



Delivering Progress

2020

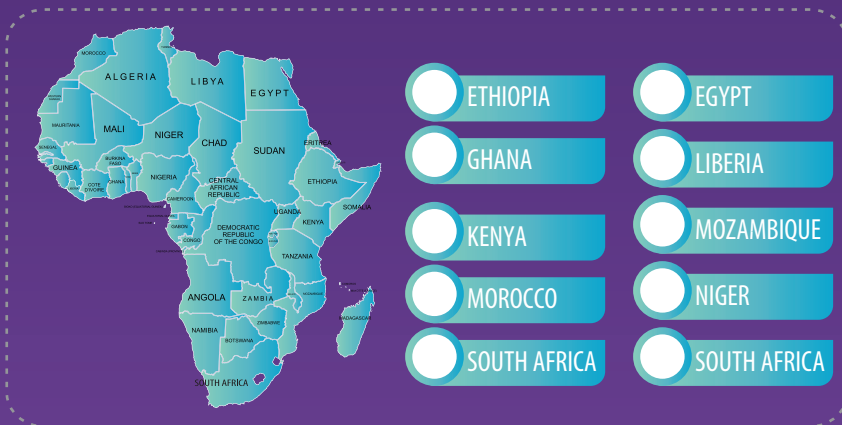
ANNUAL REPORT



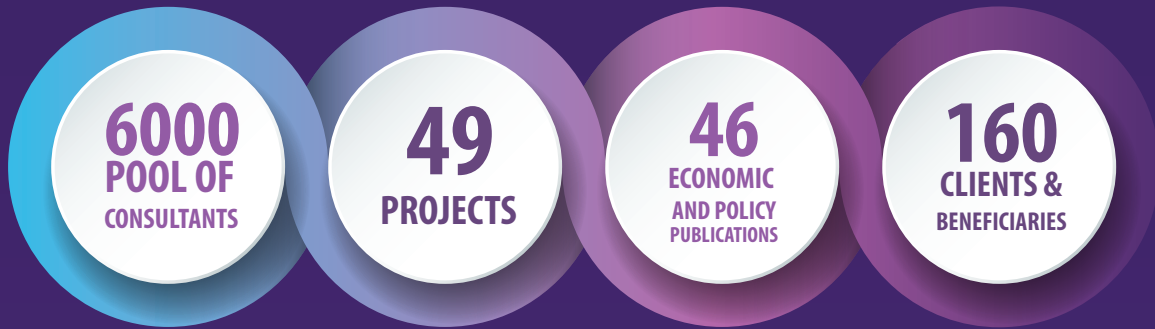
A WINDOW INTO PMCG'S WORLD



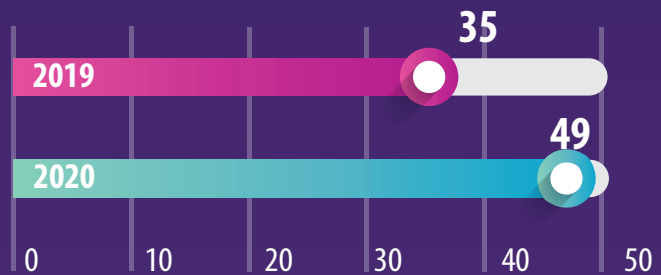
**COUNTRIES
IN WHICH
WE HAVE
WORKED:**



DELIVERING PROGRESS FOR A BETTER FUTURE



Number of Awarded Projects:



PORTFOLIO

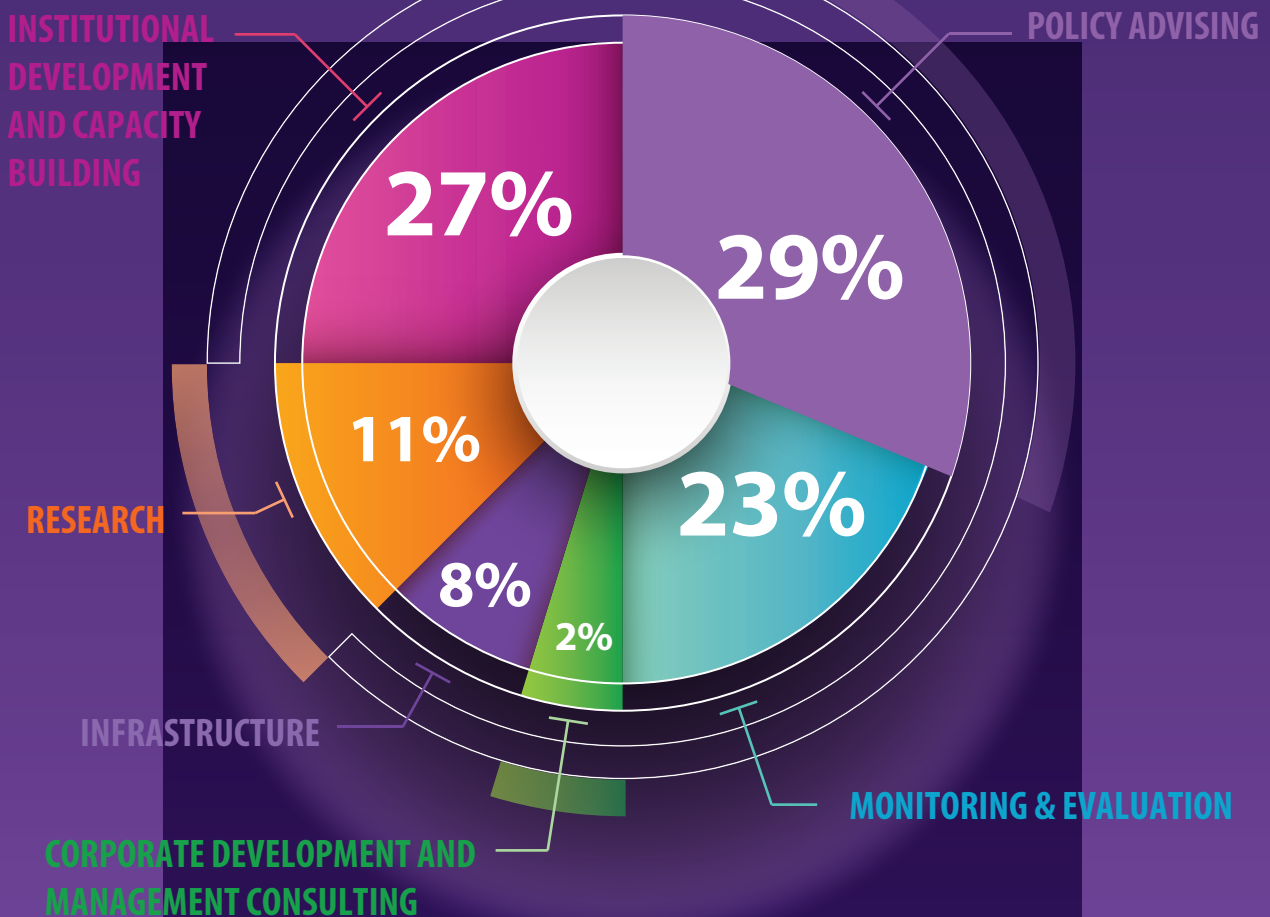


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CHAIRMAN'S LETTER



Dear Friends,

The year of 2020 was one of turmoil and uncertainty, posing numerous challenges. However, in my summarizing letter, I would like to take a more upbeat view, and draw your attention to some of the new prospects and opportunities that the COVID-19 pandemic has presented us.

Without any doubt, all of us have already had to reevaluate our approaches, ranging from mere technical aspects to larger scale and more significant issues like preserving team spirit and sustaining shared values while working remotely.

Clearly, the pandemic has vividly shown us the importance of digitalization. We, at PMCG, have been lucky as, given the nature of our work, we had everything in place to smoothly shift to a 100 percent online mode. Our flexibility has benefited our partners and beneficiaries, as we have been able to fulfil commitments and provide assistance regardless of distance. This is particularly significant given the company's international focus, having now worked in or with 32 countries.

Throughout 2020, we also continued to work on achieving our strategic goals, as well as focusing on the diversification of our activities and extending our work to new geographical areas.

After officially registering PMCG and PMC Research in Ukraine, we have intensified our work there and are now issuing a regular country-specific publication entitled "Economic Outlook and Indicators in Ukraine," which focuses on key economic indicators, such as external trade, the labor market, and economic growth forecasts.

Elsewhere, for the first time, we started working in Egypt on public finance management reform and in Jordan on the evaluation of support for civil society and media. Indeed, compared to 2019, this year we recorded an increase of 40% in the number of projects awarded.

At the same time, we have broadened our portfolio by taking on work concerning the rule of law and public security, and we have also enhanced our coverage of education. We are certain that all such areas are of critical importance with respect to any country's sustainable development and self-reliance.

People remain our main asset though, in the course of delivering progress to countries in transition. Demonstrating this quite strikingly, despite the pandemic, our in-house staff increased in number by 8% in 2020, compared to 2019. Initially, it seemed set to be quite challenging to maintain team spirit and the company culture while being socially distanced from each other. However, the personal and professional qualities of our team members have risen to the fore, demonstrating tremendous unity in unfamiliar times.

Finally, in addition to our outstanding team members, we would not have been able to implement so many interesting projects and meet our responsibilities without our valued partners and beneficiaries. I convey my sincerest thanks to all of them. We have had an unprecedented but interesting year and I expect the years ahead to be challenging but also exciting. If we rethink our approaches and focus more on learning the lessons the pandemic has been teaching us, we will surely continue to deliver progress across countries and continents.

Yours sincerely,

MEET PMCG'S BOARD

We are proud of our illustrious advisory board that unites decades of experience from top international development institutions, including the World Bank and the US State Department. The board's purposes include supporting PMCG's strategic development and innovation, exploring new business ideas, facilitating sustainable growth, providing strategic direction, and guiding quality improvement.

ALEKSI ALEKSISHVILI, Chairman and CEO

Mr. Aleksis Aleksishvili, Chairman and CEO at Policy and Management Consulting Group (PMCG), has clocked up 20 years of working experience in public finance and economic development policy, notably serving as a high-level government official and government adviser responsible for economic development policy, budget and financial policy, tax and customs policy reform, business climate improvement and enhancing the "doing business" environment.



GIORGI KHISHTOVANI, Director, Research

Dr. Giorgi Khishtovani, Director of Research, has been making a notable impact in public, private and non-governmental sectors in Georgia and abroad for a decade. He manages research and analyses, quality control, fundraising and strategic planning at PMC Research.



KENNETH S. YALOWITZ, Non-Executive Director

Diplomat Kenneth S. Yalowitz has had an outstanding career and possesses an invaluable understanding of countries in transition. He served as a US diplomat for 36 years before leading the Dickey Center for International Understanding at Dartmouth College from 2003 to 2011. He currently works as Director of the Conflict Resolution M.A. Program at Georgetown University (Washington, D.C.). Mr. Yalowitz is a Global Fellow at the Woodrow Wilson Center in Washington, D.C. and a member of the Council on Foreign Relations.



LASHA MESKHIA, Director, Business Development

Mr. Lasha Meskhia, Business Development Director at PMCG, is responsible for project management, developing strategic plans, action plans, and business expansion strategies, as well as identifying new markets and product opportunities. He also focuses on product development, managing company representatives at various locations and working to improve the management processes and procedures of the company.



SHIGEO KATSU, Non-Executive Director

Mr. Shigeo Katsu brings three decades of experience working with the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank, where he has accumulated vast knowledge and experience of Europe and Central Asia in the fields of infrastructure, trade, and transitional economies. He is currently the President of the Nazarbayev University in Astana, the flagship academic institution of Kazakhstan.



ZAZA BROLADZE, Non-Executive Director

Mr. Zaza Broladze (PMP) boasts around two decades of impressive experience in top management positions and has worked with international organizations and government institutions. In 2008, he joined PMCG as a Public Sector Consulting Director and in 2012 he became Deputy CEO and Partner, coordinating policy advising, capacity building and institutional development projects at PMCG.



DAVID LEZHAVA, Director, Public Policy

Mr. David Lezhava, Public Policy Sector Director at PMCG, and has 20 years of professional working experience in the fields of public finance and economic development, regional development, social policy, and energy policy. As Public Policy Sector Director, he is responsible for managing PMCG's public policy project portfolio, fundraising and collaboration with partners, clients and international development organizations, as well as for the development and implementation of the company's strategy.



IVANE TAVADZE, PRACTICE DIRECTOR, Institutional Capacity Building, Monitoring and Evaluation

Mr. Ivane Tavadze has joined PMCG in 2012 and has since enhanced the institutional and human capacity of various organizations from both the public and private sectors of countries in transition by assessing and analyzing their individual and institutional performance factors.



LARRY DERSHEM, PRACTICE LEAD, Monitoring and Evaluation

Mr. Larry Dershem is a research and program evaluation professional with over 30 years of working experience. His areas of expertise include quantitative & qualitative research, personal exchange and interorganizational networks, household and community studies, program evaluation design, and international community development. He is experienced in the design of social and behavioral surveys, research for program development, design and oversight of program evaluations, as well as in capacity-building of local staff in design, monitoring, evaluation, and research methods and techniques.



MAX VAN DER SLEEN, Non-Executive Director

Mr. Max Van Der Sleen has over 40 years of professional consulting experience across 50 different countries in Europe, Africa, the Middle East and Asia. He occupied the position of CEO and Chairman of the Board of Management at Ecorys Netherlands, where he was primarily responsible for leading the development of the company's strategy, operational performance, market renewal, and product innovation. By elaborating and implementing meaningful policies, Mr. Van Der Sleen significantly contributed to the company's overall international advancement.



TAMAR JAPARIDZE, Executive Director

Dr. Japaridze, Executive Director at PMCG, is responsible for strategic management, daily operations management, financial management, and project implementation. Her duties also include fundraising and ensuring compliance with international standards and requirements, in addition to the preparation of technical and financial business proposals to be submitted to local and international companies.



ZVIAD KHAREBAVA, Director, Business Sector Consulting

Dr. Zviad Kharebava, Business Sector Consulting Director at PMCG, plays a crucial role in expanding the company's business sector portfolio. He joined the company in 2013 and has since attracted valuable partners to PMCG through supporting key clients in infrastructure, hydro power and agriculture projects by providing plans for business development, fundraising and investment.



POLICY ADVISING AND OPTIMIZATION FOR THE PUBLIC SECTOR

Delivering
Progress to
Countries
in Transition
and Recovery



At PMCG, we believe that liberty and a free market economy provides a formidable basis for strong economic policy and development.

This appreciation of the role of liberty in transforming societies comes from first-hand experience. We have played, and continue to play, a part in economic reforms, moving countries from an inefficient, centralized economy loaded with heavy regulations toward a flexible, growing, transparent, and more progressive society.

Our team's valuable experience of **policy reform and securing economic progress**, combined with the expertise of our consultants and partners, as well as an encyclopedic comprehension of international best practices, equips us to assist communities and governments to establish stronger economies, to alter attitudes and to stimulate progress both regionally and nationally.

In the last 13 years, a total of **32 nations across the globe have progressed as a result of our expertise**. Specifically, our team has steered governments and communities toward economic reforms through a suitable legal framework and institutional performance.

PMCG, across a wide spectrum of nations, has contributed to establishing stronger policy and reforms that have **given people the necessary environment in which to improve their lives**. This contribution has ranged from revenue generation in Africa to enhancing fiscal efficiency and regulatory frameworks in Europe and Central Asia.

Many governments have, with our support, created more comfortable environments in which to do business. The work PMCG carries out **brings tangible change**, as repeatedly evidenced by international rankings, such as the **World Bank's Doing Business Report**.

The success we have achieved has been driven by our dedication to blending our knowledge and international best practices, combined with local expertise of every nation in which we work. PMCG cooperates with the highest caliber of regional experts to arrive at viable and sustainable solutions suitable for the local environment. Such a complex approach means that the policies we put together are carefully designed and ideally suited to face the obstacles and opportunities present in the relevant communities.

ALBANIA

Collaboration between different branches of government is one of the most important factors in the successful introduction of reforms. In 2019, we, in a consortium led by B&S Europe, started working with the Government of Albania, under the European Commission (EC) Framework Contract SIEA 2018 - LOT 3 project entitled "Support to the Reform of Subordinated Institutions and Agencies."

The project team supports the Government of Albania and the Office of the Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister of Albania as the main beneficiary, in the design, steering, implementation, and monitoring of the reform of subordinated agencies and institutions of the Albanian state administration.

At the same time, the collaboration is focused on **strengthening sector-specific analysis, and**

legal drafting and implementation of reform based on an in-depth understanding of the distinctive features of the relevant sectors. Training and coaching of top- and middle-level managers in the sectors being reformed is also covered by the project.



CENTRAL ASIA

Since 2016, we have been working under the USAID Competitive Trade and Jobs (CTJ) Activity in Central Asia, in association with DAI International. This project covers Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan and aims **to increase the competitiveness of Central Asian economies in order to increase exports in horticulture and to improve transport and logistics sectors that operate regionally, to reduce the time and cost of trading across borders and to create or maintain jobs. Our role is to improve border management and customs policies in order to move goods more efficiently and less expensively at and beyond borders.**

In addition to the high costs and considerable time required to trade because of the currently weak transport and logistics situation, exporters/importers across the region have cited a lack of information and harmonization of customs procedures, including an excessive burden of documentation, as a root cause of delays and expense.

Accordingly, our work is focused on developing a trade facilitation action plan to: reduce the time and cost of crossing borders along key transport corridors; identify and prioritize non-tariff barriers

to trade along corridors; facilitate dialogue between governments and private sector trade and business associations relating to border issues that hinder trade, and develop a private sector dialogue mechanism with government entities that determine regulations or other requirements specified by trade agreements; assist in the creation or further enhancement of national trade facilitation and transport bodies; develop an action plan to address constraints with host governments and the private sector; and analyze gaps in the development of a national single window in coordination with other donors, and implement activities in which USAID would have a comparative advantage.



EGYPT

In recent years, Egypt has succeeded in establishing a micro-fiscal environment, resulting in good progress being made on budget consolidation, leading to more sustainable public finances. Nonetheless, the COVID-19 pandemic and containing measures taken by the Egyptian government will have long-lasting consequences, including fiscal consolidation and macroeconomic aggregates.

In this context, the EU recently launched a significant program entitled “EU Support to



Enhance Administrative and Public Economic Governance in Egypt” to contribute to the PFM reform process initiated by the Egyptian government and the Ministry of Finance (MoF).

“We are truly honored that we have been awarded this opportunity to support the Government of Egypt in the effective implementation of PFM reforms. We believe that together with a highly qualified team of experts, we will deliver real impacts in the priority areas of PFM reform implementation and ensure the sustainability of results,” said Tamar Medulashvili, EU Projects Manager at PMCG.

The project team will focus on two main components: demand-driven support for the Government of Egypt, and specifically the MoF and its affiliated entities, on the path towards further reforming the PFM system with a focus on international taxation and public procurements; and providing direct support to the EU Delegation to Egypt on policy dialogue with the MoF, budget support eligibility assessment, and identification of future support programs.

GEORGIA

Since 2019, within the framework of the European Union project “Facility for the Implementation of the EU-Georgia Association Agreement II,” led by IBF International Consulting, we are working to advance the implementation of the EU-Georgia Association Agreement (AA) and the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA). The project team is focusing its efforts **to enhance the coordination, monitoring, evaluation, and reporting mechanisms of the Government of Georgia (GoG). Moreover, it is introducing legal and institutional reforms, and raising public awareness about EU-Georgia agreements.**

In the course of 2020, the project team delivered a number of trainings and workshops on different topics, such as: monitoring plans in veterinary border control procedures; border control procedures for food/feed of non-animal origin; phytosanitary border control procedures; legal and specialized terminology and its consistent

use in the process of legal approximation for law drafters and representatives of the agencies involved in this process. Meanwhile, the Technical and Construction Supervision Agency (TCSA) delivered trainings in the following fields: machinery; explosives for civil use; toy safety; ATEX; appliances burning gaseous fuels; and PPE.

A strategic document on the food safety component of the Agricultural and Rural Development Strategy of Georgia (ARDSG) was also developed. The team also supported the Strategic Communication Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to develop a new strategic communication document based on a broad consultation process involving line ministries, the Parliament of Georgia, as well as representatives of civil society, business, and academia, and delivered targeted training for communication units. As part of the ‘6 Years of Association for Georgia’ campaign, it implemented a campaign aimed at raising public awareness about the importance and achieve

ments of the EU–Georgia’s Association Agreement (AA) and to enhance the visibility of EU–Georgia relations and benefits to be reaped as a result of the AA’s implementation.

At the same time, we, as part of a consortium led by ICE – International Consulting Expertise, are working on the EU project entitled “Support to the Development of the Criminal Policy, Prosecution and Investigation Georgia,” aimed at **strengthening the rule of law and protection of human rights in Georgia in line with its international commitments, to continue to support the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) in coordinating and monitoring implementation of the Criminal Justice Reform Strategy, and to bring reforms to the Prosecutor’s Office and the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA) in line with international standards and commitments.** We are supporting the MoJ in coordinating and monitoring the implementation of the Criminal Justice Strategy, and in advancing reforms to the Prosecutor’s Office and the MIA in line with international standards and commitments.

In 2020, we delivered several trainings for the MIA staff, including: project preparation and management; modern practice of human resource

management and development; and data visualization. All have already produced excellent results.

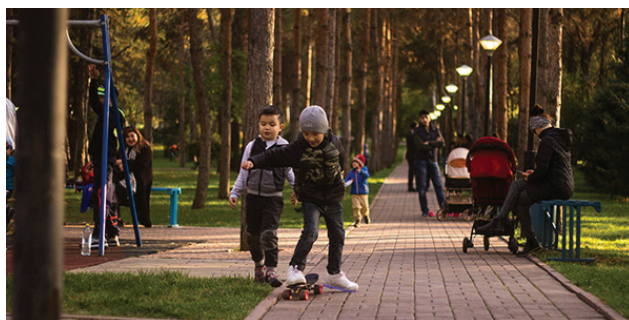
“Evidence-based policy-making as well as informed decision-making are priority directions for the Prosecutor’s Office of Georgia. In this regard, rapid processing, context analysis and respective visualization of data are of the utmost importance for our analytical team. The training course tailored to our needs delivered by an exceptionally competent trainer has significantly improved the skills of the analytical team in their timely analysis of large amounts of information, establishing relationships between variables, and introducing innovative practices and discovering new trends,” said a representative of the Department of Oversight on Prosecutorial Activities and Strategic Development of the Prosecutor General’s Office of Georgia, Analytical Unit, who also added that “in an era of technological development, processing and delivering data are no longer enough; therefore, it is important here that during the trainings we were introduced to modern approaches to data visualization, which enables us to present data in an interesting, informative and understandable way for the user.”

KAZAKHSTAN

We are working with the Government of Kazakhstan to improve public financial management (PFM) practices in the country, under the UNICEF project “Policy Guidance on Procurement,” led by Oxford Policy Management (OPM).

In the course of the collaboration, the project team works on assessing and gathering evidence on PFM practices, in order to provide recommendations **to ensure that efforts made to optimize the utilization of public budgets yield the maximum impact on children-related sectors by identifying appropriate pathways according to the different PFM practices to secure**

re-allocation of efficiency savings, including ring-fencing of public budget for children-related areas.



MALDIVES

The efficiency and transparency of government, especially when managing the budget process and public investments, are among the most important factors affecting public financial management (PFM) and effective domestic revenue mobilization (DRM).

In 2020, we began working with the Government of the Maldives, as part of a five-year program, run by DAI Global and funded by USAID, focused on establishing and implementing a transparent and accountable system that leads to improved national budget allocations and management, the identification and implementation of efficient public investments in services and facilities, and the mobilization of sufficient public revenue,

commensurate with public investments and services.

“PMCG is broadening its geographical area of assistance to governments and recently we started working with the Government of the Maldives to strengthen its PFM and DRM systems. Transparent budget management is the backbone of social and economic development of a country and its prosperity. In this regard, we will support the Government of the Maldives at a regulatory and legislative level. Such intervention is pivotal for the Government in its creation of transparent rules-based public finance,” said Aleksi Aleksishvili, CEO and Chairman at PMCG.



INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND CAPACITY BUILDING



Improving

Efficiency and

Enhancing

Performance



We strongly believe that effective results depend on people, good systems and strong analysis. We know that institutions need to be efficient and competitive if they are going to survive and if they are going to give their clients the level of service they need.

*We are dedicated to supporting **public and private institutions to transform inefficient bureaucracies into modern, capable and transparent structures.** Often, that means moving institutions away from futile centralized governance to an adept and competitive structure, to efficiently enforce legislation and **improve service delivery.***

We perceive organizations as adaptive systems, and we use systematic approaches to help them identify and analyze existing performance gaps. That means we go far beyond just training and coaching; we analyze organizational, process and individual performance levels to address identified gaps and to assist in the implementation of performance solutions packages.

*We work in several areas using a variety of tools, including **human and institutional capacity development (HICD)**, performance assessment and management, change management, human resource management, and public outreach and strategic communications to effectively*

address the barriers that hinder development in public and private sectors. We also reinforce and maintain the competences and capabilities necessary for institutions to achieve their short-, medium-, and long-term objectives.

As part of our organizational capacity enhancement programs, PMCG ensures that newly established or reconfigured systems and outputs are suitably aligned with the external environment and expectations of beneficiary institutions.

*Significantly, the **USAID Good Governance Initiative**, led by **Tetra Tech ARD**, praised our staff and consultants, noting our important role in establishing reforms in all branches of government.*

*"PMCG has been a reliable and trusted partner for the five-year Good Governance Initiative (GGI) project in Georgia. PMCG's staff and local consultants have provided timely and critical input, supporting the Government of Georgia's governance reform process in all branches of government with high-quality analytical services, based on their excellent local knowledge and experience. We look forward to continuing our working relationship with PMCG over the remaining years of the GGI program," said **David B. Smith**, the then GGI Chief of Party, **Tetra Tech ARD.***

EASTERN PARTNERSHIP (EAP) COUNTRIES

The European Commission initiative entitled Mayors for Economic Growth (M4EG) unites Eastern Partnership (EaP) countries, namely Moldova, Ukraine, Belarus, Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan, to support local authorities to become active facilitators of economic growth and job creation.

In order to boost the sustainability of project results with regard to local economic development, the project has engaged with various stakeholders such as local authority associations, business associations, small- and medium-sized enterprises, and educational institutions.

“Our aim is to support active mayors to become facilitators of economic development and job creation. The initiative supports them to identify the major areas for improvement, to assist in the creation of economic development plans, and to enhance skills and competencies. On the other hand, the initiative contains a grant component to support implementation of the best development plans,” explained Zviad Archuadze, PMCG’s Consultant and Country Coordinator for Georgia and Azerbaijan.

More than 400 signatories have joined the initiative. Around 250 plans have been approved, and more than 50 Local Economic Development Plans (LEDPs) have been evaluated as “excellent.” Meanwhile, 16 M4EG grant projects have been implemented.

Around 2000 participants have had the opportunity to participate in various trainings and

study tours were conducted within the initiative on topics such as: external positioning and marketing; public investment; small and medium enterprise development; tourism; and agriculture. Throughout the initiative, about 40 international networking events were organized, facilitating experience-sharing within the network.

A number of municipalities have already demonstrated the positive impact arising from the collaboration. For example, Bolnisi Municipality (Georgia) has planned and implemented effective changes in its municipality, bringing tangible results for its citizens. It is the first municipality in Georgia to have established an agricultural center, serving as a space where farmers can access mobile services related to local agricultural production, including the packaging of fruit, vegetables, cheese, and meat, and the bottling of wine. This novel platform for business activities supports local winemakers and farmers in the preparation of their products for local and export markets, thereby boosting their competitiveness.

“Bolnisi Agricultural Center is a very special place in the development of small family wineries in our municipality. This center plays a significant role as it provides consultations to novice winemakers on-site as well as in the cellars on how to bottle wine and various other procedures necessary to ensure a final product of the highest quality,” said Guram Avkopashvili, a winemaker in Bolnisi Municipality.



GEORGIA

In 2020, we completed our work under the USAID/Georgia Human and Institutional Capacity Development 2020 Activity (HICD 2020), aimed at assisting the USAID Caucasus Mission in addressing its partner organizations' administrative limitations and performance gaps that impede the effective implementation of all key reforms including those related to the EU-Georgia Association Agreement (AA), the Open Government Action Plan, and civil service reform.

In total, we have implemented 16 projects within HICD 2020 and supported 13 government and non-government institutions to address challenges and increase capacity in the following areas: institutional and performance assessment; performance solution package; business process improvement; organizational development strategies; monitoring and evaluation frameworks; optimal governance and organizational structure development; human resource management; communication strategy; and IT assessment.

Overall, we have: **developed more than 120 recommendations and 26 solutions packages for six institutions; prepared organizational development and program strategies for three institutions; helped to compose optimal organizational structures for four institutions; devised communication strategies for two**

institutions; facilitated around 30 workshops and training sessions; documented and streamlined more than 130 business processes for eight institutions; and worked with two public institutions in the energy sector.

"Having an effective communications strategy is essential for the Public Defender's Office, as it is a national human rights mechanism, which handles a number of issues in this area. Our activity is diverse both thematically and geographically, and covers target groups at local as well as international levels. All of this again places an emphasis on the need to use modern, inclusive and innovative communication methods. The USAID-supported project will enable us to improve our communication with society and relevant stakeholders. It is very important for us to understand society and vice versa, and to understand our common principles such as punctuality, transparency, accessibility, proactivity, and inclusiveness. We think that the PDO's communications strategy will have a positive impact on human rights activities in Georgia," said Ekaterine Skhiladze, Deputy Public Defender of Georgia. We have also worked with the Public Defender's Office in the course of developing a communications strategy and action plan, and improving its internal communications function.

KYRGYZSTAN

We are collaborating with the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic (GKR) to pursue **sustainable growth by developing an effective PFM system** under the PFM-2 project funded by the Multi-donor Trust Fund. We are supporting the GKR to introduce changes to the policy, structural and business processes for effective, efficient, and transparent budget planning, implementation, and monitoring within the scope of the program entitled "Improving Program Based Budgeting and Budget Investment Planning Including Improvements in Sectoral Expenditures Planning."

In the course of our collaboration with the GKR, we have facilitated **diagnosis of the legal and**

institutional framework and practices for medium-term expenditure planning at the Ministry of Finance (MoF) and sectoral ministries.



We have also made initial steps towards fostering interrelation between mid-term planning and annual budgeting by strengthening the respective policy and legal framework, and have produced the first set of analytical reports based on reviews of the country's National Development Strategy, government and sectoral programs, the Key Directions of Fiscal Policy document (KDFP), and the core business processes of the medium-term budget forecast (MTBF), in line with national and sectoral programs with the medium-term budget. We have demonstrated the best international practices and experiences in effective mid-term budget planning, program-based budgeting, and treasury operations via webinars aimed at experience-sharing with the MoF. Our team has also carried out vertical functional analysis of the MoF structure and offered approaches pursuant to structural optimization.

As its next step, the project team plans to

enhance mid-term, program-based budgeting and budget monitoring capabilities at 10 pilot chief controllers of budget funds (CCBFs) and to extend support to streamline and strengthen the existing capabilities of 20 CCBFs covered under the PFM-1 project. The team will also introduce and pilot-test the PBB practice cycle in at least five local self-governments (LSGs) in different regions of the KR. At the same time, the team will develop recommendations for the optimization and automation of business processes.

"This webinar, as well as the previous one, was very informative, interesting, and inspiring. Hearing about Georgia's experience, which is the most advanced among the post-soviet states in implementing reforms, and building on the lessons learned is crucial for us," said Elnura Sarieva, representative of the Project Implementation Unit of the MoF of the Kyrgyz Republic.

LIBERIA

How a country manages its revenue mobilization plays an important role in its overall economic development. With this in mind, we are working with the government institutions of Liberia, particularly the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning (MFDP) and the Liberia Revenue Authority (LRA) to improve domestic revenue mobilization in the country.



In order to reach the overall goal, PMCG, under the United States Agency for International Development's (USAID) Revenue Generation for Governance Growth (RG3) project, led by DAI International, assists the MFDP and the LRA to create a policy environment that is predictable, transparent, and fair, which should lead to improved revenue mobilization and enhance the efficiency, integrity, and transparency of revenue administration.

The project involves collaboration with the Liberian government, private sector, and civil society to strengthen dialogue between all parties. Moreover, it seeks to increase engagement and awareness regarding taxes and the benefits of building a tax-paying culture, thereby increasing taxpayers' trust in their government.

The project team has already developed a reform roadmap, covering essential steps and a list of products to be excised, while advice has also been given on effective tax collection. In 2016, when the project was launched, excise tax contributed only 3.8% of the total tax revenue and about 0.7% of GDP, which is relatively low by

international standards. With appropriate control mechanisms, excise tax can generate up to 3% of a country's GDP. Thus, after consultations, excise stamp reform was identified as vital.

“For a reform of such a scale, it is vital to properly communicate its benefits to all stakeholders and to help them to successfully get on board with the new process without much tension. The goal of the excise stamp regime's implementation is to improve the alcohol and tobacco market, and to provide transparency to all of its participants. The operating manual will support the LRA's officers to successfully

start working with excise stamps, and the illustrated booklets will increase awareness among the general public as well as entrepreneurs,” said A. Gorbushkin, Consultant at PMCG.

The implementation of such a reform will allow the Liberian government to raise additional revenue to develop the country, and to regulate the market fairly. It will also help to identify goods for which excise duty has not been paid and goods for which a guarantee should be provided to ensure that buyers receive the promised quality and quantity. The reform will also help to strengthen the administration of other taxes.

UKRAINE

We, as a subcontractor of Chemonics International, worked under the USAID project entitled “Competitive Economy Program (CEP)” to create a business intelligence module (BIM) for the State Customs Service (SCS) of Ukraine and to enhance its risk analysis system.

In order to contribute **to trade facilitation and to audit the automated system of analysis and risk management (ASUR), we created a BIM for the SCS to monitor, analyze, and evaluate statistical data from customs posts on certain goods and vehicles crossing the border, with the purpose of identifying correlations, suspi-**

cious activities, or potential fraud.

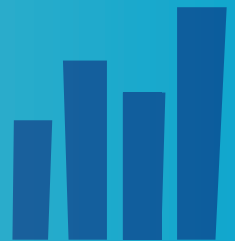
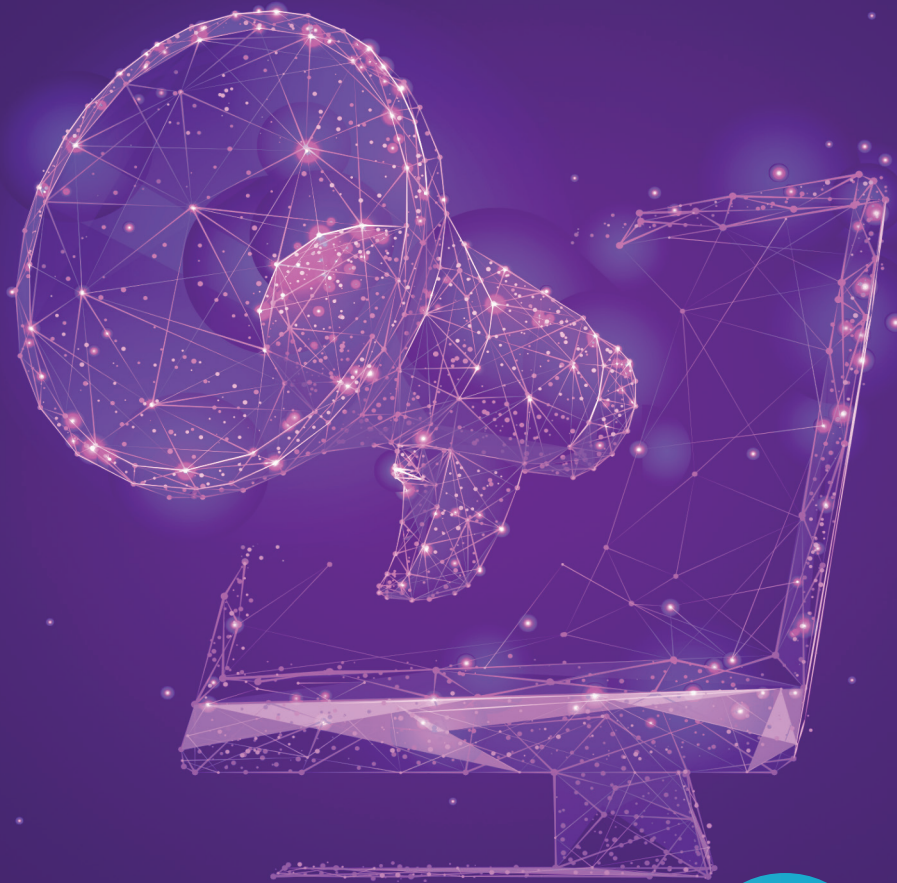
We also audited the operations and risks of the currently-used ASUR and prepared recommendations for transparent, efficient, and easy interaction with customs.

“Businesses are getting broader opportunities to analyze market trends and volume free of charge today. The BIM solution provides services for 200+ daily users on average and has gained high appraisals from local and foreign businesses (Norway, Czech Republic, Taiwan, etc.)” said Volodymyr Chugai, manager of the project.



MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Providing
Insight for
Tangible
Results



For a decade we have been helping **governments** and **companies** to assess the impacts they are making, to detect the challenges they face in their operations and to identify and grasp opportunities for improvement.

When seeking to improve overall results, **to achieve tangible success** and **to have an impact on reform or institutional changes**, monitoring and evaluation tools are extremely essential. Such tools enable the assessment of the relevance, efficiency and effectiveness of a given project or program. When it comes to monitoring and evaluation, we focus on the following three main areas: program monitoring; performance and impact evaluation; and data quality review.

Our monitoring and evaluation is oriented toward **impact measuring** and serves as **a guide for project implementation and management**, providing

stakeholders with information on the progress being made toward the achievement of objectives as well as highlighting any disparities between targets and actual achievements. This valuable method identifies where a program is heading, how it will get there, and whether its resources are being used in the most cost-effective manner.

Using project evaluation, we identify what is positively and/or negatively influencing target groups, individual households, institutions and the overall environment. This allows us to better understand the extent to which project goals have been achieved and what impacts the project results have had in general and on the target group in particular.

Strong knowledge and understanding of economic growth policy and good governance helps us to adequately evaluate the situation and improve results.

EAST JERUSALEM

This year, we completed implementation of the EU framework project entitled EU East Jerusalem Programme Evaluation, under a consortium led by B&S Europe, which was focused on assessing the achievements and overall quality of the EU East Jerusalem Program in the context of the EU's evolving cooperation policy with an increasing emphasis on results-oriented approaches and the contribution towards the fulfillment of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Accordingly, we searched for evidence of why, whether, and how the EU's intervention has led to satisfactory results, and also identified the factors enhancing or hindering progress in this regard.

JORDAN

As part of a consortium led by B&S Europe under the Services for the Implementation of External Aid (SIEA) 2018 EU Framework Contract Lot 3: Human Rights, Democracy and Peace, we conducted a final **evaluation of the support given by the EU to civil society and media in Jordan** and related projects in this regard.

"The EU is a longstanding partner of Jordan and supports the country's endeavor to strengthen democracy through increased participation of citizens in political life and increased independence, quality, and credibility of the media and civil society organizations (CSOs). Through the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI), the EU continuously supports the improvement of the services provided by media and civil society actors in Jordan. This evaluation served to assess the extent to which the implemented activities have achieved the set goals and helped to draw-up lessons learned and provide insights to boost preparation for future actions," said Ms. Tamar Medulashvili, Projects Manager at PMCG.

The main focus of this evaluation was on the assessment and evaluation of achievements, the

The evaluation covered **the assessment of the past performance of 29 completed and ongoing projects** (2013-2018) under the EU program in East Jerusalem, with a focus on its intermediate results (measured against expected objectives), and the reasons underpinning the varying results achieved. The evaluation also included key lessons learned, conclusions, and recommendations aimed at improving current and future actions.

The evaluation will serve as a main tool in future programming and formulation. The main users of this evaluation are the East Jerusalem program's stakeholders, including the EU.

quality and results of action in the context of an evolving cooperation policy with an increasing emphasis on results-oriented approaches and their contribution towards the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The evaluation also elicited information about the impact of the support provided to media and civil society actors in the process of the action and the quality of services provided by the implementing partners, specifically UNESCO, which was in charge of implementing support for media, and the National Center for Human Rights (NCHR), which was in charge of implementing support for civil society in Jordan.



MOLDOVA

We are working on evaluating the EU budget support program for agriculture and rural development in Moldova. This project is funded by the EU and is being implemented by PMCG as part of a consortium led by ADE.

Since 2016, the EU has provided support to rural development and agriculture in Moldova



through the European Neighbourhood Programme for Agriculture and Rural Development (ENPARD), the main goal of which has been to reduce rural poverty. Such assistance is provided to the Moldovan government and to NGOs/C-SOs working directly with communities on the ground.

Through this project, PMCG experts **assess the extent to which the goals of the ENPARD's budget support program have been met**, paying particular attention to its results measured against expected objectives, and the reasons underpinning such results. The evaluation will be conducted using five DAC evaluation criteria (relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability).

The findings of the project will yield lessons learned and corresponding recommendations in order to improve the design and implementation of future budget support programs in the field of agriculture and rural development in Moldova.

TUNISIA

Media play a vital role in the development of countries and the societies therein, making it crucial that media organizations around the world are properly supported. We, as part of a consortium led by B&S Europe, are implementing



an EU framework project in Tunisia entitled Mid-Term and Final Evaluation of the Tunisia Media Sector Support Program.

In order to address the evaluation questions, the project team works to analyze existing program documentation, national policies, the EU's strategic framework and related projects funded by the EU or other donors. Moreover, the emphasis is placed on observing the impact of various implemented projects on the various targeted beneficiaries.

The evaluation and lessons learned are important with respect to future actions of the Government of Tunisia, the Delegation of the EU to Tunisia, and the various partners of the program.

UKRAINE

We, as part of a consortium led by B&S Europe, together with GOPA under the EU Framework Contract SIEA Lot 3: Human Rights, Democracy and Peace, assessed the outcomes of the action Communicating Europe in Ukraine (CEIU) and **delivered a strategic vision, intended to ensure more effective and sustainable communication of the European Union (EU) in Ukraine.**

Existing local, international, as well as Russian media channels greatly influence the image of the EU in Ukraine, particularly in its eastern regions. Accordingly, the activities of the EU are perceived disparately among different groups of people. Findings and recommendations of this evaluation will contribute to improved communication about the EU's support to Ukraine.

"In the context of EU-Ukraine cooperation, in order to support its policy priorities, the EU is

investing resources in developing strategic communications. In this sense, our main objective was to help the EU develop impactful communications. Through measuring and evaluating different aspects of EU communications, we were able to advise the EUD, and other main actors involved, on how to develop stronger communications and achieve greater influence," said Ms. Bianca Baumler, Consultant at PMCG.



WORLDWIDE

In 2020, PMCG, as part of a consortium led by B&S Europe, completed a project under the EU Framework Contract Lot 3 entitled Mid-term Evaluation of the Framework Partnership Agreements (FPAs) and Their Corresponding Specific Grant Agreement, which was aimed at **advancing collaboration between the European Commission and CSOs worldwide.**

The project included conducting of a mid-term evaluation of the FPAs signed between the EC and CSOs, and corresponding grant agreements (since 2015, a total of 49 such grants have been signed). The EC has developed FPAs with CSOs and associations of local authorities across Africa, Asia, Latin America, and Europe. These partnerships cover a wide array of fields of intervention such as anti-corruption, gender, accountability,

human rights, political and social inclusion or economic empowerment, decentralization, good and inclusive local governance, and decentralized cooperation.

In the course of the evaluation, we **analyzed the quality and the results of relevant FPA actions at that point and presented the findings to EU delegations, member organizations, and other interested stakeholders as part of an evolving cooperation policy with an emphasis on results-oriented approaches.**

The policy is also intended to strengthen representative, membership-based, and actor-based regional and global CSO networks and associations' capacities in delivering vital components of development at global and regional levels.

INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT



Adapting Global
Experience to Fix
Local Challenges

Having in place infrastructure that is both modern and operates smoothly is crucial for countries making the transition towards becoming a developed economy. Such infrastructure creates significant added value and is essential in the realization of economic development.

Hydro power, oil and gas all do more than light up and heat households, they fuel the operations of companies and factories around the world. Vital infrastructure, including roads, railways and other means of transportation, help to deliver raw materials, products and services to regional and world markets.

*From **waste management** to **electricity grids**, and from **logistical hubs** to **water supply**, PMCG's specialists assist clients by providing **technical***

***assistance, feasibility studies and detailed designs necessary** to build the appropriate infrastructure for **sustainable growth**.*

*Our work with governments at all levels, from municipalities to ministries, is focused on helping them to **transform the management of state enterprises and municipal enterprises**, and providing them with the tools needed to develop and create modern organizations that serve the needs of the public.*

*We are actively working on the development of water and wastewater infrastructure, highways, and solid waste landfills among other facilities. We believe that the only way to **create new jobs, reduce poverty and facilitate economic growth**, is to establish proper and reliable infrastructure.*

SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT

We are collaborating with the Solid Waste Management Company of Georgia (SWMCG) to improve waste management in several regions of Georgia. For Kakheti and Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti regions, as part of a consortium led by Fichtner, we are implementing the KfW Integrated Solid Waste Management (ISWM) Programme II – Accompanying Measures. The program **entails the construction of regional sanitary landfills and transfer stations, the closure of existing landfills, as well as pilot projects in recycling and composting.**

In the process, strengthening the SWMCG institutionally is imperative. Hence, we enhanced its human resource management (HRM), strategic planning, and communication capacities in order to ensure the company's effective operation and efficient performance through attracting and retaining high-quality personnel, supporting their continuous professional development, creating a modern working environment, effectively planning and implementing communications and public relations strategies with the municipalities.

"I am very satisfied with the training as a whole, which is, first of all, to the credit of the trainer. The topics were very interesting, and they were discussed in adequate time. This course gave me even more motivation to study further the issues related to personnel management," said Mr. Lasha Khoperia, Deputy Director at the Solid Waste Management Company of Georgia.

As we are certain that clear communication with the local community is key to the project's implementation, we have also conducted public discussions to present the project activities to the local population.

"While today's regulations require the involvement of the population in public decisions, it is important to inform them properly and in a timely manner. Optimal distribution of resources, a proper communication strategy, and well-implemented activities can ensure the realization of this common good," said Ms. Ana Kabzinadze, Communications Consultant at PMCG.

At the same time, since 2016, we, together with

HPC AG (an international engineering company), have been working on an EBRD project in Georgia entitled Kvemo Kartli Solid Waste Management Project – Project Implementation Support Services, which is designed to assist the SWMCG to assess, design, and build a solid waste management facility.



The landfill will serve about 300,000 inhabitants across the following five municipalities of the region: Marneuli, Bolnisi, Dmanisi, Tetrtskaro, and Tsalka.

The project team will also supervise the construction process, with the aim of ensuring punctual and effective construction of a new sanitary landfill. We are engaged in the following work: **elaborating a detailed design for the landfill and all of the necessary auxiliary infrastructure; developing technical requirements; and obtaining approval from the local authorities.** Moreover, we are also helping to prepare the necessary tender documents and support the local government during the procurement process, as well as during the implementation of the contract and construction process.

We are actively working on an **environmental and social impact assessment study**, the scope



of which has already been approved by the Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure of Georgia.

As a result of the conducted meetings, the representatives of the municipalities, non-governmental organizations, and the local population are now deeply aware of the already-implemented activities, developed documents, and upcoming plans regarding the construction of a new regional non-hazardous waste disposal facility in Kvemo Kartli region as well as the employment **opportunities employment that the construction of this facility will create for locals.**

Simultaneously, we work with the Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure (MRDI)

of Georgia, under the UNDP project entitled Development of Performance Management Systems for Street Cleaning and Waste Management Services in 23 Municipalities of Georgia. This collaboration is focused on developing a **performance management system (PMS)** for municipalities to assist local authorities to better plan, manage, assess, and improve service provision, including the cleaning of streets and other public areas, and municipal waste management.

The project team has conducted a baseline study, and will also support the in the process of PMS introduction, including running pilot PMSs in eight municipalities, their replication in 15 municipalities, and the assessment of the impact of PMSs on municipal service delivery.

REGIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT

PMCG cooperates keenly with international development institutions to contribute to regional infrastructure development, which we believe is one of the most essential contributors to a country's overall economic development.

We work with Temelsu and Hill International – an American construction consulting firm – as part of the Asian Development Bank's (ADB) Urban Services Improvement Investment Program, which envisions supervision of construction/rehabilitation works on water and sewerage systems as well as a wastewater treatment plant. The project team has been working together with the United Water Supply Company of Georgia (UWSCG) to provide construction supervision

services regarding rehabilitation and renovation works on the water supply and sewage systems in four towns of Georgia.

About 200,000 residents across the four towns will benefit from gaining modern and improved water supply systems by the end of the project.

We believe that presenting updates concerning the construction of new water supply systems, the installation of pumping stations, the arrangement of water supply pipes and distribution networks, the construction of a new reservoirs, and the metering of hundreds of apartments to the representatives of the municipalities and the local population are all of fundamental importance. Therefore, we conduct public discussions to introduce upcoming plans to local residents.

“Meeting with the local population about the project is very important as informing the public about the goals and benefits of the project, and providing them with technical details and deadlines for the implementation are integral parts of our activities. In addition, we also present a grievance and redress mechanism (GRM) to the communities, and highlight their rights and roles under this mechanism,” said Ms. Ketevan Chubabria, Consultant in Social Safeguards at PMCG.



SOLAR ENERGY

As part of a consortium led by RINA, under the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) project we are conducting a study with the purpose of assessing the viability of introducing new renewable energy production in Georgia.

“It is important for Georgia to gradually move toward new, renewable sources of energy. Floating solar PV is a new practice for our country and I hope that this project will be a step forward for Georgia in its efforts to increase the production of renewable energy,” said Zviad Kharebava, Business Sector Consulting Director at PMCG.

We have already examined the feasibility of developing a 50MW floating photovoltaic (PV) plant on the surface of Enguri reservoir, focusing on evaluating the existing market framework and regulations in Georgia, including construction permitting, impact assessment, competitive procurement, and operation, with a particular focus on identifying whether there are sufficient provisions in place for building and operating solar PV plants on water surfaces. **We also highlighted all of the existing gaps that need to be**

addressed for the auctioning, approval, construction, and operation of floating solar PV plants.

We are still working to scrutinize the potential environmental and social risks and considerations of the project including pollution risks and how these could be addressed during the design, construction, and operation of the project, guided by the environmental and social issues outlined in the EBRD’s Environmental and Social Policy of 2019 and its associated performance requirements.



ROADS

This year, as part of a World Bank project led by Antea Netherlands B.V., we finalized a feasibility study and detailed design for the upgrading of the Rustavi – Red Bridge and Rustavi – Sadakhlo roads in Georgia.

These sections are part of the East-West Highway (EWH), which is of great national and international strategic importance. **The EWH project is supposed to transform Georgia into a transport and logistics hub for trade, connecting Central Asia and the Far East with Turkey and Europe.** As is standard procedure, before construction can begin, a feasibility study and detailed design was conducted by the Roads Department of the Government of Georgia.

In the first phase, we analyzed the overall environmental and social impact of the project, taking into account any foreseen positive and

adverse effects, recommending appropriate solutions to minimize undesirable effects, and preparing the resettlement policy framework.

During the second phase of the project, we developed a detailed Resettlement Action Plan (RAP) based on the Resettlement Operation Policy of the World Bank (OP/BP 4.12) and the Resettlement Policy Framework (RPF), which were prepared in the first phase, as well as the relevant



national legislation and procedures specified in these documents. Moreover, we provided procurement and contract management, including preparation of contract documentation and checking of the consistency of technical specifications with BoQ and FIDIC conditions.

“We highly value the cooperation with PMCG,

which played a significant role in the smooth and successful implementation of the project by providing strong local management and logistical support to the project team, as well as by facilitating communication with the client and beneficiary;” said Richard Smallegange, Director International at Antea Nederland B.V.

DAM INFRASTRUCTURE

We have been collaborating with state-owned company Georgian Amelioration, under the World Bank project entitled Independent Dam Safety Assessment and Design & Author’s Supervision of Dams Safety Activities for Algeti & Sioni Dam, as part of a consortium led by Temelsu.

We have already completed the core elements of the project, which entailed inspections of Algeti and Sioni dams, which feed Kvemo Samgori and Tbilisi-Kumisi irrigation systems, the evaluation of their appurtenances and performance history, and the preparation of dam safety assessment reports in accordance with World Bank policies.

In pursuit of the project objectives, **we implemented dam safety measures, procuring the equipment recommended in the assessment, we installed an automated dam monitoring system, and we established an early warning system and associated preparedness plan.** This collaboration also included a capacity assessment of local authorities and the training of operational and management staff in dam safety.

The recommendations issued on remedial and safety-related measures will serve as an important guide to upgrade these dams to an acceptable standard of safety.



WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE (WASH)

This year, we started the process of **conducting a final evaluation of the EU-funded project entitled "Water for the Poor," which aims to protect and promote the right to health and to adequate living standards of citizens in vulnerable multi-ethnic rural communities** of the Kakheti and Kvemo Kartli regions of Georgia, and has been implemented by the Caucasus Environmental NGO Network (CENN).

This project aimed to enhance the well-being of vulnerable groups in multi-ethnic communities, especially women and youth in these two regions of Georgia through introducing the water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) regulatory system and services, as well as ensuring social and environmental justice, protection of human rights, solidarity, integration, non-discrimination, and prevention of water conflicts and marginalization in these multi-ethnic rural communities. Moreover, it sought to strengthen the capacity of these groups and respective local community institutions regarding WASH, and to encourage them to advocate their right to health and adequate living conditions.

We started working on the feedback as to the extent to which project goals had been achieved and to determine what impacts the project has had in general, and on the target groups in particular. Indeed, by applying relevant tools, we have been assessing the efficiency and effectiveness of the project, and identifying what has positively and/or negatively influenced its target groups.

"In vulnerable communities of Georgia, the management of WASH is poorly regulated while universal access to clean water and sanitation is one of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals that make up the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This project was designed to bring about tangible results in Kakheti and Kvemo Kartli regions in this regard. We are measuring the project's impacts, detecting its challenges and highlighting any disparities between targets and actual achievements, which can serve as an important guide for future improvements in this direction," said Ms. Salome Napetvaridze, Project Manager at PMCG.



CORPORATE DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT CONSULTING

Facilitating

High-performance

and Profitability

for sustainable Growth



Companies turn to PMCG for sound advice on **raising capital investment** as well as **market expansion and development**. We help executives to make better decisions by using our experience and networking to support companies to make the best choices when faced with challenges and opportunities.

While we do work with **large corporations**, we also actively collaborate with **small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)**, as we believe that they are key drivers of economic development. From **international standards certification to corporate expansion**, our consultants provide expert advice in a wide variety of areas, including **business development, financial**

advice and investment, mergers & acquisitions, and market penetration.

Our specialists have hands-on experience in their areas of expertise, which allows PMCG to provide custom-made solutions based on a company's needs.

We have provided SMEs with invaluable insight as they navigate the challenges and opportunities presented by the **Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement (DCFTA)** in the EU's Eastern Neighborhood (Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine).

SUPPORTING GOOD GOVERNANCE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN ARMENIA, GEORGIA, UKRAINE, AND MOLDOVA

In 2020, we became part of the Good Governance Fund (GGF) as a subcontractor of Abt Britain Limited under the Technical Assistance Facility Eastern Partnership (TAF EP). The program is funded by aid from the UK government and aims to **reduce corruption, promote transparent and accountable institutions, and to build open, inclusive economies and societies in Armenia, Georgia, Ukraine, and Moldova** under the TAF EP.

Through this program, we will implement a series of projects oriented toward: reforming the regulation of the business environment and economic governance; conducting institutional capacity-building to develop more effective governance, public administration and management of public finances; conducting anti-corruption measures and judicial reform; modernizing key sectors (such as energy and banking) to support the transition to becoming a market-driven and modern economy and reforming state-owned enterprises; and strengthening media and civil society.

“We believe that our projects across the program’s relevant thematic areas, designed to strengthen the effectiveness of political and economic institutions, will play an important role in enhancing citizens’ quality of life in the targeted countries,” said Nino Chikvanaia, Project Manager at PMCG.

In 2020, we also started working to strengthen the MSME sector in Georgia through the following projects:

Functional analyses and development of a roadmap for state support programs – The project team has been conducting an evaluation (on a macro level) of the state support programs

delivered by the following state agencies: Enterprise Georgia (EG); Georgia’s Innovation and Technology Agency (GITA); and the Agriculture and Rural Development Agency (ARDA). They will accordingly elaborate a five-year roadmap for the implementation of recommendations, and key performance indicators (KPIs) for the modernization of these programs. As a result, the Government of Georgia (GoG) will be better placed to address the MSMEs’ needs and to support them more effectively in overcoming existing challenges presented by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic through increasing their export potential and more efficient organization of state budget spending.

Development of alternative financing for MSMEs - The project team will elaborate assessment reports on the current leasing market, its capacity, existing legal, tax and regulatory environment, and on international best practices. Based on the assessments, they will elaborate the draft strategy to develop the leasing industry in Georgia, accompanied by recommendations and a roadmap. As a result, the project will support the GoG’s commitment to accelerate economic growth by developing a draft strategy for a vibrant leasing industry tool to finance MSME growth and stimulate fixed capital formation in the country.



STRENGTHENING ECONOMIC SECURITY

We, as part of a consortium led by DAI Global, are implementing the USAID-funded program “Economic Security Program in Georgia (GESP)” that focuses on assisting Georgian firms to take advantage of the country’s market access and location to exploit regional economic opportunities and to compete with international rivals on

the domestic market.

Our work focuses on supporting the program in the areas of: **value chain prioritization and gaps assessment; data gathering and analytical work; stakeholder facilitation and engagement activities to promote sector-wide collaboration; gender inclusion; and youth engagement.**

In the course of 2020, we have developed two policy briefs, one on the tourism sector and the other on creative industries in Georgia. Both were focused on identifying key economic policy/regulatory challenges facing the tourism sector and creative industries, and to facilitate dialogue between private and public sectors including a wide spectrum of civil society and political representatives.

“The documents were developed in close cooperation with a wide spectrum of stake-



holders in order to fully study existing problems in both sectors and to find the most appropriate solutions together with them. These policy briefs are very important for Georgia and we believe that they will be actively used as action-oriented tools by potential policy practitioners to eliminate given challenges in both sectors,” said Ms. Ketevan Babiashvili, Consultant at PMCG.

The five-year program will improve the livelihoods of Georgians by generating investment and increased employment in priority sectors and value chains. The program is designed to scale-up the economic impact through collaboration, strategic partnerships, and investments while building alliances within and between the private sector, government, and civil society. The program will facilitate investment and job creation in a number of important ways, including a grant fund to strengthen the eco-system within particular value chains and a partnership fund to spur investment.

IMPROVING COMMERCIAL STANDING

Tbilisi Transport Company (TTC) is one of the largest companies operating in Georgia in the field of transportation, and we are collaborating with it under the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) project entitled “Tbilisi Bus Project - Corporate Development and Stakeholder Participation Programmes,” led by Mott MacDonald CZ - a global engineering, management, and development consulting company.

We are working with TTC **to improve its commercial standing, service, and environmental/social performance** by supporting the identification, implementation, and establishment of the corporate, financial, operational, and environmental/social management standards



required to adhere to the relevant covenants including those in the EBRD’s financing documents. Moreover, we are collaborating to develop a medium-term-focused corporate development program (CDP) and to improve TTC’s corporate planning capacity to assist the ongoing transition towards becoming a self-sustaining entity with commercially sustainable operations, as well as implementing the Environmental and Social Action Plan (ESAP), developed for TTC by the EBRD.

At the same time, we are assisting TTC to implement **a stakeholder participation program aimed at enhancing public ownership by encouraging the use of public transport, increasing public participation in the provision of public transport services, and raising public awareness about issues related to project implementation.**

The project seeks to enhance TTC institutionally, and should ensure that it obtains a medium-term CDP and boosts its corporate planning capacity, all of which should have a positive impact on TTC becoming a self-sustaining entity with commercially sustainable operations.

PMC RESEARCH

Using Policy

Research to Promote

Economic Liberty and

Prosperity



Research-based policymaking is a fundamental part of a legal and regulatory framework that promotes long-term, sustainable development. Open and results-oriented **public discussion** is also an invaluable component of **good governance**, as evidence-based policy contributes to **well-informed decisions** through which the best available option(s) are selected for policy development and implementation. At the same time, profound studies provide valuable information for **businesses and financial institutions** to support them to make **savvy and effective decisions**.

With this in mind, we decided to create an independent subsidiary – PMC Research – in 2010.

PMC Research is an **award-winning think tank** that aims to facilitate **economic and social development** by analyzing the most challenging policy areas in **Eurasia**, including **public policy, international trade and investment, SME development, labor market and migration, education and social policy, and democracy and civil society**.

By combining our methodological and policy expertise, we elaborate **research-based policy options** that are focused on **transparency, economic development, freedom, and prosperity**.

We conduct comprehensive research and provide policy recommendations to **central and local governments**. Our work is supported by various international and government institutions, including the **United States Agency for International Development (USAID)**, the **United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)**, the **European Commission (EC)**, the **Open Society Foundation (OSF)**, the **International Visegrad Fund**, the **Emerging Markets Forum**, the **Konrad Adenauer Foundation**, the **Savings Banks Foundation for International Cooperation (SBFIC)**, the **State Commission on Migration Issues of Georgia**, the **Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic**, the **Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Estonia**, and the **Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Poland**.

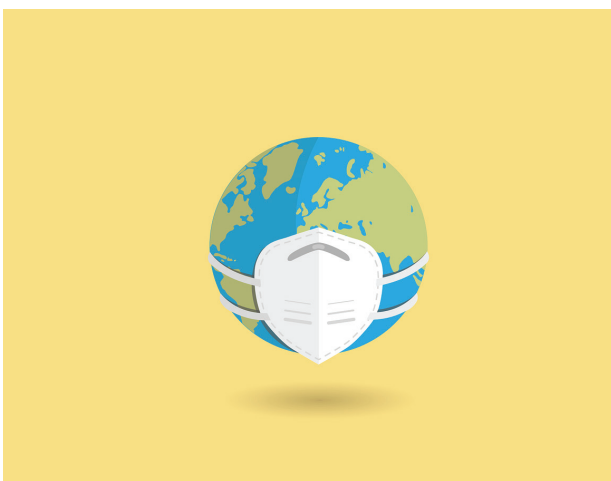
Based on quantitative and qualitative data analyses, the Center publishes a variety of research outputs, including policy papers and policy briefs as well as the following periodic publications: the monthly newsletter **Economic Outlook and Indicators** which analyzes various facets of Ukraine's and Georgia's socioeconomic development; the monthly bulletin entitled **Monthly Tourism Update**; the quarterly document **Georgian Economic Climate** in cooperation with the **ifo Institute for Economic Research (Germany)**; and the semiannual publication **Black Sea Bulletin** in cooperation with the **Institute for Economic Research and Policy Consulting (Ukraine)**.

Dialogue is, naturally, a crucial part in the process of introducing new initiatives, programs and reforms. Therefore, together with our partners, we have developed a platform from which to **stimulate constructive and systematic policy debate that establishes cooperation practices among different political and social groups**. Through this approach, during the ten years of PMC Research's existence so far we have organized **more than 65 public debates**, bringing together a wide range of stakeholders oriented toward finding ways to arrive at optimal decisions with respect to **policy planning, design and implementation**. In addition, the Center is constantly making efforts to expand its international network. In 2019, PMC Research became a member of the **Trans European Policy Studies Association (TEPSA)**, which unites some of the leading European research institutes working on European affairs. Furthermore, PMC Research joined the **CAREC Think Tanks Network**, deepening its collaboration with the leading think tanks of the CAREC member countries. In 2020, PMC Research became a member of **Atlas Network**, a highly effective global network that contributes to making the world freer, and more prosperous, transparent and accountable.

We also firmly believe it is important in our work to **promote and support young researchers** who have bold and innovative ideas. Cooperating with our partners, we have managed to identify a number of talented early-career researchers and have given them the chance to study and discuss key challenges facing society today.

POLICY RESPONSES TO COVID-19

The year of 2020 turned out to be immensely challenging for the whole world. As a public health crisis struck, tight restrictions were imposed to limit the spread of the virus, with severe effects on the global economy. The COVID-19 pandemic, and the ensuing economic shock, has prompted governments all around the globe to act swiftly and decisively to mitigate the health and economic impacts of the crisis. Throughout the year, we have researched the impacts of the pandemic on a wide variety of policy sectors, governance, and economic activity. Our research has included the effects of the pandemic on education, migration, fiscal policy, foreign direct investment (FDI), employment and income, and tourism. We also analyzed government responses to the pandemic at central and local levels in Eastern Europe, the Balkans, the Caucasus, and Central Asia.



Later in the year, we launched the GIZ project entitled “Research of Good Practices and Moderation of Virtual Events at Municipal Level in Times of COVID-19,” which was **designed to share experiences and innovative solutions efficiently across regions in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic in the areas of health, business, and governance**, so that cities in GIZ’s Connective Cities Network (which unites cities from Germany, Southeast Europe, MENA, sub-Saharan Africa, Asia, and Latin America), could better prepare for the effects of the pandemic, and boost the effectiveness of their responses to its spread locally.

“The COVID-19 pandemic has created a universal problem, which affects the whole world. Thus, during this global crisis, it is especially crucial to share innovative and effective solutions in different fields quickly to as many countries as possible. This project will ensure the effective dissemination of good practices in response to the COVID-19 pandemic at municipal level and will play a huge role in tackling this global challenge,” said Piotr Zuber, team leader of the project.

We developed criteria for the selection of municipalities, which were chosen on account of their good practices. Meanwhile, the team identified and analyzed the good practices and positive experiences in the project countries in the fields mentioned above. We also mobilized representatives of cities from partner countries to participate in virtual events and to present their own good practices and project ideas.

EMERGENCE AND DEVELOPMENT OF DIGITAL PLATFORMS

Going digital is inevitable for development, especially following the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2020, in response to the Civil Service Bureau’s initiative to create a unified online learning platform for civil servants, we started working on a project under the UNDP’s

“Supporting Public Administration Reform of Georgia Program” to **assess the digital learning readiness of civil servants in Georgia.**

We reviewed the legal framework and the existing mechanisms of professional development for civil servants in Georgia, analyzed the

obstacles limiting their effectiveness, and conducted in-depth interviews and focus group discussions with relevant stakeholders and civil servants **to better understand the potential challenges that could arise from a shift to online learning among ethnic minority groups.** Furthermore, the study included a large-scale phone survey of civil servants to assess civil servants' digital competence and readiness, and ultimately produce actionable recommendations for the development of an effective online learning platform for civil servants.

“The soon-to-be-established online platform for distance learning will offer an opportunity to harmonize all resources prepared by local and international organizations for the professional development of Georgia’s civil servants. Specific mechanisms and incentives need to be put in place to ensure that the potential benefits of distance teaching are realized in practice. Therefore, our research is very timely, as we aim to provide concrete recommendations based on a synthesis of perspectives gathered from different stakeholders as well as a review of international experience,” said Ms. Maya Komakhidze, Researcher at PMC Research.

The importance of digital solutions has become apparent in nearly all fields of human activity, and

agriculture is no exception. Increasing farmers' access to technology represents a crucial step toward **strengthening the agricultural sector** in Georgia. In collaboration with the Georgian Farmers Association (GFA) under the USAID Zrda Activity in Georgia, which is implemented by Chemonics International, we developed a comprehensive business plan for the mobile application spin-off company – Agronavti – which is a platform on which farmers can market their products to potential buyers. This business plan was introduced in order to contribute to avoiding the platform's inherent operational subsidy through the GFA's donor-financed activities, and to raise capital to guarantee its future growth and long-term sustainability both domestically and internationally by **completing the groundwork to enter markets in nearby countries.**



MIGRATION GOVERNANCE IN CENTRAL ASIA

In the midst of increased human mobility, interaction between migration and development is closely intertwined. Thus, we believe that examining how migration affects development in sending and destination countries, and ascertaining how these processes can be better managed is crucial. While mounting evidence shows some advantages of local governments in leveraging the developmental benefits of migration, in many developing countries, including those of Central Asia, **the extent of engagement of the local authorities in this process** is still marginal.

Correspondingly, supported by the Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation (CAREC) Institute, the PMC Research team examined

migration patterns from the southern rim of Central Asia and analyzed the developmental implications of the sending communities and the migrants themselves, revealed and investigated policy gaps in development-oriented migration management, and ultimately introduced recommendations to **facilitate impactful engagement of local authorities in migration governance.**

“Our study found the following areas to have potential for impactful engagement of local authorities in migration governance: stronger predeparture orientation of migrants; better reintegration services; better use of remittances and diaspora engagement for local

development; and leveraging the potential of mahallas for development-oriented migration management. Accordingly, we offered relevant recommendations on how to insert local governments in these areas of migration

management, in order to increase the wellbeing of migrants and the sending communities,” said Dr. Giorgi Khishtovani, Director at PMC Research.

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING (VET)

This year, we worked under the UNDP project entitled “Supporting the Development of the Skills Agency in Georgia,” which aims to establish the Skills Agency in the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture, and Sport of Georgia, in the form

of a public-private partnership (PPP), which will be in charge of strategy and reform coordination in the Georgian vocational education and training (VET) sector.

In pursuit of project goals, **we formulated a consolidated vision of the role of the Skills Agency in the Georgian VET sector, developed a list of functions that are to be taken over by this agency, created an organizational structure, and developed an annual budget for it as well.**

“The establishment of the Skills Agency will be a completely new stage in the development of vocational education in Georgia, which is of very high importance nowadays to better respond to the existing and future labor market demands,” said Dr. Giorgi Khishtovani, Director at PMC Research.



RURAL SME DEVELOPMENT IN AZERBAIJAN AND GEORGIA

Developing rural finance in the South Caucasus region is essential to overcome poverty in rural areas. Hence, we recommended specific interventions by the Savings Banks Foundation for International Cooperation (SBFIC) to **advance the agricultural sector and rural SMEs in Azerbaijan and Georgia, by enhancing their economic opportunities and supporting rural finance development.** Our recommendations included both capacity development strategy and the establishment of a coherent strategic intervention framework.

In pursuit of project goals in the first stage, the existing state strategies regarding the development of the agricultural sector and rural SMEs in

Georgia were analyzed. Then the main constraints for rural SMEs’ development in Georgia and Azerbaijan related to access to finance, skills development (financial literacy and management skills), and value chain development were all investigated. Thereafter, based on the analysis of state strategies and existing constraints for rural SMEs’ development, strategic directions for the SBFIC were identified and respective actions were defined.

Later, we described state and donor interventions according to the prioritized actions, analyzed the existing gaps between these actions and interventions of the state and the donor organizations, and issued respective recommendations for the SBFIC for both countries.

TRADE POLICY

Trade is one of the most important drivers of the economy. Crucially, the free trade agreements (FTAs) that Georgia has signed with the European Union, China, Turkey and other countries, are effective tools when it comes to facilitating trade relations and will consequently have a significant impact on Georgia's economic development trajectory. With this in mind, we, together with the Konrad Adenauer Foundation, under the project "Public Policy Discussion and Dialogue Platform," analyzed the **economic effects and their possible long-term political consequences at this stage in order to make informed decisions in the future.**

We also conducted research entitled "Relations between China, the European Union and Georgia: Analysis of Economic and Political Relations," the goal of which was **to analyze the economic and political ties between China and Georgia, as well as between Georgia and the EU**, covering the following key issues: the deepening of China-Georgia economic relations and the possi-

ble impact on Georgia's political relations with the West; identification and analysis of the economic consequences of the China-Georgia FTA; and identification and analysis of the economic consequences of the EU-Georgia DCFTA.

Based on the research findings, conclusions and recommendations were composed regarding options for future action to expand and enhance the possible benefits of such agreements.



RURAL COMMUNITIES DEVELOPMENT: CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT, EMPLOYMENT, AND YOUTH INCLUSION

In the high mountainous regions of Georgia, locals face many challenges in their daily lives, many of which are associated with poverty and unemployment. In order to promote rural development, for several years now, we, together with Caritas Czech Republic and the Croatian Rural Development Network, have been implementing a project entitled Promotion of Rural Development and Diversification in Khulo Municipality, and, together with Care Austria and the Austrian Development Agency (ADA), the project entitled Support to the Development of Livelihoods in Disadvantaged Rural Regions of Georgia – Mestia/Samegrelo - Upper Svaneti Region/ Both projects were launched by the European Union (EU).

PMC Research has been implementing **the EU-LEADER/Community-Led Local Development (CLLD) methodology in both of the regions to bring together local government officials, farmers, CSOs, youth groups,**

business owners and other active community members, and to unite them under a local action group (LAG) – a platform for identifying challenges and encouraging locals to play a key role in the development of their respective territories.

In Khulo municipality, after institutionalizing the LAG and conducting capacity-building activities, its members developed the Local Development Strategy (LDS), which has provided a framework to support the socio-economic development of the municipality and to improve the quality of life of its residents, and elaborated a tourism development plan. In the course of the project, a rural development grant competition was launched as well, and this year we conducted training courses for the beneficiaries of these grants in financial accounting, business management, and digital marketing, enabling them to boost their businesses.

Meanwhile, LAG members in Mestia municipality have developed the Local Development Strategy (LDS) for 2020-2024, and we have supported and assisted them in various directions including gender and diversity and environmental protection, while providing them with key inputs to align the LDS with national policies. We have also worked with the LAG to establish a grant scheme to fund priority actions set by the LDS, and strengthened the capacity of its executive board to coordinate, monitor, and manage the implementation of the strategy. In 2020, we elaborated a report entitled High-Priority Community Problems in Mestia Municipality, enabling locals, including activists to effectively lobby the local and central government authorities to fix common problems, and thus bring about positive changes in their communities. Later, we analyzed the reasons behind citizens' refusal to participate in public deliberation through the General Assembly of a Settlement mechanism in the remote communities of Georgia.

“Implementing LEADER in the rural communities of Georgia changes the lives of the local populations for the better. PMC Research enhances the bottom-up approach for rural development through strengthening local action groups in Khulo and Mestia municipalities. Furthermore, our experts provide on-job



guidance and training for small and medium business owners funded within the framework of the projects to ensure their sustainability,” said Tengiz Sultanishvili, the project coordinator in Khulo and Mestia.

Meanwhile, with the support of the Youth Agency, we are implementing the project Supporting an Inclusive Youth Policy by Establishing Sustainable Youth Platforms and Promoting Non-formal Education in Racha, in the course of which we have already established the Youth Assembly in Racha-Lechkhumi and Kvemo Svaneti region, which conducts various activities dedicated to **providing youth with opportunities, experiences, and the necessary theoretical and practical skills and competencies to support their full and successful integration into society.** Such efforts are designed to enable them to get involved in decision-making processes at the local level through civic engagement mechanisms.

Having accumulated sound experience of promoting rural development, we have also supported monitoring and evaluation of other related projects implemented in Tsalka and Dedoplistskaro municipalities.

“We believe our examination of how much the project was able to achieve its objectives, which included strengthening locally-led community development, enhancement of skills and capacities of LAG members, and increased the access of households to social, environmental, and economic services, will serve as important grounds for local governments, ENPARD, and various project managers to enhance the performance of current and future LEADER/CLLD projects,” said Dr. Larry Dershem, Practice Lead in M&E at PMCG.

BUSINESS SOPHISTICATION IN RURAL AREAS

We are certain that the development and promotion of clusters in regions is beneficial for private sector enhancement, as it can boost productivity and advance innovation. As part of the “EU

Innovative Action for Private Sector Competitiveness in Georgia (EU IPSC)” program, which is a joint initiative of the European Union and four UN agencies (the United Nations Development

Programme (UNDP); the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO); the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO); and the International Organization for Migration (IOM)), at first we conducted a diagnostic study of two clusters - marine fishing, and processing and the preservation of fruits and vegetables – in the Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti region of Georgia. We then started working on two clusters in two other regions of Georgia: the processing and preservation of fruits and vegetables cluster in Guria; and the poultry cluster in Kvemo Kartli.

“Referred to as agglomeration economies earlier **in Alfred Marshall’s works, business cluster development has recently been recognized as an important concept with respect to stimulating entrepreneurial competitiveness and sustainable economic development. As of**

today, with the concept being at an emerging stage in Georgia, our comprehensive study, which identifies the potential for prioritized business clusters’ development, will play a crucial role in strengthening the competencies and capacities of state and private entities in enhancing their understanding of the clustering approach and its benefits,” said Mr. Gaga Abashidze, Consultant at PMC Research.

We described both the history and existing reality of these clusters, analyzed business operations within them, developed cluster maps, and then elaborated short-term objectives as well as a long-term visions for the development of these clusters, all of which can **boost entrepreneurship and business sophistication by strengthening the capacities of government and local entities to develop and operate clusters.**

GEORGIAN BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

With the aim of analyzing the business climate in Georgia, since 2019 we, together with the ifo Institute for Economic Research (one of the leading economic research institutes in Europe) and the Business Association of Georgia (BAG), have been working on the BAG Index, the BAG Employment Barometer, and the BAG Investment Survey.

The quarterly BAG Index, Employment Barometer, and the biannually published BAG Investment Survey aims to assess the business environment in Georgia, as well as to outline future expectations of the private sector and to evaluate their planned responses to the changing environment.

“When we started thinking about developing the BAG Index, we thought that learning from the experience of the ifo Institute, which has been preparing this kind of index for many years in Germany, would be vital. The BAG Index measures sectoral levels, namely construction,

trade, manufacturing, and service. One of the main components of the BAG Index is ascertaining how association members assess the changing business environment,” said Ms. Sopho Basilidze, Researcher at PMC Research, who added that “the index covers the largest Georgian companies, and their assessment is critically important in identifying the major challenges facing the Georgian economy.”



CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Empowering

Progress

The COVID-19 pandemic has thrown down the gauntlet to the company's operations, however we shown unwavering preparedness and resilience to counter global social challenges. Our flexibility has allowed us to shift and briskly adapt to new circumstances regarding the management of the workplace during such an unprecedented crisis. Before state restrictions were even imposed, we were already encouraging employees to work remotely in the interests of their own health and safety, and to avoid transmission of the virus.

On the other hand, we have been cognizant of probable feelings of stress, fear, and nervousness among our team members owing to such rapid changes in lifestyle and the general uncertainty surrounding the pandemic. With their wellbeing firmly in mind, we have supported them physically and emotionally, inviting psychologists and yoga masters to conduct training sessions to manage any possible stress and anxiety.

In addition, the most fundamental component of our CSR efforts entails enhancing the company's working conditions year on year. As our staff are clearly essential to the company's success, their professional growth is given top priority. We respect and value our employees, not only by ensuring equal opportunities, but also by boosting their career prospects.

In 2017, we launched the Employee Personal Development Program within which, on a yearly basis, each team member

prepares an individual plan based on their own personal development needs and desires. Subsequently, to help them to reach their stated goals, we provide funds for substantial actions that may include training sessions, workshops, and seminars. Meanwhile, the achievements of this particular program have gained widespread recognition and PMCG was honored to be named a "Responsible Employer" in Georgia's Responsible Business Awards 2018 (known as Meliora).

"We are happy that our Employee Development Program was acknowledged among other deserving initiatives. As for the consulting company itself, it's more important for us to have educated professionals on board, as they are major assets for us. We believe that the only way to gather such people is to create an environment where everyone has an equal opportunity to develop and grow," said Marika Gogoladze, Human Resources Manager at PMCG.

We are certain that our devoted approach to personnel is something that boosts the company's resilience. With that in mind, despite the ongoing global crisis, in 2020 the number of our in-house staff increased by 8%.

Furthermore, we continue to provide direct care, public advocacy, family support services, and training to under-18s through a partnership with First Step Georgia, which is an organization focused on enhancing the quality of life for children with special needs. By providing financial support to them, we play a small but meaningful role in protecting their



rights and equal status in the community. Because the year of 2020 turned out to be even more challenging for the organization than usual in terms of soliciting funds, we provided it with some additional financial support.

Parallel to supporting governments and communities by delivering simple, comprehensive, and progress-oriented services, we go the extra mile by using our expertise to empower youth, thereby ensuring progress for generations to come.

We know that providing young people with developmental support is key to securing an effective and sustainable future for the country. Moreover, we are certain that youth play a crucial role in steering progress, especially in developing countries. Accordingly, we are determined to continue empowering young people by assisting them to obtain high-quality education.

With this in mind, we launched our scholarship program in 2015 and since then we have continuously financed students to complete their studies in master's programs at top-tier universities, and the year of 2020 has been no exception.

"I am sincerely honored to have been selected as the recipient of a PMCG scholarship. I want to thank the company for this kind and important contribution. This scholarship has reduced

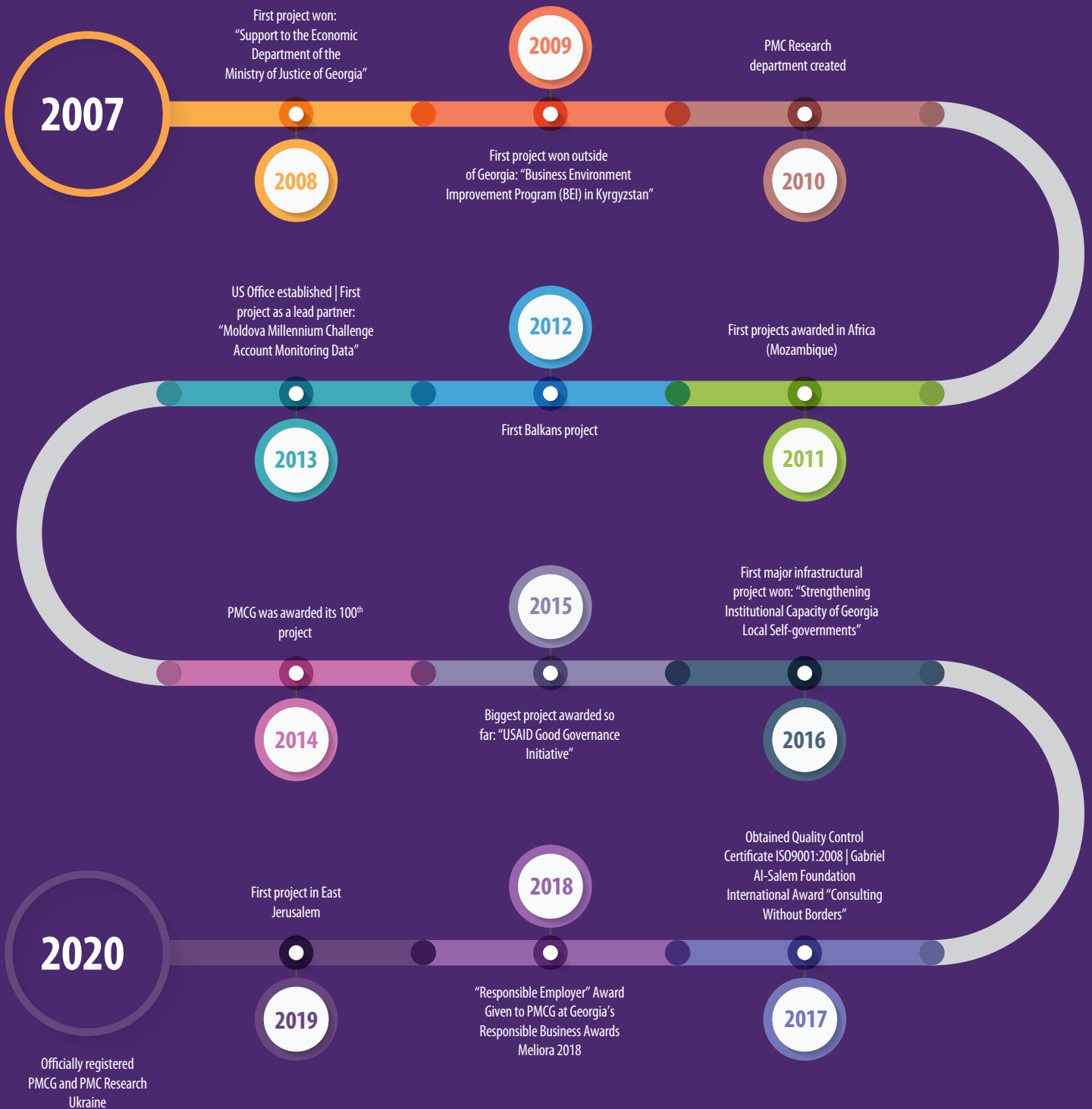
my financial burden and, accordingly, allowed me to focus on my study and put all my energy into doing well in my classes. I hope one day I will be able to help other students to achieve their goals just as you have helped me," said Ms. Mariam Gogotchuri, one of this year's scholarship recipients.

"Since becoming a university student, I have taken on many duties and faced many difficulties. However, PMCG gave me the opportunity to enjoy my academic experience and appreciate student life. With its financial support, PMCG motivated me to be as supportive as they are in terms of helping others in the future," said Ms. Ana Chkhartishvili, one of this year's scholarship recipients, who also added that "I believe that supporting students to gain high-quality education is the most important thing for every country's further development and progress."

We have also affirmed our commitment to CSR by becoming a member of the United Nations Global Compact, the world's largest corporate sustainability initiative. By joining this network, we confirmed that our strategies and operations align with universal principles on labor, human rights, anti-corruption, and the environment.

"It's a great honor to become a part of this initiative and to contribute to making the world more sustainable and transparent. We believe that being responsible is the only way for companies to operate in the modern world. At the same time, this is a source of motivation for our team to take action to advance societal goals and reach tangible results," explained Ms. Tamar Japaridze, Executive Director at PMCG.

PMCG'S MILESTONES 2020



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