

# AN ETF-ICC GOOD PRACTICE IN YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP TRAINING



PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICE  
OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP

THE ACADEMY OF THE GEORGIAN  
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY

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In its transition from a command economy, one of the challenges for Georgia has been building an entrepreneurial culture as a foundation for a competitive market-driven economy. Education and training have been identified as critical factors in building the entrepreneurial skills that the Georgian economy needs to compete in regional and world markets. In particular, a 2014 study by the Georgian Chamber of Commerce Industry highlighted a paucity of entrepreneurship skills amongst the general population that it saw as an impediment to growth and an aggravating factor in the country's efforts to address high unemployment. To address the issue, the Chamber partnered up with a non-governmental organisation (Junior Achievement Georgia) with experience in promoting entrepreneurship education to road-test a model for integrating entrepreneurship into secondary education.

## THE TRAINING PROGRAMME

### DEFINING TRAINING NEEDS AND INTERESTS

As inputs to the training curriculum and design, the Chamber's training department or 'academy', in cooperation with Junior Achievement, established three focus groups. Each focus group comprised young people aged 15-25 years. The focus groups were established in three separate regions representing a cross section of Georgian society. This allowed for a comprehensive set of findings on young people's knowledge and interests regarding entrepreneurship. Key issues from the focus groups included:

- weak understanding of the principles of a market economy;
- poor financial literacy;
- fear of failure, and particularly on money concerns and bankruptcy, as a barrier to an entrepreneurship career.

### POLICY CONSULTATION: PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTORS

A second step involved interviews with high-level officials from the education ministry and curriculum experts, as well as with the banking sector and the employers' association. Two issues stood out, in particular, from the consultations. Firstly, the education authorities did not understand the difference between business education and entrepreneurship education. Secondly, a frustration to the development of entrepreneurship education in secondary education was the restriction to engage business directly into classroom education. This discouraged business from actively contributing to entrepreneurship education development.

### SELECTION OF PILOT SCHOOLS

A mail-out to all secondary schools in Georgia included a call for expressions of interest in participating in the pilot programme. Commitment by the school directors was the primary selection criterion. Twenty schools were selected.

### TRAINING DESIGN AND DELIVERY

Without a dedicated budget, the 16-week training programme comprised a tried-and-tested, school-based student company programme of Junior Achievement. Key components of the programme included:

- career assessment and personal action plan;
- creative thinking;
- identification of a business opportunity;
- market research;

- elaboration of a business plan and pitching the business proposal to potential investors (pupils committed their own pocket money as well as group pitching to well-known Georgian entrepreneurs);
- sales strategies and techniques for start-ups;
- business administration skills (e.g. finance management and reporting).

Further, the programme borrowed where possible on other materials for learning purposes. For example, a video developed by the Ministry of Finance to help small businesses with tax returns was incorporated into the programme with the aim of developing young people's knowledge and understanding of how to meet up to the responsibility of paying business tax.

All components of the programme were adapted to the Georgian school environment, including the local business context.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING METHODS

The core teaching and learning methods were a) real-life business case studies elaborated by the Georgian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, b) group work and c) individual and group coaching of pupils. All activities were delivered outside of official school hours.

Given that business people are restricted from working directly in schools, volunteers were identified from third-level students with an interest in entrepreneurship training. These volunteers were identified and trained on the Junior Achievement school-based 'company programme' that involves the typical lifecycle of a company as well as coaching techniques.

Following training, the coaches were backed-up with a self-help support group established through Facebook. The Facebook facility allowed for further advice and direction to the volunteer coaches by SME training experts from the Georgian Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Further, school-based business clubs encouraged pupils to establish mini-companies where young people learn business skills 'by doing'.

## ACCESS TO FINANCE

A core part of the programme was to develop young people's understanding of the role of banks in personal and professional financing, including how undertake a credit assessment, to file a loan application and management of a loan. Teaching youngsters risk assessment and risk management also feature in the programme, including the transparent management of capital, income, expenses and other finances of a company.

## MONITORING, EVALUATION AND IMPACT

Monitoring focused specifically on pupil performance within the programme, with more specific follow-up and feedback to school directors. The programme's first independent evaluation is presently on-going.

A total of 198 pupils participated in the programme (40% female).

In terms of impact, pre-entry knowledge and skills demonstrated that participating pupils had a more developed understanding of a market economy, a more developed entrepreneurship career perspective with a greater interest and commitment to their wider education.

## IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICY AND PRACTICE

Particular efforts are being made by the Chamber to engage policy interest in the programme with a view to scaling up within the national secondary school curriculum. Curriculum proposals and teacher training implications (teachers assuming the coaching role) have been elaborated and await a ministerial decision. Succinctly, the implications for secondary school curriculum are an extra 2 hours per week for secondary level pupils.

Next step developments include an on-line platform for teachers for exchange of information and experience as well as access to teaching materials and assessment tools.

## BUDGET

This training project had no dedicated budget and relied entirely on volunteer expertise support from the Academy of the Georgian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Junior Achievement Georgia.

## WHAT MAKES THE TRAINING PROGRAMME STAND OUT?

Learning points from this good practice that will inspire others keen to bring forward entrepreneurship promotion of young people include:

- **Leadership and partnership:** a joint venture between the Georgian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and a locally based NGO with competence in the area of entrepreneurship education demonstrates the value of partnership and cooperation in bringing forward youth entrepreneurship in the country;
- **Reaching out:** generating reform and innovation in the schooling system from outside is a particular challenge, but the efforts of the Georgian Chamber of Commerce and Industry demonstrate the potential of reaching out to important stakeholders in government to bring about that change;
- **Change by example:** often education authorities are reluctant to introduce change in curriculum. External partners, like the Chamber and Junior Achievement, provide an opportunity to road-test curriculum innovation which allows for change by example;
- **Problem solving:** given that there are restrictions in Georgia to business directly engaging into the teaching and learning process, the project solution involved training up third-level students with an interest in entrepreneurship and who acted as 'proxy' business people;
- **Zero budget:** without a dedicated budget, the project demonstrates what can be achieved in moving forward with entrepreneurship education, simply on the basis of a commitment of the Chamber and its delivery partner, Junior Achievement.

## CONTACT DETAILS

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