

Agricultural Transformation Through Stronger Vocational Education (ATTSVE)

Executive Summary

Synopsis: Agriculture remains an essential sector to support economic growth and poverty alleviation in Ethiopia. Numerous national government policies and initiatives as well as other donor initiatives have recently agreed that the next phase of economic growth must involve the evolution of Ethiopian agriculture from one that is subsistence-based to one that is becoming increasingly market-oriented. To achieve this, the Government of Ethiopia (GoE) has adopted a series of occupational standards and, under the auspices of the National TVET Strategy, called for a modernization of the Ethiopian Technical and Vocational Education Training (TVET) institutions to use competency-based programming with a 70:30 balance of skills: knowledge in the outcomes within the academic program. Agricultural TVETS (ATVETs) are now adapting their curricular programming as well as instructional methods and focus to equip their graduates to meet the market-oriented, entrepreneurial and labour market demands of the present and future.

ATVET colleges are largely located in the rural regions, close to the smallholder farming areas. In these areas rural youth, both the males and females, as well as adult women are often an overlooked and underemployed human resource. While ATVETs were established for a large scale training of DAs, the demand for DAs has been largely met; as a result ATVETs have capacity to re-invent themselves to serve new labour demands and opportunities in the rural and agricultural sector (such as training of rural youth; customized programming for women). To do this, there needs to be institutional revitalization as well as targeted, customized retraining or updating of both male and female instructors, administrative leaders, and modernization of the curriculum. Gender equality and environmental sustainability need to be mainstreamed into all trainings and activities to build ATVET capacity for sustainable approaches to agriculture and to meet the needs of both male and female client groups.

The Agricultural Transformation Through Stronger Vocational Education (ATTSVE) project is designed to enhance the capacity of the Ethiopian ATVET system to prepare skilled, competent technical graduates. Four ATVET colleges have been selected for focused training and investment, with the intent that they will become leaders in change, sound institutional management and innovation, while at the same time serving as models for teaching and curriculum reform and demand-driven programming for the ATVET system.

The ATTSVE project is designed to contribute to the national TVET strategy to continue to train development agents (DAs) when required, but to focus on graduating students who are equipped with the practical and theoretical competencies prescribed in the Ethiopian Occupational Standards and that support the national priority of entrepreneurial, market-oriented agricultural production. Under the ATTSVE project, ATVETs will also become reputable providers of modular training as well as customized short-term trainings that meet the unique needs of farmers, rural youth, the agri-industry and the broader rural communities. Training design and delivery will grant specific consideration to the unique needs of women as farmers and female rural youth. As a result of customizing the training modules, the ATVETs themselves will be transformed both through institutional strengthening as well as the maturation and the diversification of their own programme offerings and instructional modalities.

Mentoring and guiding the ATVETs in this six year project will be led by Dalhousie University, in collaboration with the other implementing partners, MEDA (Mennonite Economic Development

Associates of Canada), JUCAVM (Jimma University College of Agriculture and Veterinary Medicine) and McGill University. The project is funded by the Government of Canada by the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development through the bilateral agreement between the governments of Canada and Ethiopia.

The Ultimate Outcome of the project is to “Increase the supply of male and female graduates from agricultural technical and vocational education and training (ATVET) institutions who have the necessary skills and knowledge required by the labour market to develop the commercial agriculture sector in Ethiopia.”

The intermediate outcomes of the project include:

1. INSTITUTIONAL TRANSFORMATION: Increased capacity of four ATVET colleges to implement innovative management strategies and provide high quality training that responds to labour market needs of private and public sector stakeholders active in commercial agriculture;
2. INSTRUCTOR TRAINING AND PROGRAMMING SUPPORT: Increased capacity of ATVET instructors at selected colleges to provide training and services that is gender sensitive and meets the needs of commercial agriculture; and
3. NETWORKING AND LINKAGES: More effective partnerships developed between targeted ATVET colleges and public and private stakeholders in the sectors of agriculture and education

The immediate outcomes of the project include:

1. INSTITUTIONAL TRANSFORMATION:
 - a. Increased ability of four ATVET colleges to design and implement gender-sensitive, sustainable institutional and business management strategies
 - b. Improved infrastructural and information and communications technology (ICT) platforms to facilitate educational service delivery at four ATVET colleges
2. INSTRUCTOR TRAINING AND PROGRAMMING SUPPORT:
 - a. Improved teaching competencies of instructors in pedagogy and specialized discipline topics at the four ATVET colleges
 - b. Increased ability of instructors to develop and deliver outcome based education using a competency-based curriculum that is gender-sensitive and responsive to labour market demands in commercial agriculture sector
3. NETWORKING AND LINKAGES:
 - a. Increased networking skills among ATVET colleges to share sectorial best practices developed through project support
 - b. Increased ability of four ATVET colleges to foster collaborative partnerships with external stakeholders, particularly within the private sector

The project will span five and a half years including both inception mission and wrap-up, from March 2014 to December 2019. The DFATD contribution to the project is approximately \$18 million CAD.

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