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ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT AND MARKET COMPETITIVENESS (EDMC)

STTA Consultancy to Support Private Employment Service Providers

July 31, 2012

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List of Acronyms

CAPS	Career Advising and Placement Services
CIETT	International Confederation of Private Employment Agencies
EDMC	Enterprise Development and Market Competiveness Project
ILO	International Labor Organization
JWP	Job Website Providers
PEA	Private Employment Agencies
STTA	Short-term Technical Assistance
CG	Career Guidance

Section 1. STTA Consultancy to Support Private Employment Service Providers: Background, Rationale, Objectives, Methodology, & Constraints

1.1 Rationale for STTA Consultancy

It is widely agreed that workforce skills in Armenia are misaligned with the skills needed by Armenian enterprises – thus hindering the competitiveness of Armenian businesses. One remedy to this condition is to ensure that Armenian businesses hire best-qualified job entrants – workers who can learn faster, produce more, and stay on the job longer than low-qualified workers. Indeed, a system of directing highly qualified workers to employers has implications for national workforce performance and economic growth.

In this context, an international employment and workforce development consultant (Mr. Philip A. Hurst) was engaged on a short-term assignment with the EDMC program to strengthen services and performance of labor exchange and career information providers. The Consultant’s period of performance was June 25 – July 31, 2012.

1.2 Consultancy Objectives

As stated in the Scope of Work (contained in *Appendix A*), the aim of the STTA assignment was to, “Improve the services and performance of Private Employment Service Providers, enabling them to identify and refer best qualified applicants to employers.”

1.3 Methodology

Essentially, the consultancy consisted of six sequential phases:

Methodological Phase	25-30 Jun	2-7 Jul	9-14 Jul	16-21 Jul	23-28 Jul	30-31 Jul
1. Induction, document review, work planning, & development of interview question forms	■					
	■	■				
2. Information gathering via interview sessions & meetings		■	■			
3. Consolidating & analyzing information; formulating observations & findings			■	■		
4. Preparation of training materials					■	■
5. Conduct of training						
6. Report writing						

1.4 Documents Reviewed & Meetings, Interviews & Trainings Conducted

Appendix B lists documents reviewed for the Consultancy as well as notable meetings, interview sessions, and trainings conducted. As a summary, the Consultant and EDMC Workforce Development Deputy Team Leader conducted interview sessions with:

- 4 Private employment agencies
- 2 job website providers
- 6 university career centers

Additionally, three structured meetings were held with EDMC Workforce Development staff.

The Consultant conducted two training sessions – one for Private Employment Agencies (PEAs) and another for university career centers. Section three of this report contains details as to training development and provision.

Section 2. Information Collection & Resultant Observations & Findings

2.1 Development & Administration of Question Forms

Informed by a review of documents (*Appendix B*) and preliminary inputs from EDMC staff, the Consultant prepared question forms for the purpose of deriving information and perspectives from private employment agencies, job website providers, and university career centers. The Consultant and Deputy Team Leader conducted sessions with:

- 4 Private employment agencies
- 2 job website providers
- 6 university career centers

Half of the organizations were interviewed at the EDMC office and half were interviewed at their places of business.

2.2 Responses to Questions

Full question forms with responses are contained in the following appendices:

Appendix C: Private Employment Agencies

Appendix D: University Career Centers

Appendix E: Job Website Providers

Appendix F: EDMC Workforce Development staff

2.3 Key Observations from Interviews

PEA:

- PEAs in Armenia are small (1-5 staff)
- Most PEA owners and staff lack education in requisite areas (e.g. human resources, social sciences, organizational development, and management)
- There is no licensing or regulation of PEAs in Armenia
- PEAs acknowledge they have a bad image with both jobseekers and employers
- A majority of PEA clients are jobholders (not jobseekers) who are looking to upgrade jobs
- When placing orders with PEAs, employers often specify requirements that are not pertinent to job performance
- There is an Association of PEAs but it has no charter and it is weak and inactive
- PEAs are unaware of the International Confederation of Private Employment Agencies
- Most PEAs are not familiar with ILO Convention 181 (that sets parameters for PEA regulation and monitoring)

University Career Centers:

- Career centers are small (1-2 staff)
- Many career center staff lack education in requisite areas, e.g. social sciences and human resources. University programs or certificates in career facilitation and guidance do not exist in Armenia
- At some universities, students are mostly unaware of the career center. In all universities, student level-of-engagement with career centers is low
- Career centers do not provide job placement services for graduates/alumni – however, most centers want to provide placement in the future
- Most Armenian students perceive that job search techniques and employability workshops are *not* especially useful – they believe the pathway to a job is through family connections or expatriation
- Though required in many academic programs, internships are weak and do not impart practical job experience
- All career centers expressed the need to strengthen linkages with the employment community
- Career centers lack exposure to and knowledge of career self-assessments, job matching and referral, and career counseling concepts

Job Website Providers:

- In terms of basic content, design, and functionality, job websites of the largest providers (three sites) are on par with intermediate job websites in Europe and the US
- Job website providers know the deficiencies of their sites but are indisposed to devote available and reasonable-cost resources to make improvements
- Job website providers expressed only lukewarm enthusiasm for training. Their training and technical assistance needs are more geared to web development and IT expertise

2.4 Determination of Training Recipients

The Consultant concluded that training should be extended to university career centers. One reason is that most centers had expressed plans or high interest to provide job placement for their graduates / alumni – but conceded they lacked know-how and tools. The main point is that university career centers will become *jobseeker–employer intermediaries* – akin to private employment agencies. As such, in line with the stated aim of the STTA assignment to, “Improve the services and performance of Private Employment Service Providers (*jobseeker–employer intermediaries*) to identify and refer best qualified applicants to employers” – it was agreed that training for career centers could be justified.

Training should also be extended to *PEAs* expressed strong interest during the interviews but less than solid commitment to participate in training. It probably does not make sense to provide training to job website providers who were only passively committed to training (their interest was more in website technical assistance) during the interview.

Section 3. Training: Development & Provision

3.1 Training Development

Training subject matter was determined based on needs identified from interview results and in consideration of topics specified in the Consultant's statement of work. By and large, training needs of PEAs and career centers were divergent. As such, a separate training program was developed for each group. To address particular PEA training needs, it was necessary to develop a good amount of training content from 'scratch'. The rest was tailored from materials in the Consultant's work files.

PEAs expressed they could attend training only if it were given in half-day sessions and it didn't span more than several days (so as to not disrupt their operations). Similarly, with just 1-2 staff in each university career center, a short training program was necessary to minimize disruptions. In-line with these conditions, the training program essentially consisted of two half-day sessions for each group.

3.2 Training Aims & Objectives

The overarching training aim for each group is stated below:

- PEAs

“Improve the services & performance of PEAs enabling them to identify and refer high-qualified applicants to employers”

- University Career Centers

“Increase the scope & performance of career center services to a) improve employment pathways of graduates & alumni, & b) strengthen linkages between universities & the employment community”

The training objectives for both groups were essentially the same:

1. Expand awareness of international-level PEA / career center services & practices
2. Increase aspiration to advance PEA / career center services & practices
3. Increase capacity to improve PEAs / university career centers through application of practical actions & best practices

3.3 Training Invitation & Attendance

EDMC staff extended invitations to all 13 PEAs listed in the Armenia yellow pages by personally phoning PEAs. Key job website providers were also invited (depending on their interest in training topics). About one-third of the PEAs indicated they were not interested in training and several PEAs were unable to attend due to scheduled vacations or other commitments. Advance agendas were transmitted to potential participants.

As to training attendance, seven individuals representing three PEAs and two job website providers participated in day-1 of training. On day-2, eight individuals representing three PEAs and three job website providers attended.

EDMC staff extended invitations to all university career centers in Yerevan via personal telephone calls. Nearly half of the centers indicated they were unable to attend due to scheduled vacations or other commitments. Advance agendas were transmitted to potential participants.

As to training attendance, eight individuals representing four university career centers and two job website providers participated in day-1 of training. On day-2, five individuals representing four Career Centers and one job website provider attended.

3.4 Training Agendas

The agenda for private employment agencies follows:

Monday, July 23, 2012

Time	Topic
09:30 – 09:40	Welcome & formalities
09:40 – 10:00	Introductions & warm-up exercise
10:00 – 10:10	Training rationale, overview & objectives
10:10 – 10:20	PEAs: Taking a lead in advancing business competitiveness
10:20 – 11:00	How does your PEA measure-up? Points for developing your PEA
11:00 – 11:15	-- Break --
11:15 – 12:20	‘Nuts & bolts’ of PEA operations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Elements of workforce development & employment services ▪ PEA functional activities ▪ Knowing what employers want ▪ Understanding jobseeker qualifications ▪ Occupational coding as a means of structuring records & facilitating job-matching ▪ Manual job matching & referral ▪ Maintaining job vacancy files ▪ Tracking & measuring PEA performance ▪ Fundamentals of labor market information (LMI) ▪ PEA standards & values (CIETT)
12:20 – 12:30	Wrap-up

Tuesday, July 24, 2012

Time	Topic
09:30 – 9:40	Formalities & carryover of items from first day of training
09:40 – 10:10	ILO’s Guide to Private Employment Agencies: What you need to know
10:10 – 10:30	PEAs in Armenia: The outlook for registration, licensing & regulations (discussion period for participants to voice ideas/concerns & to ask questions)
10:30 – 10:45	-- Break --
10:45 – 11:15	How does your website measure-up? Points for developing your website
11:15 – 11:45	Delighting your customers! Six customer service tips
11:45 – 12:00	Guiding & growing your PEA: Fundamentals of business planning
12:00 – 12:30	Findings from PEA interviews: A discussion period for training participants
12:30 – 12:45	New directions for PEAs & training wrap-up

The agenda for university career centers is shown on the next page

Thursday, July 26, 2012

Time	Topic
09:30 – 09:40	Welcome & formalities
09:40 – 10:00	Introductions & warm-up exercise
10:00 – 10:10	Training objectives & overview
10:10 – 10:20	University Career Centers: Taking a lead in advancing national competitiveness
10:20 – 10:30	The big picture: Elements of workforce development & employment services
10:30 – 10:45	- - <i>Break</i> - -
10:45 – 11:45	An eye to the future: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Career center goals▪ What career centers could look like▪ Career center services▪ Career center staffing▪ Pillars of excellence
11:45 – 12:15	Developing career center resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Rationale of a 'Resource Development Component'▪ Career center needs: Workshops, materials, tools, forms, & services
12:15 – 12:30	The importance of creating a career center identity & atmosphere
12:30 – 12:45	Gifts from the trainer: Career articles, employment & employability workshops, & career center posters
12:45 – 13:15	- - <i>Lunch</i> - -
13:15 – 14:00	Putting 'pizzazz' into your career center workshops
14:00 – 14:30	Getting inputs from students, employers & faculty – to serve their wishes & needs

Friday, July 27, 2012

Time	Topic
09:30 – 09:45	Formalities & carryover of items from first day of training
09:45 – 10:45	An introduction to job placement services
11:00 – 11:15	- - <i>Break</i> - -
11:15 – 12:15	Vocational counseling concepts
12:15 – 12:30	How does your website measure-up? Points for developing your career center website
12:30 – 13:00	Group discussion & work period - Training wrap-up

3.5 Training Materials

The following pages show lists of all materials prepared by the Consultant for both trainings. It should be noted that the Consultant gave university career centers a large number of materials (handouts, career tools, and workshops) as e-files on CDs.

Soft and hard copies of all training documents are in the possession of EDMC Workforce Development Staff.

Titles of Handouts (Training Materials) for Private Employment Service Training

e-file #	Document Title
A1	Training Agenda
B1	PowerPoint – Day 1
B2	PowerPoint – Day 2
C	60 Evaluative Factors for Private Employment Agencies
D1	PEA Discussion & Reference Guide – Cover
D2	Key Elements of Workforce Development & Employment Services
D3	PEA Functional Activities
D4	Knowing What Employers Want: Tips for PEAs & Writing Effective Job Descriptions
D5	Top Skills & Values Employers Seek from Jobseekers
D6	Understanding Jobseekers Qualifications
D7	Occupational & Industry Coding
D8	Maintaining the Job Vacancy File
D9	Suggestions for Improving Candidate Referral & Employer Services
D10	PEA Measures & Records
D11	Introduction to Labor Market Information
D12	CIETT at a Glance
D13	CIETT Code of Conduct & Charter of Private Employment Agencies
D14	CIETT 2012 Conference – Top 10 Takeaways & 7 Key Messages
E	ILO Guide to Private Employment Agencies – Regulation, Monitoring & Enforcement
F	Website Evaluation Form
G	PEA Customer Service
H	Business Plan Basics
J.	Notes from ‘Adapting to Change – How Private Employment Services Facilitate Adaptation to Change, Better Labor Markets, & Decent Work’
Z	CIETT: Adapting to Change – How Private Employment Services Facilitate Adaptation to Change, Better Labor Market & Decent Work

Shading denotes materials constituting “PEA Discussion & Reference Guide”

Titles of Handouts (Training Materials) for For University Career Centers

e-file #	Document Title
A	Agenda
B	PowerPoint
C	Key Elements of Workforce Development & Employment Services
D	University Career Center Training – Discussion & Reference Guide
E1	Six Career Steps for Students
E2	Career-related Books
E3	List of Employment & Career-related Workshops, Tools & Handouts
E4	List of Articles from Career Websites
F1	Assessing Your Training Savvy
F2	Elements of Training from A–Z
F3	The ABCs of Student Learning & Putting Pizzazz into Training
G1	Customer Service
G2	Exercise: Getting Inputs from Career Center Customers
H1	Cover Page – An Introduction to Job Placement Services & Operations
H2	Job Matching & Referral – Functional Activities
H3	Knowing What Employers Want
H4	Top Skills & Values Employers Seek from Job Seekers
H5	Occupational & Industry Coding
H6	Maintaining Job Vacancy File
I1	Distinctions Between Staff Development & Career Development
I2	Counseling in University Settings
I3	Career Counseling Concepts – Training Guide
I4	Listening Quotient Quiz
I6	Listening Skills for Competent Counseling
J	Website Evaluation Form
X	Myers-Briggs Type Indicator – An Introduction & Sampler

In English (not translated)

List of Workshops, Tools & Handouts Provided by Consultant for University Career Center Training

Employment Tools & Workshops		<i>n of pages or slides</i>
A Working Attitude	PowerPoint	2
The Right Appearance for the Job	Handout	2
Applications & CVs the Right Way	Workshop / Handout	6
Job Search Skills – Winning Ways to Find a Job	Workshop – Trainer’s Guide	3
Job Search Skills – Winning Ways to Find a Job	Workshop – PowerPoint	16 slides
Job Search Tips	Handout	1
Job Consideration & Readiness Checklist	Assessment	1
Tips for Your Job Interview	Handout	1
In the Interview	Handout	1
Sample Interview Questions	Handout	2
Experience, Tools, & Accomplishments Worksheet	Assessment	3
Informational Interviewing	Handout	1
Optimizing Your Success at Job Fairs	Handout	3
Thinking About Your Likes & Dislikes (Interests)	Assessment	2
Job Loss Workshop for Unemployed Workers	Workshop / Handout	6
General Workshops		
Your Health: Live Better, Feel Better	Trainer’s Guide	6
Your Health: Live Better, Feel Better	PowerPoint	21 slides
Lowering Your Stress	Trainer’s Guide	5
Lowering Your Stress	PowerPoint	12 slides
Lowering Your Stress	Handout	8
Boosting Your Self Esteem	Workshop / Handout	2
Assessment of Self Esteem	Assessment	1
Improving Self-Confidence	Handout	1
Getting Unstuck & Relinquishing Anger	Trainer’s Guide	3
Getting Unstuck & Relinquishing Anger	PowerPoint	5 slides
Unemployment & Emotions: Overcoming Anger & Getting Unstuck	Handout	3
Time Management	Workshop Agenda	1
Time Management	Trainer’s Guide	9
Time Management	PowerPoint	20 slides
Time Management	Handout	14
Listening for Understanding	Workshop Agenda	1
Listening for Understanding	Trainer’s Guide	6
Listening for Understanding	PowerPoint	21 slides
Listening for Understanding	Handout	5
Listening Quotient Quiz	Assessment	1
The ABCs of Adult Learning & Training With Pizzazz	Workshop / Handout	5
Assessing Your Training Savvy	Assessment	2
Training Preparation Checklist	Tool	1
Icebreaker Exercise	Tool	1

Staff Development & Utilization Tools		
Best practice for Organizing, Conducting & Attending Job Fairs	Workshop Agenda	1
Trainer's Guide: How to Organize & Conduct Successful Job Fairs	Trainer's Guide	16
How to Organize & Conduct Successful Job Fairs	PowerPoint	52 slides
Job Fair Toolkit: Best practice for Organizing, Conducting & Attending Job Fairs	Booklet	34
Job Club Guidebook: Information, Procedures & Materials for Job Club Leaders & Members	Booklet	20
Orientation & Information for New Job Club Members	Handout	8
Introduction to Vocational Counseling Concepts	Workshop Agenda	1
Vocational Counseling Concepts	Handout	11
Fundamentals of Vocational Assessments	Handout	4
Understanding & Serving Low-Qualified Jobseekers	Workshop Agenda	1
Understanding & Serving Low-Qualified Jobseekers	Trainer's Guide	11
Understanding & Serving Low-Qualified Jobseekers	PowerPoint	14 slides
Understanding & Serving Low-Qualified Jobseekers	Handout	8
Understanding Job Loss & Moving Ahead to Re-Employment	Workshop Agenda	1
Understanding Job Loss & Moving Ahead to Re-Employment	Trainer's Guide	13
Understanding Job Loss & Moving Ahead to Re-Employment	PowerPoint	31 slides
Understanding Job Loss & Moving Ahead to Re-Employment	Handout	7

List of Articles from Career Websites Provided by the Consultant (for University Career Center Training)

A. Skills & Attributes Employers Want
Four Common Job Hunt Dilemmas Solved
Five Tricks to Get You Hired Faster
B. Job Search Tips
Six Essential Skills Every Job Seeker Needs
Ten Ways to Score a Job Offer
Finding Unadvertised Jobs
Five Ways to Turn Off Employers
Top Ten Jobseeker Mistakes
Top Ten Reasons Employers Want to Hire You
C. Writing CVs
25 Resume Tips for Great First Impression
Buzzwords That Can Damage Your Resume
The Most Important Part of a Resume
D. Interviewing
Five Interview Tricks for a Competitive Edge
Eight Things That Set Jobseekers Apart
Ten Common-Sense Interview Tips
Ten Types of Interviews
After Interviews – Five Reasons for Sending Thank You Letters
How to Answer Ten tricky Interview Questions
In Interviews
Interview Blues
Interviewing – 50 Worst Mistakes
Interviews – What Not to Wear
Interview Tips
Shocking Interview Stories
Your Nonverbal Communication Can Wreck Your Interview
E. What your _____ says about you!
What your body language says about you!
What your desk says about you!
What your hand shake says about you!
What your hand writing says about you!
What your voice says about you!
What your walk says about you!
F. Misc
Dos and Don't of Handling Business Cards

3.6 Training Observations & Outcomes

The STTA conducted capacity building trainings for 16 representatives from 10 PESP organizations including 3 PEAs (Tanger, Accept and Eduardo), 3 job portals (HR.am, careercenter.am and jobfinder.am) and 4 university career centers (AUA, Northern University, Agriculture University and Armenian State Economics University). Participants included management as well as key technical staff from the involved organizations and education institutions. The training was tailored to address local needs, resources and capacities – with the objective of enabling PESPs to improve career guidance operations, increase students’ employability and identify and refer best qualified applicants to employers. In addition key stress was put on development of presentation, marketing and employer relations skills of the participants.

PEA Training:

- The training was exceedingly participatory, with all participants expressing viewpoints and ideas
- A significant value-added aspect of PEA training was having individual agencies together in one room – discussing issues and challenges from the perspective of the *collective* PEA industry in Armenia
- As a result of training participants seemed to understand the criticality of a) acquiring thorough job vacancy descriptions, b) obtaining broad information as to jobseeker qualifications, and c) applying concepts of ‘soft-skills’ and ‘fit’ in the matching process
- PEAs felt that the handouts (particularly those dealing with the International Confederation of Private Employment Agencies and ILO Convention 181) will prove to be useful resources
- The Consultant believes the training sparked interest in revitalizing and strengthening the Association of PEAs in Armenia – that could (in the distant future) lead to membership in CIETT (the International Confederation of Private Employment Agencies)
- Key end-results of training include the following: :
 1. PEAs acquired knowledge in business planning, customer service, job matching, public relations, marketing and advertising
 2. PEAs learned new methods for contacting and establishing relations with employers as well as assessing training needs and developing presentation skills
 3. Participants became more knowledgeable regarding new tools for assessing and improving their websites
 4. Participants understood the important role PEAs play in the labor market
 5. Participants gained a sense of pride about their work
 6. Participants appeared to be motivated to improve PEA practices
 7. A shift was initiated from ‘individual PEAs as competitors’ to ‘collective PEAs as a force to improve the image of PEAs’
- The Consultant contends that objectives for PEA training were fully achieved, the objectives being:
 1. Expand awareness of international-level PEA services & practices
 2. Increase aspiration to advance PEA services & practices

3. Increase capacity to improve PEAs through application of practical actions & best practices

University Career Center Training:

- The training was exceedingly participatory, with all participants expressing viewpoints and ideas
- Based on participants' statements the training imparted an understanding of the importance of 'pathways' to employment and linkages between universities and the employment community
- The training components on career self-assessments, job matching and referral, and career counseling concepts presented new insights to participants on the benefits and challenges of these services
- The array of career-related materials given to participants by the Consultant (e.g. handouts, career tools, and complete workshops) can (if implemented properly) advance service delivery mechanisms and raise the career centers' image
- Based on participant discussion and comments, the training laid the foundation of customer orientation and continuous improvement
- Key end-results of training included the following:
 1. Participants acquired new tools and methods for improving their career orientation assessment and counseling processes
 2. Participants understood the importance of creating a career center identity and atmosphere
 3. Participants understood the significance of career resources (either printed or virtual) in informing and empowering students/alumni
 4. Participants gained practical training tips with regard to presenting career workshops
- The Consultant contends that objectives for career center training were fully achieved, the objectives being:
 1. Expand awareness of international-level career center services & practices
 2. Increase aspiration to advance career center services & practices
 3. Increase capacity to improve career centers through application of practical actions & best practices

Section 4. Recommendations

With respect to the current STTA assignment, the Consultant offers the following recommendations for activities to be undertaken by the EDMC Workforce Development component:

1. Provide assistance to strengthen the Association of PEAs in Armenia

Boost functionality of PEA Association to: a) increase active membership, b) adopt a PEA code of conduct, and c) attain a modest level of self-regulation

This could include facilitating restructuring of the Association; providing best practices training and hands-on assistance in association leadership and functioning; endeavoring to support membership or engagement in the International Confederation of Private Employment Agencies (CIETT); and proposing a demonstration project with the ILO to institute PEA self-regulation based on Convention 181

2. Facilitate establishing linkages between qualified PEAs and employers in targeted sectors

This could include: 1) Strengthen the performance and competitiveness of employers in targeted sectors (EDMC value chains) through the hiring of best qualified employees (referred by PEAs); 2) Boost PEA visibility and credibility in the employer community by demonstrating the utility of PEA-assisted employee referral

These aims in turn could entail sponsorship of a forum to introduce employers and PEAs. Prior to the forum, the most capable PEAs should be selected for participation and provided assistance in preparing a presentation on the benefits of hiring best-qualified employees and the value of using PEAs. Incentives should be provided to employers to utilize PEA services.

3. Raise university administrators' understanding of the functions, possibilities, and value of career centers

The core goal in this area would be to increase support/funding to professionalize and expand university career centers. In this regard it was stated in a career center interview that, "Universities are proud of career centers but cannot articulate why they have the centers"

This aim could be pursued through sponsoring a forum of university administrators; and conducting a professional and energetic presentation on career center functions and services. This in turn should include tangible examples of the cost/benefit of career centers and how they add value to universities in terms of alumni hire rates, community engagement, and overall image.

4. Provide support and technical assistance to improve internships

The core strategic focus in this area would be to advance internships in Armenia to give students a) constructive exposure to the workplace, b) on-the-job skills acquisition, and c) worthwhile work experience. In this regard, participants in career center training made the following comments: employers have a bad attitude towards internships; internships are a 'bother' or 'headache' for employers; companies are reluctant to accept interns; companies complain that interns are not properly matched to positions; companies don't know how to work with interns; students are not given an orientation to internships; the sole objective of students is to get an internship certificate – they see little other value in internships.

Considering the scope and breadth of internship 'challenges' in Armenia, it is critically important to make internship improvement a centerpiece effort in the EDMC Workforce Development Component by expanding resources and bringing an international internship expert to the program.

5. Lead effort to generate ‘provisional’ occupational information

In order to achieve this objective, it is important to generate materials (in the form of simple guides and brochures) containing occupational information for demand-jobs and projected growth occupations. These materials should be aimed at young students and jobseekers.

This will in turn entail a practical methodological approach to generate *provisional* occupational information and resources is provided in *Appendix H* (contributed by the Consultant).

6. Carry out a pilot project to demonstrate the value of ‘World of Work Career Awareness’ in secondary schools

The core aim of this activity will be to increase student ability to a) recognize self-talents and interests, b) explore the world of work, c) match themselves to career areas, and d) be familiar with educational and/or training requirements of jobs.

This will entail collaboration with educators to develop model ‘World of Work’ curricula that utilizes active learning and project-based learning techniques.

7. Policies, Administration, Governance

Career centers and stakeholders should review their role in development and delivery of CG services to different beneficiaries to ensure all key actors are represented in their formulation.

In this regard career centers should develop long range strategic implementation plans for 2012-15. The plans should address the key areas identified in this section, including addressing the need to: (a) refine specific areas of policy and management; (b) define financing requirements for development and delivery of key elements of career guidance, and sources of funds, (c) set priorities and agree on roles for different institutions for the design and development of methodologies and information systems for delivery of career guidance services, and (d) agree on indicators and procedures for monitoring and evaluation of services.

8. Financing

The costs for development and delivery of CG services in different contexts are currently not defined, there are weak links between policy and financing for CG, and action needs to be taken to identify resource requirements and methods of allocating resources.

To effectively address this critical issue, EDMC should work with and assist institutions administering CG services to develop estimates of recurrent costs for implementing CG services. This can be done in part using administrative systems that track the time staff spend on delivering CG services. Personnel are the major cost of service delivery, and this time can be translated into costs per beneficiary served.

In addition, efficient methods of allocating needed resources to service providers must be identified. Educational institutions and other institutions and agencies delivering CG services should in this regard enact policies that require their service providers to provide specific staff (i.e. one full-time counselor for a given number of beneficiaries, or minimum hours per beneficiary) which will ensure, even in decentralized institutions with per capita financing, the delivery of minimum services

9. Beneficiaries and Definition of Career Guidance Services

The objectives of career guidance for different beneficiaries vary, as do the types of services needed, and the role of different institutions in delivering these services. This issue needs to be clarified in order to set priorities for development of appropriate services, and support lifelong learning..

In this regard University Career Centers should work with agencies and institutions to define and reach consensus on the objectives and related priorities for the career guidance services each institution/agency will deliver to their beneficiaries. Defined objectives could include: analysis of

interests and aptitudes; enhanced awareness of the need to make career decisions; exploration of broad career areas to identify downstream education/training and employment options; selection of specific careers and related specialized education/training; methods of linking beneficiaries with employers (i.e. internships) during training; job search strategies/engines which help beneficiaries find employment after education/training or for the unemployed.

10. Delivery of Services

While numerous pilots for delivery of CG services have been developed, many of these materials are not widely disseminated or understood by potential service providers. There are major gaps in the availability of career information (i.e. beneficiary assessment tools, related labor market and education training opportunities) and a shortage of staff who are trained to facilitate delivery of CG services to end users.

11. Career Information

Priorities in this area include (i) aptitude and interest assessments, (ii) related information on occupations, (iii) related education and training opportunities, and (iv) creation of additional career awareness and exploration methodologies. Without these information resources end users cannot be expected to make informed career decisions. In addition, career centers should work with stakeholders to develop: (i) demonstration/model career centers at different service provider locations; (ii) career awareness curricula modules for integration into education courses at schools, and (iii) career exploration short courses at secondary schools.

International best practice experience emphasizes: (i) the importance of provision of CG services to end users where they are located and congregate (i.e. career centers in schools, community agencies, employment agencies) as opposed to requiring beneficiaries to travel to central locations; (ii) that information be effectively formatted and presented in a manner that allows direct access and understanding by end users without any, or limited intervention by, CG staff unless in-depth assistance is needed; and (iii) the increased use of information communication technology to deliver the information, supplemented by other media (i.e. print, video, etc.) as appropriate.

Specific recommended actions in this area include the following:

Aptitude and Interest Assessment: Career Centers should access additional simple assessment instruments which link aptitude and interests directly to occupations, and integrate them into the automated assessment systems.

Labor Market Information: The availability of simple labor market information appropriate for beneficiaries is a major shortfall of the current Career Information Systems (CIS) and overall career guidance initiatives in Armenia. The National Statistics Department should include questions on occupations in the household survey or other surveys which could provide information to strengthen the CIS occupational information, in particular wage data by occupation.

PEAs and university career centers should develop a template for collection and annual updating of occupational information files in the CIS, identify a sample of employers which hire individuals in these occupations, and annually circulate the template to them to get the information updated.

Model Career Guidance Centers: There are pilot CG programs and physical centers in some institutions (i.e. colleges, universities, employment offices, etc.). But many of these models are incomplete, suffer from a lack of agreement on what CG services should be delivered and a lack of methodology and information. It should be noted that the international trend is to provide basic services in a manner that end users can access and use directly without, or with very minimal, intervention of specially trained staff. This is occurring for several reasons: (i) CG services should be available to all citizens on demand, not just to a few; (ii) it is impossible from a resource standpoint to provide sufficient trained staff to directly intervene with the majority of end users, and (iii) direct access to services and information by individuals provides a more objective approach to CG than at times can be achieved when staff may have pre-conceptions, lack of information about careers or have a “directive” approach. However, it is recognized that professional CG staff should be available to intervene when needed with some individuals.

EDMC should take the lead, in cooperation with stakeholders, based on agreement of the role of each to define practical demonstration approaches for addressing the methodological, information and staffing requirements necessary to operate the agreed career guidance services; which should cover career centers in universities, and employment offices.

EDMC can develop one model demonstration center with all materials which other service providers could review to select the methodologies most appropriate for their Career Centers and beneficiaries. This demonstration Center could also serve as a “laboratory” to pilot test new materials and methodologies before disseminating them to service providers.

12. Training Career Guidance Staff and Managers

Pre-service Training for Career Guidance Staff and Trainers. Specifically trained staff are needed to support career guidance services in education, training, employment, human resource departments in the private sector, NGOs and other organizations assisting citizens with career decision making. Existing higher education programs (i.e., social pedagogy, psychology) do not produce appropriate staff meeting internationally recognized standards for CG. Other transition economies (e.g., Hungary, Poland, and Romania) have recognized this and developed related higher education programs.

EDMC in cooperation with stakeholders should develop terms of reference for a tender to select one or more higher education institutions to develop a modular diploma program to deliver pre-service training for CG staff. Consideration should also be given to developing a short term program to develop “para-professional non-degree programs”, perhaps in selected colleges, to assist in operation of career centers.

13. Monitoring and Evaluation of Services

Systematic tracking of the cost of inputs, use and outputs by beneficiaries, and evaluation of outcomes and impact of CG services, is just beginning to emerge in Armenia. However more monitoring and evaluation is necessary to support allocation of national and local resources to CG.

Specific recommended actions in this area include:

Define and Assess Indicators to Monitor Use of CG Services: EDMC should work with stakeholders which are implementing CG services to: (i) identify and assess institutional policies that support provision of career guidance services; and (ii) develop indicators that assess use of CG services by beneficiaries. This should include a review of indicators in the self-assessment instruments now being pilot tested in colleges and universities to see if these ideas could be effectively adapted for use in schools.

Refine Student/Trainee Tracer Studies: EDMC should work with stakeholders which are undertaking tracer studies of individuals which are completing education and training programs, to ensure questions are included which will help identify how graduates make career and education decisions. YPOC should not initiate tracer studies as their work load is already extensive.

Identify measures to evaluate CG outcomes and impact: EDMC may wish to consider designing and providing resources to appropriate agencies to undertake specific studies such as: (i) career maturity studies on individuals which have been involved in CG services (i.e. as have been done in South Africa), or (ii) comparing similar individuals who have and have not participated in career guidance and their success in training and job placement programs (i.e. as have been done by the Poland, Hungarian, and Romanian employment services).

Appendix A

Lists of Documents Reviewed & Meetings, Interviews & Trainings Conducted

List of Documents Reviewed (in approximate order of review)

1.	EDMC website (<i>Note: during the Consultant's period of performance this website was under review / construction & was mostly unavailable</i>)
2.	USAID-Armenia website – EDMC Program Overview
3.	Pragma & Sibely websites – EDMC Program
4.	CIA World Factbook – Armenia, June 2011
5.	“Evaluation of the Bridges between Educational Institutions & Businesses in Armenia” EDMC 2011
6.	“Armenia in Figures” 2011 – Labor market information
7.	Yerevan Yellow Pages: Recruitment Centers
8.	Assorted websites of Armenian PEAs, university career centers, & job website providers
9.	Pamphlets & brochures of various PEAs & university career centers
10.	Preview copy of report “Analysis & Recommendations for Strengthening Career Guidance & Counseling Policies & Services in the Republic of Armenia” 1 July 2012
11.	“Guide to Private Employment Agencies – Regulation, Monitoring & Enforcement” ILO 2007
12.	International Confederation of Private Employment Agencies (CIETT): CIETT Code of Conduct & CIETT Charter of Private Employment Agencies” (2006)
13.	“Adapting to Change – How Private Employment Services Facilitate Adaptation to Change, Better Labor Markets, & Decent Work” Boston Consulting Group & the International Confederation of Private Employment Agencies (CIETT)

Notable Meetings – EDMC & USAID–

Date	Name(s)	Purpose
6/25	Funzik, Tigran	Review Task Worksheet; Plan Consultancy schedule
6/26	Funzik, Tigran	Obtain inputs re: PEAs
6/27	Alexander (CoP), Tigran	Overview STTA assignment & receive inputs as to conduct & outputs
7/10	Funzik, Tigran	Obtain a broad range of inputs & clarifications re: PEAs, career centers, job website providers, etc.
7/31	Jason McNabb (USAID), Gayane, Fuznik, Tigran	Debrief STTA assignment

Interview Sessions

Thur 28 June			
11:00	HR.am	Tatevik Abrahamyan	Product Manager
3:00	Tanger Personnel Recruitment Agency	Nana Heruni	Chief Executive
5:00	Northern University Career Center	Hakob Qajyan	Director
Fri 29 June			
11:00	CareerCenter.am	Armen Yeremyan	President
3:00	Agriculture University / Icare Foundation Career Center	Lusine Mnatsakanyan	Director
	Yerevan State Linguistic University Career Center	Annie Hovsepyan	Coordinator
	European University Career Center	Yeva Terosyan	Director
	American University of Armenia	Narine Petrosyan	Coordinator
Mon 2 July			
11:00	Accept Employment Center	Susanna Shamakhyan	Director
2:00	Yerevan State University	Lilit Hakobyan	Director
Tue 3 July			
10:00	Eduardo Employment Agency	Eduard Harutyunyan	Director
3:00	Anahit Employment Agency	Anahit Simonyan	Director

Training Provided

Date	Training for	Title	N of Participants
7/23-24	Private Employment Agencies	Enhancing Capabilities & Services of PEAs in Armenia – A Groundwork Training & Working Session	Day-1: 7 Day-2: 8
7/26-27	University Career Centers	Enhancing Capabilities & Services of University Career Centers in Armenia – A Groundwork Training & Working Session	Day-1: 8 Day-2: 8

Appendix B

Consolidated Responses to Question Form for Private Employment Agencies

Responses to Questions: Private Employment Agencies

1. When was this Employment Agency started?
 - 2000
 - 2004
 - 2005
 - 2000

2. Why are you in the Private Employment Agency business (what attracts you or interests you in Private Employment Services)?
 - Previously worked with the Armenian Chamber of Commerce
 - After childbirth, registration with State Employment Service sparked interest in PEAs
 - Got interested in PEA due to outcry for jobs in Armenia
 - Was laid-off from HR dept. of big Soviet plant & couldn't find a job – this led to starting a PEA

3. What are your biggest challenges or difficulties in running an Employment Agency?
 - Tanger Recruiting Company:
 - Our focus is mid & top-level positions with international companies, so the global financial slowdown has impacted our recruitment activities
 - For us, VAT taxes are a problem when we do outstaffing

 - Eduardo:
 - Difficult to work with lower strata of population
 - Almost need to be a psychologist to explain job concepts to jobseekers
 - Jobseekers lack knowledge of job search
 - Employers have no standard salary approach
 - Half of all PEAs are 'one-day' companies (come & go quickly)
 - The government should make it easier for PEAs to engage in training

 - Anahit Employment Agency
 - Employers specify unreasonable age requirements in vacancy postings – they prefer young applicants over qualified ones
 - Employers make hiring decisions based on physical appearance

4. What other names are used in Armenia to refer to “Private Employment Agencies”(e.g. Recruitment Centers, Headhunters, etc.)?
 - Cadre Centers
 - Career Centers
 - “Employment agencies have a bad image so we've branded our company as a recruitment center”

5. About how many Private Employment Agencies are there In Armenia?
 - Nobody can say for certain due to lack of PEA licensing
 - Most PEAs are small & hidden – they may open for a short time then disappear

6. Do you know of any private Employment Agencies outside of Yerevan?
 - No

7. What is the typical size of Private Employment Agencies (*number of staff*)?
 - 1 to 4 staff
 - All PEAs are small

 - Tanger: 4 staff

- Accept: 5 staff
- Eduardo: 4 staff
- Anahit: 1 (solo operation)

8. What are some characteristics of people in the Private Employment Agency business (*education, job experience, age, gender, etc.*)

- Terrible – many owners lack adequate education
- Owners / staff of PEAs won't even show up for training – they don't understand that training is needed

9. What sectors does your agency cater to (do you specialize/focus in certain sectors)?

Tanger Recruiting Company:

- Initially we served all sectors – later we limited our focus to mid & top-level management & executives for international companies

Accept Employment Center:

- Mid & high-level positions
- Retail
- Fast-moving consumer goods (FMCGs)

Eduardo Employment Agency:

- All sectors
- Tend to work mostly with middle-skilled & technical level jobseekers
- The lower strata is difficult because nobody wants to work with these people

Anahit Employment Agency

- Office workers such as secretaries with advanced software skills

10. What are the best known employment agencies (what 2-3 agencies dominate in Armenia)?

- “There are only three good agencies in Armenia”
- “Career Center & Job Finders are very expensive”

11. Do employers favor PEAs over the State Employment Service (Why)?

- People go the State Employment Service to apply for/receive benefits rather than to look for jobs
- Highly qualified people do not use the State Employment Service
- Programs at the State Employment Service are not clear in terms of who can get in the programs & how they are implemented
- State Employment Service deals only with unemployed people (not those who want to upgrade their job)
- State Employment Service serves only minimum salary jobs
- The State Employment Service posts only low-level jobs so employers look to PEAs for mid to higher level jobs

12. How do *jobseekers* view PEAs in terms of quality of services - - what are the top complaints of jobseekers in regards to PEAs?

- Many/most PEAs have a bad reputation
- Probably every third person has a negative opinion of PEAs
- Without licensing, anyone can open a PEA – and with no regulation agencies can take jobseekers' money & run
- There's a very bad perception of PEAs – they come & go quickly
- PEAs charge jobseekers \$6.00 – \$12.00 to register (“This is a lot of money for most Armenians)
- Jobseekers' top complaint is payment of registration & placement fees
- “Most jobseekers come to me after they have tried other PEAs”

13. How do *employers* view Private Employment Agencies in terms of quality of services, and what are the top complaints of employers in regards to PEAs?

Tanger Recruiting Company:

-We were the first agency to start charging *employers* instead of charging *jobseekers*. The fact that our agency is doing well bodes for our business model & reputation

Accept Employment Center:

-Two months ago we put-together a survey and called 70 employers to get inputs

Eduardo Employment Agency:

-Right now I have more vacancies than qualified jobseekers

-People have lost trust because of unscrupulous PEAs

-Employers complain about fees

Anahit Employment Agency

-It relates to referring applicants actually qualified for positions instead of sending physically attractive applicants (employers focus on the later)

14. Employers complain that Employment Agencies do not send them qualified applicants.

What is the basis of this complaint?

-“Speaking for employment agencies in general, I cannot say if employers are satisfied or not”

-“I refer candidates based on their job experience & knowledge, but employers often do not want these candidates – they want good-looking candidates or candidates with certain soft skills “

-Employers complain that the English skills of candidates is not high enough

15. Regarding the Association or Union of Private Employment Agencies – are you a member of this association?

-Yes

-The idea for a union is good but the director of the union cannot also be a PEA owner/director - it could be a conflict of interest. The union director should be independent, such as a lawyer

-“No, I refused to join this association. It’s only a place to speak – there is no action”

-This association has no purpose or value

16. Do you think this association has the potential to serve a useful function?

-There are 9 members in the Association

-There is a government movement to regulate PEAs. The PEA Association was created to promote/lobby for self-licensure & regulation

-Voices that are united (via an association/union) will be heard

-There is no licensing or regulation of PEAs – government should do this (so only good agencies survive)

-An organization should be created to control PEA fees & to stop PEAs working out of apartments

17. What could be done to strengthen the Association?

-PEA associations in Europe are a model that should be emulated

-The PEA Association in Armenia is very weak

-Association members try to meet once a month

-The Association has developed a PEA code of conduct. The Association has a Facebook page that outlines safeguards that jobseekers & employers should know about before using a PEA

18. How do PEAs charge for their services:

-Nearly all charge jobseekers a registration fee plus a percentage of their first months’ salary

-Only a couple of PEAs charge employers

-“We charge hirees 50% of their first paycheck”

-“At the moment we charge jobseekers but I understand this is the wrong approach”

-“We do not charge jobseekers from vulnerable populations”

-“I don’t charge a registration fee – I receive a fee only after placement”

19. What incentives would you need to focus more on serving: a) disabled jobseekers, b) low-income jobseekers, c) jobseekers outside of Yerevan

- Government could outsource these programs to PEAs
 - Abroad (e.g. in Europe) there is a higher level of cooperation between PEAs & Public Employment Services
-

20. Do you think most Private Employment Agencies have a formal business plan?

- “Our agency does not have a business plan”
 - Armenia is too unpredictable, so having a business plan is not realistic
 - “Every year we work with our accountant to do a risk analysis, plan goals, & set activities”
 - “In the near future we plan conduct a salary survey & also get into HR consulting”
 - “I have a kind-of business plan but it’s several years old”
 - “No, I don’t have & don’t want a business plan”
-

21. How do you promote or market your Employment Agency (advertise in newspaper or radio; depend on word-of-mouth, etc.)?

- “When we started we had advertisement campaigns – now we promote ourselves through the internet via our website, Facebook, & LinkedIn”
- “We did a promotion when we launched our website”
- “I have a sales person that contacts employer prospects”
- “My agency is marketed by its good reputation & by word-of-mouth”

22. Does this Employment Agency have a website?

- “Yes – it’s been voted as one of the top websites in Armenia”
- Yes
- No, but it’s under construction
- “No – my agency is okay without a website”

23. Do you have a desire to expand your Employment Agency business?

- Yes
 - No
-

24. If there was training that would give you techniques and tools on improving your Employment Agency business – would you be interested in such training?

- It depends – probably
- Probably yes
- We’d probably send someone
- No

25. To what extent would training be useful in the following areas?

___ Improving presentation & sales skills to gain more clients (employers & jobseekers)

___ How to write a mission statement for your Employment Agency business (*a concise statement that describes the purpose of your business*)

___ How to make or improve your business plan (*a business plan summarizes your operational & financial objectives and contains plans on how to realize your business objectives*)

___ Identifying niche markets to expand or realign your business

- ___ How to improve customer service
- ___ How to reach-out and establish linkages with employer & jobseekers (outreach)
- ___ Effective ways to post or advertise job vacancies
- ___ How to manage your applicant pool (organizing and keeping track of jobseeker records)
- ___ Ways to improve job matching (matching jobseeker qualifications with job requirements)
- ___ How to follow-up with employers to ensure quality service
- ___ Creating measures that will show how your Employment Agency is performing
- ___ Providing jobseeker services that will increase the recognition and reputation of your business
- ___ Effective techniques for marketing and advertising your business
- ___ Enhancing your business website
- ___ Understanding ethical issues regarding HR & recruiting

-All interviewees said that most of these topics are needed & valuable but indicated less than total or enthusiastic commitment with regards to attending training

26. Are you familiar with the Armenian laws and regulations pertaining to Private Employment Agencies?

-(Question not asked)

27. To what extent do you keep yearly measures or records such as:

- number of jobseekers registered
- number of job orders received from employers
- number of employers served
- number of vacancies advertised
- number of placements made
- dollar volume of sales (placement commission)

-“We have software for some of these measures but we don’t do regular analysis”

-“Yes, we collect & analyze all these measures”

28. What opportunities do you foresee in Private Employment Agencies?

- The stronger players/agencies will survive
- PEAs should be optimistic
- “We hope to expand”
- “The future is in our website (which is being constructed) – it will enable users to access services automatically. Also it will have pictures of jobseekers so employers can see them”

Differentiating features of PEAs:
Accept Employment Center:

- Accept director chooses employers based on their honesty & on feedback from places
- Have 80 out-staffing employees (for which Accent has labor contracts) – concentrated in IT telecom companies and home-to-home sales
- 80% of Accent jobseekers are already employed but are seeking job upgrades
- Accent cooperates with HR.am
- Accent has a short-list service for employers
- Gives jobseekers interview tips for specific employers (based on idiosyncrasies of employers)
- Has trainings in evenings on CVs, etc, for jobseekers– but jobseekers don't come because a nominal fee is charged

-Accent has an emphasis on testing:

- Tests on languages; accounting; personality tests, etc.
- Retains a psychologist to do testing
- Employers may request certain tests
- Registrants are not charged for tests & are given copy of test results

-Accent has two types of data bases:

1. Data base of *active* registrants:

- 3,000 registrants
- Accent knows registrants well & has checked their recommendations
- Registrants have passed tests

2. Data base of *passive* registrants:

- 2,000 registrants
- Retains CVs for possible consideration

-Accent's job matching process:

- Employers provide online job description (including salary)
- Custom proprietary program uses keywords & filters to screen CVs

Eduardo Employment Agency:

- 4,000 employers in database
- No software for job matching – does it manually
- “I often ask employers to increase the salaries stated in vacancy announcements because they are too low”
- “In selecting candidates I look beyond looks of a person – I look at a person's brain”
- Frequently visits employers – both clients & prospects
- “The important thing is to pass to people that this agency is not cheating them”
- Wants to make a proposal to State Employment Service to partner in job referral (will ask State ES to fund 50% of costs)

Anahit Employment Agency:

- “Employers like me for my quickness and responsiveness”
- “I place 10-15 candidates per month”

Appendix C

Consolidated Responses to Question Form for University Career Centers

Responses to Questions: University Career Centers

1. How long has the career center been in operation & how long have you worked with the career center?

Northern University:
-3 yrs

Four Universities at 29 June input session:
-18 yrs (worked in center 8 yrs)
-3 yrs (worked in center 5 mnths)
-8 yrs (worked in center 5 yrs)
-2½ yrs (worked in center 5 mnths)

Yerevan State University:
-6 yrs

2. To what extent do students know about and use the career center?

-“Every semester the Career Center Director makes presentations to student groups regarding the Career Center”

Four Universities at 29 June input session:
-100% of students know about the center
-100%
-100% at ICare / 15% at Ag Uni
-15%

Yerevan State University:
-Not all students are informed about the center
-We have a mailing list of 20,000 alumni

3. In your opinion, how do students view the career center – favorable, neutral, or unfavorable?

-“Impressions of the Career Center depends on students’ level of engagement”

-“According to our recent student survey, satisfaction with our career center is high”
-Most students expect placement

4. What are the key goals of the career center?

Northern University:
-Increase students’ employability competitiveness in labor market
-Provide labor market information (e.g. job demand)
-Establish connections with enterprises/companies

Four Universities at 29 June input session:
-To create mechanisms to get jobs
-To impart motivation & responsibility
-To impart employment skills e.g. job search, resume writing, interviewing

5. Does the center have a mission and vision statement?

Northern University:
-We have a charter with functions & duties of the career center
-We prepare a yearly work plan
-The university has five-year strategic plan that includes the career center

Four Universities at 29 June input session:
-Yes
-Yes

-No
-No

6. Does the career center have a link on the university's website?

-Yes
-Yes
-Yes
-No
-No

7. Does the center have brochures that overview career services and activities?

-Yes
-Yes
-Yes
-No

8. Are all new (incoming) students given an orientation to the career center?

Northern University:

-Every semester we make presentations to student groups about the career center

Four Universities at 29 June input session:

-Yes
-Yes
-Yes
-No

Yerevan State University:

-Every year we do sessions with incoming students

9. What are the center's key services (*most frequently provided services*)?

Northern University:

-Provision of labor market info to students (university conducts own LMI studies)
-Soft-skills training
-Invite employers/authorities to university to give jobs/career presentations
-Collect CVs from alumni (alumni data base)

Four Universities at 29 June input session:

-Resume writing; job orientation (via employer presentations)
-Scholarships; job opportunities; career fairs; roundtable discussions; CVs
-We invite HR people from companies to university to give tips on CVs & interviewing
-Internships

Yerevan State University:

-Labor market demand & skills balance
-Student competitiveness
-Internships & volunteer work
-Cooperation with private & public sectors
-Presentations/lectures from enterprises & businesses
-We have memos of cooperation with employers for 'Faculty Business Centers' to generate demand-driven curricula

10. What services would you like to expand or improve?

Northern University:

-Our problem is in linking with employers – employers do not have a culture of working with career centers & schools – it's a 'headache' for employers to work with universities

Four Universities at 29 June input session:

-How to keep in touch with employers & get info from them
-Data base methods

-Job fairs are hard to do because employers are very passive

Yerevan State University:

-Employability (soft skills workshops)

-How to track employment/placement of alumni

11. Are there any services that you currently do not provide that you would like to provide – what are these services?

-Self assessments

-Career guidance/counseling

-Placement (provision of placement ranges from incidental to frequent)

-Topics of employability (soft skills) workshops are very limited – would like to expand

12. How many staff does center have?

Northern University:

-Two staff

-The career center has a 'reference person' in each department

-In general, career center staffs are small 1-2 persons

13. Are students utilized in the center as 'Peer Assistants'?

Northern University:

-Yes, we have 10 students who assist

Four Universities at 29 June input session:

-Yes

-Yes

-No

-No

14. Is the career center office space adequate or inadequate (*considering the range of services and student flow*)?

-Space is generally adequate (for current services & student flow)

15. To what extent is the career center automated (*uses computers and specialty software for operations and service delivery*)?

-“No specialty software – we use standard (Microsoft) applications”

-All centers have computers (for staff – not for students to access career info)

16. What equipment and supplies are most needed to bring the center to a higher standard?

-*(Question not asked)*

17. Regarding the size, services, and budget of the career center – in recent years have these things increased, decreased, or remained the same?

-None of the career centers have specified budget – they request & receive finances for events, etc.

18. Think about an ideal career center – one with proper office space and equipment and a full range of services. Now think about your current budget. How many multiples of your current budget would be required to achieve an ideal career center?

-“Our problem is not with space or equipment – it's getting to employers”

19. Are you familiar with operations and services of university career centers in Europe and America?

- Most career center directors are familiar with American & Euro centers
 - Armenian career center needs, resources & capacities are “totally different” from those in Europe & US – Armenian career centers don’t need such size & scope
-

20. If there was training that would give you techniques and tools on improving your career center – would you be interested in such training?

Northern University:

- Generally yes (depending on staff availability)

Four Universities at 29 June input session:

- Enthusiastically yes

Yerevan State University:

- Yes but all staff are scheduled for vacation the end of July

21. To what extent would training be useful in the attached career center service areas as well as the topics below?

___ Improving presentation skills (“putting pizzaz into training”)

___ Getting feedback from your customers (students, employers & faculty) & serving their wants & needs

___ Employer Outreach: Ideas for establishing relationships with employers

___ An introduction to job placement services

___ Points for developing your career center website

___ What gets measured gets done – CAPS measurements

___ Fundamentals of career self-assessments

___ Vocational counseling concepts

___ Essentials of improving internships

___ How to organize & conduct successful job fairs

Northern University:

- Not interested in self-assessments
- No need for career guidance
- Interested in workshops on employability (soft-skills) training
- We need mechanisms to share vacancies with Department Chairs & to do pre-screening

Other five universities:

- Exceedingly interested in most topics
-

Misc notes / comments:

- Of the six university career centers that were interviewed – two recently administered questionnaires to alumni regarding career center services
- Typically, students do not choose their field of study – their families select/imposes their field of study
- There is a severe lack of labor market information – students don’t know jobs in demand or projected growth occupations
- “Universities are proud of career centers but some cannot articulate why they have the centers”

(In interview sessions, the following chart was used to discuss career center services and to obtain inputs regarding scope and level of services)

University Career Center Services

	Purpose	Examples of Delivery Mechanisms
<i>Services for students</i>		
Placement	To place students in suitable internships and to refer qualified students and alumni for job vacancies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Job fairs ▪ Bulletin board & website postings of internship opportunities & of job vacancies ▪ Resume referral ▪ Summer employment programs
Self-assessment	To ascertain student abilities, interests, personality attributes, and values and to apply these factors in selecting appropriate majors and career fields	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Group or self-administration of printed inventories or worksheets ▪ Self administration of computerized and on-line inventories ▪ Group or individual interpretation sessions
Career exploration and exposure	To facilitate examination of career fields and specific occupations with regards to job duties, working conditions, worker characteristics (abilities, personality attributes, and values), earnings, training requirements, and promotional opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Workshops on various aspects of career exploration ▪ Library containing commercial career-related books & materials ▪ Printed resources generated by CAPS center or adapted from web materials ▪ Online career tools ▪ One-on-one assistance to facilitate career exploration ▪ Job seminars & on-campus corporate visits ▪ Job shadowing – where students ‘shadow’ business professionals (mentors) and observe activities for 1-2 days ▪ Career fairs
Labor market information	To provide local (country and regional) information and projections as to job growth and demand thus enabling students to select training that will lead to <i>viable</i> employment opportunities (and decrease saturation of students in no/low growth fields)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Group sessions presenting labor market information ▪ Printed resources containing country & regional-specific data on jobs in demand, projected growth occupations, & forecasted skills needs ▪ Computerized & online labor market information
Employment tools	To provide pragmatic skills in job search, job applications, CVs, and interviewing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Workshops on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Effective Job Search Skills -The Right Appearance for the Job -Applications the Right Way -Preparing A Winning CV -Doing your Best in Interviews ▪ Role playing exercises ▪ Commercially available books ▪ Printed resources generated by CAPS center or adapted from web materials ▪ Software tools & websites ▪ One-on-one coaching & assistance

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	Purpose	Examples of Delivery Mechanisms
Employability tools ('soft-skills')	To provide graduates and alumni an 'edge' in getting and keeping a job and growing on the job	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Workshops on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -How work works -Practical office skills -Skills & attributes employers want -Positive attitude -Self-initiative -Teamwork -Work ethics -Customer orientation -Lifelong learning -Realistic career expectations ▪ Role playing exercises ▪ Commercially available books ▪ Printed resources generated by CAPS center or adapted from web materials ▪ Software tools & websites ▪ One-on-one coaching & assistance
Self-employment tools	To impart entrepreneurship awareness and help graduates and alumni direct academic learning to self-employment opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Workshops in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Directing academic learning to self-employment -Moving from 'looking for a job' to 'creating a job' -Self-employment pros and cons -Assessing business ideas -Business start-up fundamentals ▪ Commercially available books ▪ Printed resources generated by CAPS center or adapted from web materials ▪ Software tools & websites ▪ One-on-one coaching & assistance
Career guidance	To assist students and alumni understand themselves in relation to career choice and work-life issues and to provide guidance in career planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ One-on-one personalized engagement with students ▪ Career planning tools ▪ Commercially available books ▪ Printed resources generated by CAPS center or adapted from web materials
Academic advising	To guide students in selecting academic majors and coursework in line with their career goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Group presentations on academic majors & associated coursework ▪ Workshops relating aptitudes & interests to academic areas ▪ Individual advising sessions
Alumni special services	To provide services catering to the needs and issues of alumni	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Specialized workshops ▪ One-on-one counseling ▪ 'Job Club' - where individuals seek jobs as part of a group of fellow job seekers, working together under a leader who provides support, information, facilities, and supplies
Services to Employers		
Placement	To partner with employers in placing suitable students in internships and referring qualified graduates & alumni for job vacancies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Employer outreach to government ministries, public work schemes, private employers, private initiatives, UN, NGOs, and associations ▪ Onsite employer visits to promote internship program; solicit internship positions; & specify position requirements

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	Purpose	Examples of Delivery Mechanisms
Job Fairs	To facilitate employers' participation in university job fairs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Profession caliber job fairs
Corporate citizenship	To help employers support university and community efforts to engage students in the world of work	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Employer outreach to government ministries, public work schemes, private employers, private initiatives, UN, NGOs, and associations
<i>Services to the Community</i>		
Career exposure	To broaden world-of-work outlooks by providing tailored career information to primary and secondary students and community groups – while representing and promoting the universities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ World-of-work presentations▪ Printed handouts▪ Career Fairs

Appendix D

Consolidated Responses to Question Form for Job Website Providers

Responses to Questions: Job Website Providers

1. How long has your jobs website been in operation?
 - Since 2007 (HR.am)
 - Since 2003 (Career Center NGO)
 2. Why are you in the jobs website business (what attracts you or interests you to jobs websites)?
 - To fill a need/gap
 - Back in 2002 there was no such job service or project. Later, some projects got funding but 'died' after funding stopped
 - “For 2½ years we disseminated job info for free, then decided to make it a pay project”
 - “We've had huge positive feedback”
 3. How many staff does your website business have?
 - HR.am: 4 to 5 staff (HR.am is just one project in company)
 - Career Center NGO: 10 people
 4. Approximately how many 'hits' per month does your website get?
 - Around 5,000 visits a day
 - “We don't actively monitor but get 200,000 hits per week”
-

5. About how many jobs websites are there in Armenia?
 - Many, but many/most are not 'serious' and probably get less than 100 visits a day
 - “There are 10-15 jobs websites – all of them copy info/vacancies from our website”
 6. Do certain types of businesses or organizations tend to list their vacancies on jobs websites?
 - All types of businesses use jobs websites for all vacancies
 - “On our website all vacancies are posted in Armenian & English (not Russian)”
 7. What are the best known jobs websites (what 2-3 websites dominate in Armenia)?
 - Career Center.am – they post middle & high-level vacancies; everything is payable
 - Job Finder.am – they created a search engine to find jobs just copying content from other websites

 - In Armenia there is little competition in this area
 - Some competitors are more software developers than real recruiting/job referral businesses
 - “Other websites do not have non-discrimination policies like we do”
-

8. Does your website business have a formal business plan?
 - No, there is no need
 - No
9. How do you promote or market your jobs website (newspaper or billboard advertising; radio; word-of-mouth)?
 - Word of mouth
 - “We never did advertise – the public just jumped-in”
10. What are your biggest challenges or difficulties in running a jobs website?
 - “None – we have no software problems. We're working all the time on improving the websites”

Do you have a desire to expand your jobs website business?

-“I called employers for inputs regarding complaints & suggestions”

-“Our model is continuous improvement – we strive to make our site better”

-“As a service we have a HR professional blog of that has frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) for various employment concerns”

11. Are there Armenian laws and regulations pertaining to jobs websites? How do these regulations effect your business operations?

-No

-No

12. In your view, how user-friendly is your website for *employers* in terms of posting vacancies, searching CVs, and general navigation/inputting of information?

-“Our vacancies are not organized by job groups or companies, etc.”

13. In your view, how user-friendly is your website for *jobseekers* in terms of: accessing and viewing vacancies by job title, keywords, and location; submitting CVs; general navigation/inputting of information?

-“We have just one database with few filters for organizing vacancies by groups, etc.”

14. Is job matching and applicant referral part of your service portfolio? (Do you identify best qualified applicants and refer them to employers)?

-“Not now but probably in the future – we need to ascertain if employers will pay for this service”

15. Does your website include links to career resources (e.g. how to write CVs; job search tips; effective interviewing; etc.)?

-“Our site has articles and news in the blogs”

16. What would be the top 2-3 complaints that *employers* have of your jobs website?

-“For us a complaint is they don’t like that Armenian language is required for job postings”

17. What specialty database or software do you use?

-Don’t know – this is question for programmers & developers

18. Do you attempt to model your website on larger / well-known websites?

-Yes, from time to time

19. Are you satisfied with your website or would you like to improve it?

-“Our service is very dynamic – we’re working to be #1. We have 20,000 users & 2,000 employers”

-“It would be nice to know how many users get jobs through our website”

20. How do jobs websites generate revenue (make money)?

-“Currently our services are not payable – we’re against jobseekers paying”

-Through advertisements

-“Employers pay a fee for ‘Vacancy on Top’ (vacancies listed at top of lists)”

-“We charge employers to disseminate vacancy announcements”

-“We also charge employers for recruitment services where we short-list & interview applicants then refer the top 3-5 candidates”

-“We also have an online resume review service – but in two years this service has not been used because jobseekers don’t see the need for good quality resumes”

21. Does your website contain advertisements from businesses? Is this a viable revenue source?
-Yes
-

22. Do you foresee changes in the way jobs websites operate and are used by employers and jobseekers?
-“We will prepare a special place on the website for internships – internship places will pay 10,000 AMD”

23. What future opportunities do you foresee in jobs websites?
-“We want to start providing trainings for students in writing CVs & how to choose a good job”
-

24. If there was training and technical assistance to help you improve your jobs website business – would you be interested in such training?
-Probably, if staff were available

25. In what specific areas do you and your staff need training?
-In developing our website we’ve focused more on content & less on design – we’d like inputs as to polishing our website (making it ‘sexier’)
-

Misc Comments:

- Employers often select employees based only on diplomas or certificates
- “All first-received announcements may not be posted – we often need to advise employers on how to write proper vacancy announcements (descriptions, duties, requirements, etc.)”
- “Our announcements are only in English”
- “Employers seeking highly-qualified applicants use our service”
- “We have adopted international non-discrimination standards (these standards are specified in our website’s vacancy posting rules) – we do not post vacancies that have hiring criteria unrelated to job performance”
- “We pride our organization on having high principles”
- “Our organization has been a pioneer in developing a ‘culture of employment’ i.e. alternatives to nepotism in hiring”
- “We have set people free from certain employment practices by bringing transparency through the internet”
- “By registering on our website companies/organizations can look through 15,000+ CVs”
- “We have ‘trained’ our website via proprietary software how to build proper resumes – our website improves raw resumes. A resume filled-out on our website will be better than a resume written with personal help”
- “We have structured our website to sort/filter vacancies based on background, experience, salary, etc.”

Appendix E

Consolidated Responses to Question Form for EDMC Workforce Development Staff

**Responses to General Questions
Regarding Employment Services & Agencies
(for Project Orientation & Context)
Tigran & Funzik 6/26**

1. What is the most common means of job recruitment / advertising in Armenia?
 - Word of mouth
 - Websites, especially of high-qualified jobs
 - Newspapers for civil service jobs
 - PEAs

2. Are employers required to register jobs with the Public ES?
 - No – State ES targets disabled & long-term unemployed & implements vocational training

3. Do universities / voc/tech institutions have their own placement offices or career services?
 - Most have career centers (career centers are necessary for accreditation)
 - Most career centers have narrow range of services – focusing on internships & alumni services

4. How many PEAs are there In Armenia?
 - About 15 in Yerevan

5. Where are PEAs mostly concentrated (geographic distribution)?
 - Yerevan

6. What is the typical size of PEAs (staff composition of agencies)?
 - 2-5 staff

7. What sectors do PEAs cater to / focus on?
 - Highly qualified workers & migrant workers
 - (In interviews, found PEAs that focus on low to mid-level jobs)

8. Do PEAs specialize in certain sectors (limit scope of services to some sectors)?
 - Yes

9. How do PEAs charge for their services:
 - Jobseekers pay an up-front registration fee & then a percentage of their first paycheck
 - It happens that jobseekers register then never hear back from employment agencies
 - Employers are mostly unwilling to pay PEAs – when faced with paying will say ‘I will advertise/recruit myself’

10. Are measures available as to the penetration of PEAs – annual number of:
 - jobseekers registered
 - job orders from employers rec’d
 - employers served
 - vacancies advertised
 - placements made
 - dollar volume of sales (placement commission)
 - Some agencies may keep these measures

11. Regarding the Public Employment Service – generally, how do *job seekers* perceive the Pub ES?
 - The State ES is where you go to file for unemployment benefits
 - There has been an image of corruption but it's getting better
12. How do *employers* perceive the Pub ES?
 - Most employers think it's a government body you shouldn't have much contact with
13. What is the level of interaction / cooperation between the Public ES & PEAs?
 - A low level of cooperation but they have organized some joint workshops
14. Do employers favor PEAs over the Public ES (why)?
 - Yes – PEAs are perceived to have better service & do better job matching
15. Do you think most PEAs have a formal business plan?
 - Most likely not
16. Regarding owners/operators of PEAs – what is their general background (education, work experience, etc.)
 - Generally they are qualified & educated people
 - Female dominated
 - PEAs are not highly profitable
17. To what extent are owners of PEAs knowledgeable of modern business practices?
 - Owners are very *practical*-oriented
18. To what extent are owners of PEAs knowledgeable of basic employment service operations?
 - Not so much
19. What are the most well-known employment agencies (what 2-3 agencies dominate in Armenia)?
 - All are small
20. Do PEAs have websites? Do they advertise (via newspapers, radio, TV, social media)?
 - They larger ones have good websites
 - From time to time they advertise
21. In general, how do *jobseekers* view PEAs in terms of quality of services?
 - Desperation for a job can drive jobseekers to pay a fee for PEA services
22. What would be the top 2-3 complaints of *jobseekers* in regards to PEAs?
 - Job offers are limited & not are not good
23. In general, how do *employers* view PEAs in terms of quality of services?
 - Employers may see it as a necessary alternative if they can't find good applicants
 - PEAs are especially used for specialty jobs & for mass hiring (e.g. if a company needs 20 welders)
24. Is there an association of Priv ES Providers (PESPs)?
 - Yes

Appendix F

Methodology to Generate *Provisional* Occupational Information & to Develop Occupational Resources

Methodology to Generate *Provisional* Occupational Information & to Develop Occupational Resources

*Designed by Philip A. Hurst, International Employment
& Workforce Development Consultant*

Background

Presently in Armenia, there is a void of occupational information as to:

- Jobs in demand
- Details about jobs in demand, such as:
 - job duties
 - working conditions
 - approximate earnings
 - required skills
 - training / education requirements
- Projected growth occupations and sectors
- Forecast for skills needs (future demanded skill-sets)

This information is important for students and job seekers to make informed educational and employment decisions.

This type of information is typically generated via establishment studies that reflect employer needs and trends. Such employer studies are lacking in Armenia.

Objective

The objective of this project is to generate and disseminate materials (in the form of simple guides and brochures) with occupational information for approximately 20 demand-jobs and 5-10 projected growth occupations. These materials will be aimed at young students and jobseekers. The media will be very user-friendly with fundamental and straightforward content presented in a stimulating style. In addition to use in schools, these resources will be used to compliment employment services offered by the Ministry of Labor. It should be noted that these guides are intended to be *interim* – to fill an informational gap until formal establishment data becomes available.

Implications

These occupational guides may well influence students' selection of classes and fields of study – pointing them to training in high demand jobs instead of low or no-demand jobs and sectors already saturated with applicants. Similarly, jobseekers may well direct their job search efforts to occupations listed in these guides. Indeed, these guides could (to some degree) steer job and sector growth in Armenia. Therefore, these occupational resources must be developed thoughtfully and methodically.

Procedure

The approach used for this project will merge rigor with practicality. A step-by-step plan to generate, organize, and publish occupational information is enumerated on the following pages.

Plan to Generate Occupational Information & to Develop Occupational Resources

Activities	Sub-activities	Timeframe			Responsibilities
<p>A. Groundwork</p>	<p>1. Locate and become familiar with existing resources as potential models to emulate.</p> <p>2. Prepare a mock-up of an occupational guide prototype showing desired content and layout. Obtain inputs to optimize prototype. Reach consensus on structure, content, and format of guide.</p>				
<p>B. Identification of high-demand occupations</p>	<p>3. Assemble a workgroup in Yerevan comprising of 10-15 participants who are: a) highly knowledgeable about jobs, employment, labor trends, and education, and b) representative of relevant ministries, public and private employers, business and commerce associations, and training institutions. The purpose of this Employment Expert Workgroup (EEW) will be to generate and agree on a list of 20-30 high-demand occupations,</p> <p>4. For # 4 above, fine-tune process of eliciting inputs from the EEW. Prepare materials and facilitation aids for meeting of workgroup. Prior to meeting, dispatch materials to participants to orient them as to purpose, process, and expected outputs of Employment Expert Workgroup.</p> <p>5. Organize, convene, and facilitate meeting of the EEW. Obtain the following outputs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ An agreed-upon listing of 20-30 high-demand jobs ▪ A mapping of localities / regions where these demand-jobs are concentrated ▪ A short list of employers / firms who are engaged in the high-demand jobs (2-3 employers for each job) ▪ A short list (5-10) of projected growth occupations or sectors (with rationale for inclusion on list) ▪ A succinct forecast for skills needs (future demanded skill-sets). <p>6. Enter, organize, and refine all outputs in Word or Excel documents.</p> <p>7. If desired or needed, identify high-demand jobs in upcountry regions by convening Employment Expert Workgroups in select regions. (This could also be used as a means to validate selection of high-demand jobs.)</p>				
<p>C. Collection of occupational information</p>	<p>8. Select staff in MoL Division of Research and Statistics (DRS) to collect occupational information for high-demand jobs (as identified in Activity B, above). This information includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ job duties ▪ working conditions ▪ approximate earnings ▪ required skills ▪ training / education requirements <p>10. Fine-tune process of collecting occupational information. Prepare forms and instruments to be used for information collection. Develop training to instruct DRS staff in procedures and instruments.</p>				

Plan to Generate Occupational Information & to Develop Occupational Resources

Activities	Sub-activities	Timeframe			Responsibilities
		Oct	Nov	Dec	
D. Creation of job guide and associated publications	11. Conduct training of DRS staff.				
	12. Identify employers engaged in high-demand jobs (using lists produced by the Employment Expert Workgroup in # 6 above). Plan and schedule employer visits to maximize DRS staff and logistical efficiency.				
	13. Conduct employer visits and obtain job information utilizing specified procedures and instruments.				
	14. Enter, organize, and refine job information in Word or Excel documents.				
	15. Compile outputs from Activities B&C above, organizing and formatting content per the guide prototype (# 3 above). Verify information with employers as needed.				
	16. Take photographs and digitally catalogue photographs of workers engaged in high-demand jobs, for use in job guide and related publications.				
	17. Create job guide using Word or Publisher, incorporating photographs and applying graphic design techniques to achieve a stylistic and highly useable publication.				
	18. Conduct user focus groups (students and job seekers) to obtain inputs as to usability and appeal of guide. Revise as necessary.				
	19. Print specified number of guides. Make a distribution plan and distribute guides accordingly.				
E. Utilization of guides and associated publications	20. Hold media events to publicize development of occupational guide.				
	21. Make presentations to schools and training institutions on training and career selection, using the guide as a resource.				
	22. Incorporate the guide into Employment Service workshops. Distribute the guide and associated materials to job seekers.				
	23. Utilize guide information in MoL websites and other media outlets.				
	24. Update and continuously improve all occupational and vocational resources.				

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