMEs struggle to attract skilled labor, worsening labor force challenges.

The Skills in Business Programme aims to address these issues by enhancing SMEs' capacity to recruit and retain skilled young workers through work-based learning.

The project promotes a previous phase of work where People 1st International and EBRD developed an SME Human Resource Competency Framework, comprising 15 standards linked to specific outcomes and KPIs and provided training to local HR consultants across 8 countries to equip them with the tools and know-how to support local small businesses to increase the effectiveness of HR management in line with international best practice.



Skills in Business Standards

Recruitment and Retention	1. Developing Strategies	2. Competency Frameworks	3. People Policies	4. Employability Programmes	5. Market Insights
	6. Recruitment and Selection	7. Inclusion	8. Retention	9. Performance Management	10. Leavers
Work-based Learning	11. Induction	12. Career planning	13. Learning Needs	14. Learning Approaches	15. Measuring Impact



Lamatem, Morocco

People 1st International collaborated with Lamatem in Morocco as part of the Skills in Business initiative funded by The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, starting in October 2019 we provided support to improve strategy and HR systems for workforce attraction and retention. Lamatem are a leading producer of medical textiles in Morocco, they hold the largest production capacity to international standards in Africa and have more than 1000 direct and indirect employees.

Objectives / Challenges

In the initial 6 months of the project, we conducted a thorough analysis of the workforce's skills needs, gaps, and priorities. This included a scoping visit to meet the senior management team in country identifying key business and skills priorities. A survey was conducted within the organisation to pinpoint individual skills needs, collecting 195 responses.

Due to the challenges posed by COVID-19, the dissemination of survey findings and the subsequent workforce planning toolkit meeting faced significant delays. It wasn't until the autumn of 2020 that we were able to re-engage with the HR manager to move forward. During this interim period, Lamatem underwent unprecedented growth driven by global PPE demand. The company rapidly expanded its workforce from just under 400 employees at the project's inception to over 1000. To support this growth, various solutions were devised, contributing to the company's learning and development framework under the leadership of the HR manager.

Amid virtual collaboration necessitated by in-country pandemic restrictions, we engaged with the HR manager to delve into the survey results and the evolving business landscape. Noteworthy changes included:

- **Rapid Business Growth in 2020:** Lamatem experienced a surge in business growth during the year, necessitating swift adaptations.
- **Immediate Need for Internal Training:** The expansion prompted an urgent requirement for internal training to onboard and acclimate both existing and newly recruited workforce.

Outcome / Impact



Through a series of virtual meetings and working sessions with the HR manager the project resulted in several key outcomes. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) were discussed and mutually agreed upon to measure the success of implemented strategies. Templates for internal procedures, such as evaluation and Continuing Professional Development (CPD), were shared to streamline processes. A comprehensive training plan for 2021 was formulated to address evolving needs and challenges, including a programme to support the orientation and induction of new and existing employees. In addition, the project team developed an 'Introduction to Effective Training' programme specifically designed for internal supervisors responsible for employee training, with the goal of equipping them with essential skills. The training sessions were successfully conducted in January and February 2021.





About People 1st International

People 1st International has been providing world-class skills solutions for over 50 years. Our expertise is trusted by organisations globally and is proven to:

- Increase staff retention
- Maximise the potential of the workforce
- Increase productivity and competitiveness
- Create effective people strategies
- Build a strong commitment to vocational lifelong skills



For more information,
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THE EBRD

**SKILLS
IN BUSINESS**