

Background

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.

Through the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) funding, People 1st International has 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.



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



El Roda, Egypt

People 1st International, commissioned by the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), collaborated with El Roda, an Egyptian agribusiness, to improve overall strategy and HR systems for workforce attraction and retention. Established in 1987, El Roda is a leading exporter of grapes from Egypt, with a focus on the UK market. The company employs 180 permanent staff with contracts, 160 permanent workers without contracts, and up to 3,500 employees during peak seasons.

Objectives / Challenges

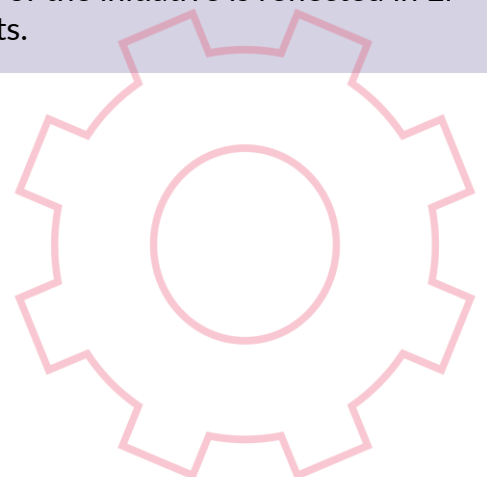
The Skills in Business initiative began in November 2019, with a full scoping visit in February 2020, just before the Covid-19 pandemic. The first six months involved analysing skills needs and gaps, identifying workforce priorities, and setting aims. El Roda acknowledged a lack of clear objectives but emphasised its honourable approach to staff and customers.

The project continued remotely after the second visit in February 2020, with UK and local consultants supporting implementation. The pandemic posed challenges to remote communication, requiring on-site training when possible. A local consultant worked with El Roda until October 2021, helping them stay focused on objectives through action plans and key performance indicators.

Outcome / Impact

The outcomes included the development of a performance management system, clear job descriptions, and a new exit interview process. The training sessions positively impacted managers, evidenced by a 94% satisfaction rate. El Roda implemented changes such as updating their website to communicate mission and values, showcasing high-profile customers, and emphasising employee satisfaction and performance.

The project's impact is evident in the improved website, clear communication of strategic aims, and the adoption of new HR processes. El Roda demonstrated a commitment to continuous improvement, evident in the introduction of work-based learning, career pathways for youth employees, and a focus on professional development. The success of the initiative is reflected in El Roda's positive changes and commitment to ongoing improvements.





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**