



Transitions for transformation

“The country is unfortunate not because it is poor but because it does not have knowledgeable, open-minded and spirited individuals”.

Ilia Chavchavadze

How can we be ready for the unexpected in the 21st century education system? More specifically, what does it mean to be prepared and well-equipped with the most demanded skills in this rapidly changing environment, in the so-called VUCA world? What is the role of occupational therapists in this broader landscape? We would like to review the aforementioned topics with respect to the Georgian context. In particular, we will focus on a system in transition that strives to become resilient through the development of an appropriate skills ecosystem that is accessible to all.

For this to happen, it is fundamental that existing top-down management structures transform into people-centered, decentralized educational institutions.

Our input will focus on the impact of global trends on skills development in Georgia, which triggers the transition process of education system at macro, meso and micro levels; Apart from that, the challenges that make the development process fragile and the need for engagement of occupational therapists in the development of an inclusive system in Georgia.

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Marika Zakareishvili, Inclusive Education &TVET expert

Marika Zakareishvili is a TVET and inclusive education expert with more than 17 years of working experience in Georgian public institutions and international organizations. In the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia, she has been working in different managerial positions, i.a. as a director of the Norwegian-Georgian project to support the implementation of inclusive education in the VET system of Georgia as well as the deputy head of the VET development department. During these years, she has been on policymaking and implementation levels cooperating with the stakeholders from the public, private as well as non-governmental sectors. Apart from that, she has been teaching in the fields of inclusive education and VET at the Tbilisi State University, Ilia State University, University of Georgia and Batumi State University. Furthermore, she is the co-author of the first MA program in Special Education in Georgia at Ilia State University. Currently, she has been working for the GIZ PSD TVET SC program as a TVET education advisor. She has been doing her PHD at Ilia State University in the Faculty of Business, Technologies, and Education.

Tamar Kitiashvili

Tamar Kitiashvili has over 20 years of experience working in public and private sector as well as for international organizations in the fields of vocational education and skills development, human resource development and international relations; she worked for United Nations Development Programme (UNDP Georgia) and German Corporation for International Cooperation (GIZ).

Ms. Kitiashvili held the position of Deputy Minister of Education and Science between 2019-2021. Prior to this, Ms. Kitiashvili was the Head of the Vocational Education Development Department at the Ministry of Education and Science, Head of the National Authorization Council and a vocational teacher.

She holds a Vocational degree in Journalism from Media and TV Art College, a Bachelor's degree in Law and Economics (German-language faculty) from the Georgian Technical University and Lüneburg University (Germany). Ms. Kitiashvili also holds a Master's degree in Psychology from the Tbilisi State University.

In July 2021 Ms. Kitiashvili was elected as the General Director of Skills Agency by the members of the supervisory board of the Agency, representing private and public sectors.

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