

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 labour, worsening workforce 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



MMS, Mongolia

Skills in Business solution

Through the EBRD's Skills in Business (SiB) programme, People 1st International, supported by a local consultant, worked closely with MMS and the assigned local consultant to strengthen HR systems, professionalise its practices and support long-term organisational transformation.

The intervention addressed MMS's most pressing HR and workforce development gaps through a structured set of solutions:

- Strengthening HR strategy and organisational structure to provide clarity, consistency and closer alignment with business goals.
- Developing competency frameworks to define role expectations, support clearer job design and inform development and succession planning.
- Introducing more structured approaches to youth retention, including onboarding processes, career development pathways, engagement and recognition practices.
- Reviewing and redesigning performance management processes, shifting from a compliance-led model toward a more consistent and developmental approach supported by practical tools.
- Embedding more strategic learning and development practices to establish continuous development pathways and build internal capability.
- Introducing impact measurement mechanisms to enable HR activity to be tracked, monitored and reviewed over time.

These solutions were implemented in a fast-moving, project-based environment characterised by fluctuating headcounts, limited HR systems and ongoing organisational restructuring.

MyMonSource LLC (MMS) is a Mongolian group operating across the energy, mining and construction sectors, employing 474 staff across seven subsidiaries. MMS faced several interconnected HR challenges: high turnover among project workers and youth employees, limited career progression, an unclear organisational structure, inconsistent performance management processes, and a lack of structured training pathways.

With 40.7% of the workforce aged 16–29 and women significantly under-represented across project and management roles, MMS needed a more strategic and inclusive approach to workforce development.



Outcome / Impact



The intervention led to measurable improvements in MMS's HR capability, workforce development and youth outcomes, while laying foundations for longer-term organisational change.

- **Clear strategic HR direction established:** MMS now has a complete HR strategy structured around ten strategic priorities, covering areas such as recruitment, talent development, DEI, wellbeing and leadership. This provides a clear and consistent framework for HR decision-making across the group.
- **Targeted retention approach in place:** A five-pillar retention framework covering onboarding and exit, employee engagement, career development, compensation and benefits, and performance and recognition now guides HR planning, with a particular focus on retaining youth and project-based staff.
- **Youth development and progression strengthened:** End-of-project KPIs showed tangible progress, with 75.2% of youth employees receiving job-specific training and 18 young staff promoted, exceeding the annual target of 12. Youth headcount increased, indicating improved attraction alongside ongoing retention efforts.
- **Performance management capability improved:** A blended performance management model is now in place, supporting fairer evaluation standards, stronger development conversations and more consistent performance practices across the group. A pilot rollout was agreed to support effective adoption.
- **Shift towards a structured learning culture:** Learning and development activity is now anchored in a competency-based approach, supported by a new CPD system, clearer training pathways and improved evaluation methods. The appointment of a dedicated HR Specialist (L&D) provides ownership.
- **Stronger measurement and accountability:** SMART targets and HR KPIs are now embedded across HR initiatives, with defined monitoring responsibilities and quarterly and annual review cycles to track progress and sustain change.

Through strong engagement from management, dedicated involvement from the HR team and effective collaboration with People 1st International and the local consultant, MMS now has the systems, tools and capability to continue embedding reforms and supporting long-term organisational growth.

Testimonial



"Collaborating with People 1st International and the local consultant has been an extremely valuable experience for our company. Delivering all training in Mongolian ensured full engagement and understanding across teams.

Through this project, we have already achieved significant improvements in our HR practices, including enhanced youth retention strategies, more robust performance management systems, and clearly defined career development pathways.

The tools and guidance provided have strengthened our HR processes, internal capacity and opportunities for youth employees. We are confident that these improvements will have a lasting positive impact on MMS's operations and organisational growth. We also sincerely appreciate the concessional finance provided by EBRD, which made this initiative possible."

Unurjargal P., Human Resources Manager, MMS





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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