

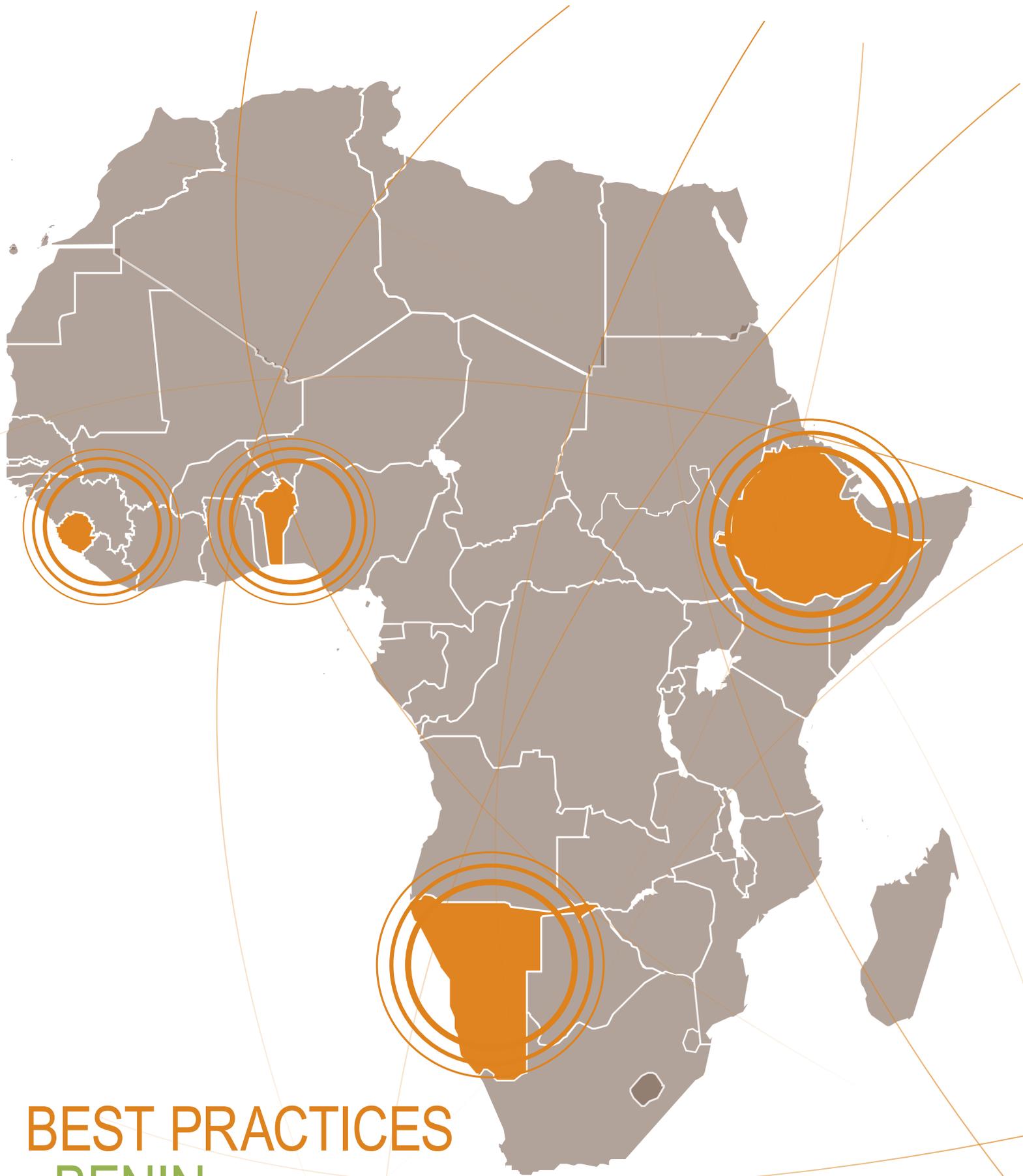


Review of Agricultural Technical Vocational  
Education and Training (ATVET) in Africa -  
Best Practices from Benin, Ethiopia, Namibia and Sierra Leone



CAADP





# BEST PRACTICES

BENIN ETHIOPIA  
NAMIBIA SIERRA LEONE

## Abbreviations

<b>ABCs</b>	Agricultural Business Centres
<b>ACI</b>	African Cashew Initiative
<b>AES</b>	Agricultural Education System
<b>ATVET</b>	Agricultural Technical Vocational Education and Training
<b>AU</b>	African Union
<b>BAPET</b>	Certificate of Proficiency for a Teaching Position at Technical Schools
<b>BMELV</b>	Bundesministerium für Ernährung, Landwirtschaft und Verbraucherschutz (German Ministry of Agriculture)
<b>BMZ</b>	Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung (German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development)
<b>CAADP</b>	Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme
<b>CAPET</b>	Certificate of Proficiency for a Teaching Position at Technical Schools
<b>CBO</b>	Community-based Organisation
<b>CoC</b>	Centres of Competence
<b>COMESA</b>	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
<b>COMPACI</b>	Competitive African Cotton Initiative
<b>CSO</b>	Civil Society Organisation
<b>DA</b>	Development Agent
<b>ECA</b>	Economic Commission for Africa
<b>ECFSP</b>	Emerging Commercial Farmers' Support Programme
<b>ECOWAS</b>	Economic Community of West African States
<b>EOS</b>	Ethiopian Occupational Standards
<b>FAO</b>	Food and Agriculture Organisation
<b>FARA</b>	Forum of Agricultural Research of Africa
<b>FBO</b>	Farmer-based Organisation
<b>FTC</b>	Farmer Training Centres
<b>FFS</b>	Farmer Field School
<b>FODEFCA</b>	Fund for the Development of Further Education and Apprenticeship
<b>FSA</b>	Financial Services Association
<b>FSP</b>	Farmer Support Project

<b>GAFSP</b>	Global Agriculture and Food Security Programme
<b>GAP</b>	Good Agricultural Practice
<b>GDP</b>	Gross Domestic Product
<b>GIZ</b>	Gesellschaft für International Zusammenarbeit
<b>ICT</b>	Information and Communication Technology
<b>IFAD</b>	International Fund for Agricultural Development
<b>IVS</b>	Inland Valley Swamps
<b>KfW</b>	Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau
<b>KIS</b>	Knowledge and Information System
<b>M&amp;E</b>	Monitoring and Evaluation
<b>MESFTPRIJ</b>	Ministry of Secondary Education and technical and Vocational Training, of Conversion and Integration of the Young People (Benin)
<b>MFI</b>	Microfinance Institution
<b>NAIP</b>	National Agricultural Investment Plan
<b>NEPAD</b>	New Partnership for Africa's Development
<b>NDP</b>	National Development Plan
<b>NGO</b>	Non-governmental Organisation
<b>NQF</b>	National Qualification Framework
<b>NTA</b>	National Training Authority
<b>PSIJA</b>	Special Programme for Youth in Agriculture in Benin
<b>PSRSA</b>	Strategic Plan of reactivation of the Agricultural Sector in Benin
<b>RCBP</b>	Rural Capacity Building Programme
<b>RECs</b>	Regional Economic Communities
<b>SSA</b>	Sub-Saharan Africa
<b>SADC</b>	Southern African Development Community
<b>SC</b>	Smallholder Commercialisation
<b>SCP</b>	Smallholder Commercialisation Programme
<b>TVET</b>	Technical Vocational Education and Training
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>UNIDO</b>	United Nations Industrial Development Programme
<b>USAID</b>	United States Agency for International Development
<b>VCD</b>	Value Chain Development

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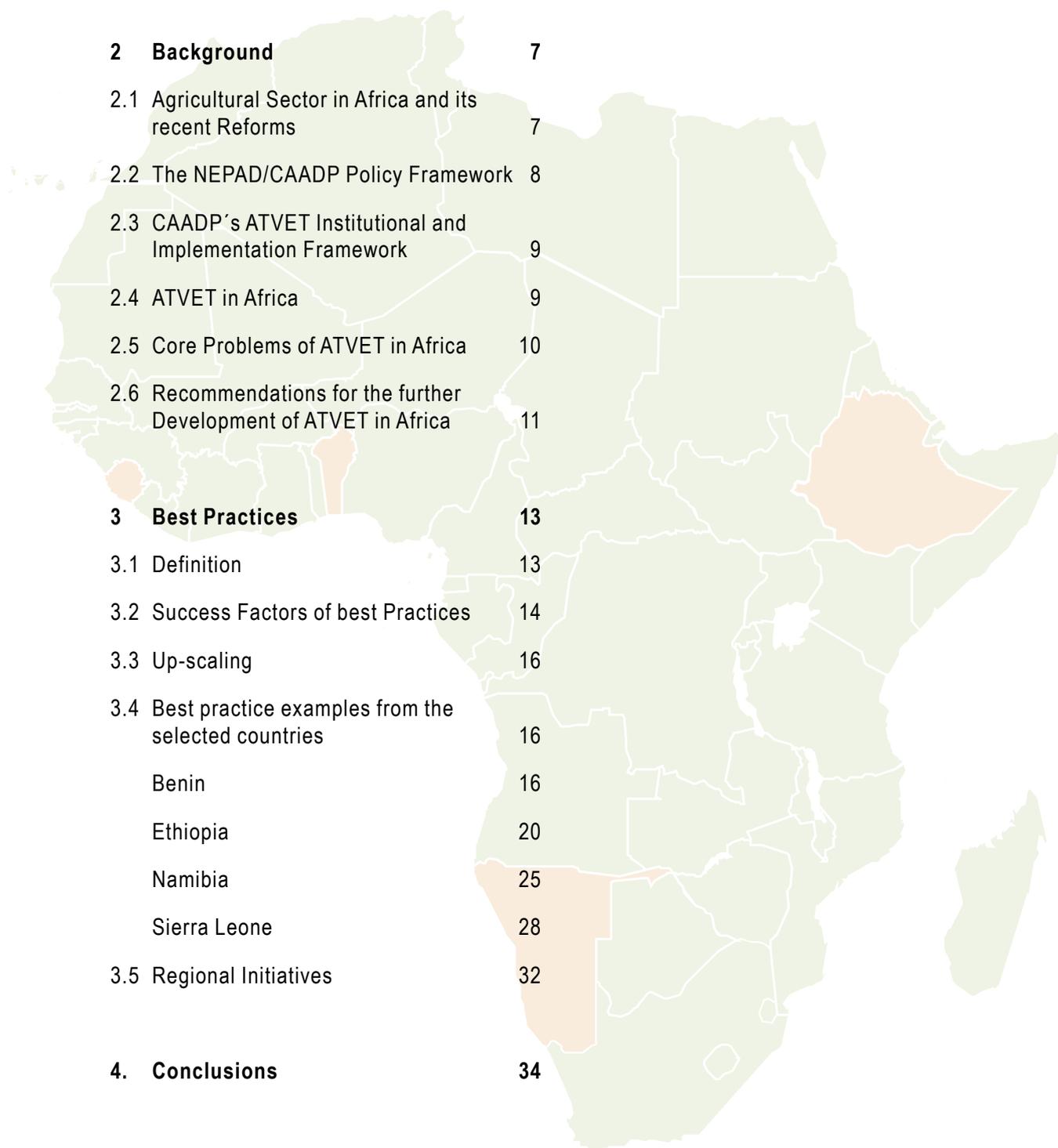
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# 1 Introduction

Within the overall Programme to “Support Pan-African Reform Processes in Agricultural Development (NEPAD/CAADP)”, supported by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), a new project called “Promotion of Technical Vocational Education and Training for the Agricultural Sector in Africa (ATVET)” has been launched by the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD) Planning and Coordination Agency (NPCA) and the CAADP-Secretariat in 2012.

The ATVET project, is supported by GIZ for the next six to seven years, will operate at the continental level, but is initiated at national level in two pilot countries, Ghana and Kenya. The project objective is to integrate agricultural vocational and technical education and training into the CAADP process. The project focus in mainstreaming ATVET in CAADP is threefold:

- Knowledge management and survey of approaches, information and best practices of ATVET in Africa;
- Anchoring of ATVET in the CAADP and AU structures and their promotion programmes
- Development and assessment of pilot qualification measures for farmers, the youth, employers and service providers at national levels.

The project is expected to extend to additional countries during the implementation phase. In order to review existing ATVET activities, to identify best practices and to provide recommendations for further implementation of the GIZ/NPCA ATVET project, four countries were selected for a stocktaking exercise: Benin, Sierra Leone, Ethiopia and Namibia.

As an outcome of this review, a number of opportunities and best practices and also gaps in the ATVET system in the four countries, were identified. This brochure summarises the findings of the study.

## 2 Background

### 2.1 Agricultural Sector in Africa and its recent Reforms

Agriculture remains at the economic base for the majority of the poor and constitutes a key economic sector in most African countries. At the same time the critical role of agriculture in addressing food security and poverty alleviation as the basis for viable and sustainable industrial and socio-economic growth cannot be overemphasised. Advances in agricultural development have to embrace commercialisation and market-orientated growth in an integrated form. The pursuit of increased productivity and overall growth targets, as well as pro-poor agricultural development strategies, should be able to deal with the special needs of rural populations whose livelihoods depend on farming.

Agriculture employs 65 % of Africa’s labour force and accounts for 32 % of the gross domestic product. Although agricultural performance has improved since 2000, agricultural growth is not sustained enough to meet the demand for food security, poverty alleviation and wealth creation. Growth has been mostly

based on area expansion, but land is scarce and many countries are facing limits to further Expansion, therefore, a shift is needed to base growth on productivity. The productivity of agricultural land must increase because African farm yields are among the lowest in the world.

In order to accelerate the process of growth in African agriculture, many governments have started to increase investments in agriculture, following the Maputo Declaration in 2003. In addition, international and private national investments directed towards agriculture during the last 5 to 7 years have increased. The emergence of farmer organisations as a set of civil society organisations that represent and cater for the needs of farmer information and services, plays an increasing role in facilitating the process of development, including capacity building.

Gradually the concepts of new partnerships and public private cooperation are also gaining ground in the agricultural and food sector. In conjunction with public extension services, input supply companies have started to organise private qualification measures often in cooperation with private foundations.



## 2.2 The NEPAD / CAADP Policy Framework

The Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) is a response by the African Governments' to achieve the Millennium Development Goal of halving poverty and eliminating hunger by 2015. It was designed to bring agriculture back to the centre-stage of economic development and to allow the sector to effectively contribute to food, nutrition and income security. Specifically, CAADP aims to reach an annual growth rate of 6% in the agriculture sector in each country through increased, targeted and effective public and private investment. Under the CAADP framework, African governments are encouraged to direct at least 10% of their annual budgetary allocations to agriculture.

To achieve the development goals, CAADP directs investments to four mutually reinforcing pillars:

**Pillar I** - Extending the area under sustainable land management and reliable water control systems

**Pillar II** - Improving rural infrastructure and

trade-related capacities for improved market access

**Pillar III** - Increasing food supply and reducing hunger.

**Pillar IV** - Agricultural research, technology dissemination and adaptation.

National Agricultural Investment Plans (NAIPs) form the roadmap for the CAADP implementation at national levels. They specify the upcoming investments and, at the same time, are monitored by all countries participating in the CAADP process at continental level. The NAIPs set out countries agriculture investment priorities with different programs and investment opportunities outlined for effective implementation. Among the numerous investment opportunities, countries are expected to include investments and prioritising capacity building of farmers and professionals in the agri-food sector.

The CAADP Programme calls for larger investments in agricultural research, extension and education systems, and implies enhancing the capacity of Agricultural Education Systems

(AES) to deliver quality education in agriculture and related topics. It also encompasses developing the capacity to provide technical training in agriculture to meet the demands of farmers.

In the Sustaining CAADP Momentum, the 10-year strategic documents for CAADP in the next 10 years, Outcomes Sought from CAADP seeks to give much more emphasis to farming as a business through 3 outcomes: a) increased productivity; b) increased competitiveness; and c) regional integration. CAADP is focusing on returns to labour, land, water and technology. Making markets work for agriculture will require policy reforms and considerable scope for regional synergies and spill-over in many areas including: agricultural research, education; technologies; input manufacturing and distribution; and mobilising investment finance.

### 2.3 CAADP's ATVET Institutional and Implementation Framework

During the last decade, the Regional Economic Communities (RECs), such as COMESA, SADC, ECA, ECOWAS etc., on the African continent have seen strong leadership and ownership for the implementation of agricultural policies on the continent. Following the subsidiary concept, the number of topics managed and decided in a regional context, including the agricultural and food agenda, are increasing. However, ATVET does not appear in the regional coordination in a systematic way although it has been recognised as an important cross-cutting and value-adding strategy of the CAADP agenda.

The implementation of ATVET makes use of the renewed CAADP implementation processes and the framework for support<sup>1</sup> at the country level. CAADP's knowledge support system for public and business stakeholders, including farmers and commodity associations aims at strengthening analytical skills, relevance and quality in policies, decision making, programmes and the competitive edge in the countries. This framework makes use of support from the RECs and, in turn, the RECs look to NEPAD/CAADP for technical support. A Partnership Platform

<sup>1</sup> CAADP – Sustaining the momentum into the next decade, January 2013 – NEPAD Planning and Coordination Agency



comprising representatives from individual country governments, private sector, CSOs, RECs, donors, and continental institutions is supporting the CAADP process.

Two components of the knowledge support system play a significant role for ATVET implementation:

- The KIS - Knowledge, Information and Skills (comprising learning networks, expert pools, knowledge networks linking available information, and data to policy design).
- Agriculture Education and Training (vocational training, private-public sector drive in competency development, curricula, tertiary education-research links, and internships).

### 2.4 ATVET in Africa

Education, skills development and technical training are central to agricultural production and rural employment in Africa. There is a wide recognition of the urgent need to put African agriculture back on high growth targets to achieve the Millennium Development Goals of poverty and hunger eradication. Recent trends in African agricultural growth are positive. Sustaining these trends depends not only on direct factors that affect agricultural productivity, but also on institutional capacity to design and implement programmes and policies, and on human capacity building on the producer side.

However, from the mid-1990s to the mid-2000s the value of ATVET was greatly overlooked. This is especially true for rural areas, where ATVET could have a significant impact on the lives of the poor by enhancing agricultural skills productivity. Training in agriculture in Africa is mostly not up-to-date and inappropriate to current conditions.

In general, ATVET in Africa is very fragmented

and therefore not integrated into an overall TVET System. In many countries it is given low importance by governments and lacks sufficient financing. In addition, demand and needs of the private sector are not identified and the private sector is not considered as an important stakeholder. Especially considering the fact that an increasing number of farmers in Africa are firmly integrated into supply chains, the interaction and synergies from both public and private employers and service providers would give a greater scope for expansion of ATVET and boost responsiveness to the system.

International companies and global consumers are interested in the participation of small scale farmers into national, regional and global markets. Yet the need to participate in international



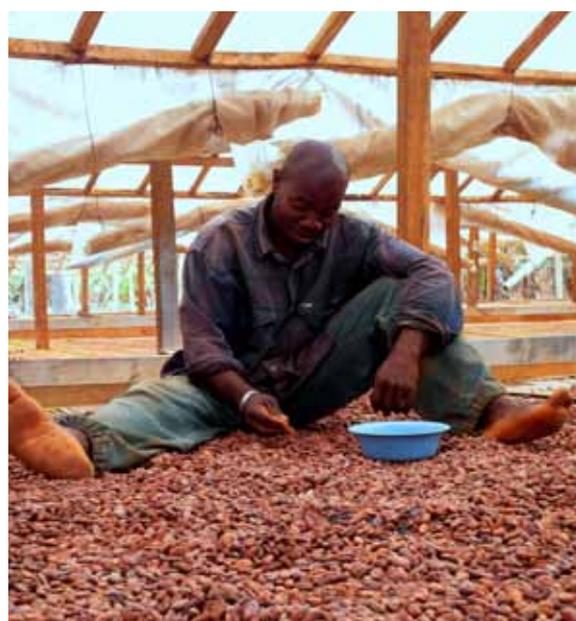
value chains goes along with a tremendous demand for advanced skills and professionalism. International and local companies, donor agencies and private foundations have therefore started to provide training with the aim to integrate African farmers into value chains. Some notable examples are the Competitive African Cotton Initiative (COMPACI), the African Cashew Initiative (ACI), the Sustainable Cocoa Business Project, milk supply in Kenya and Rain-forest coffee from Ethiopia.

## 2.5 Core Problems of ATVET in Africa

Despite many efforts in promoting ATVET in Africa, the continent still lacks technically and professionally qualified human resources flexible enough to effectively respond to fast demand-driven approaches of the agricultural markets. Based on studies and interviews

conducted during this study, the following core problems were identified deterring the ATVET systems in Africa:

- Compared to the progress in developing the general TVET systems, ATVET has only received marginal attention. The limited enrolment capacity of the training institutions excludes a wide portion of the young population from vocational education and training and limits their chances of finding employment in agriculture;
- Fragmented and scattered technical and vocational training delivery that does not meet the needs of the fast growing agricultural and food sector;
- Low capacity, inadequate and outdated training materials and equipment and lack of skilled and qualified trainers in training institutions;
- Teachers and trainers lack practical, pedagogical and didactic skills, and lack technology knowledge and competences to develop curricula;
- Few linkages exist between private and public efforts and between TVET and agricultural universities and research;
- New efforts in rehabilitating training centres and programmes in agriculture tend to rebuild on old systems instead of promoting





innovations and efficient methods;

- The present ATVET is constantly a weak point in the implementation of the National Agricultural Investment Plans (NAIPs) and the CAADP process. National capacities have not been adjusted to NAIP investments in terms of capacities and concepts;
- There is a perception that vocational training is an inferior option to academic studies;
- In general, professional work in agriculture has a negative image compared to technical or office professions.

## 2.6 Recommendations for the further Development of ATVET in Africa

Taking into consideration the identified problems of the existing ATVET systems in African countries, comprehensive solutions will be needed to develop ATVET into a demand-driven system combining education, training, knowledge development and skill-enhancing techniques within the countries' general TVET systems and bringing together public and private players.

It is therefore important to:

- Develop new and innovative models to incorporate agriculture into existing TVET systems or to generate new institutions for agriculture;
- Recognise the need for development of the professional and vocational capacity as a cross-cutting strategy under CAADP. At regional and

continental level, efforts of mainstreaming ATVET and exchanging good practice examples ought to be established within the CAADP mechanism;

- Develop legislative frameworks ensuring and supporting National Qualification Frameworks (NQFs);
- Develop appropriate M&E systems to trace the impact of ATVET in regards to employability of graduates;
- Develop and support new partnership approaches as tested in some value chain programmes;
- Install incentives that encourage private sector participation in ATVET skills development;
- Modernise existing facilities to cope with emerging innovations in training delivery;
- Support linkages between public and private initiatives among research, universities and the ATVET institutions;
- Support the role of farmer organisations in assessing training needs and compiling overviews of available training institutions as well as to lobby for improved or changed curricula and for demand-driven training courses in their country or region;
- Revisit and adopt models that have proved to be effective in generating vocational and professional capacity in other regions or countries (for example the German dual-system of agricultural education with three years of practical-theory mix);
- Transform the ATVET system into "Agri-business" or "Entrepreneurial" training that attracts



more youths and produces better farmers.

On the policy side, four priority areas which need more attention for further improvement of ATVET have been identified:

- Existence of NQFs
- Financing of ATVET in NAIPs
- Integration of non-formal and informal training into formal ATVET
- Flexible mode of delivery and modularisation

For ATVET to reach the youth and women, the following is a summary of important issues raised by young African students and farmers in various studies and interviews:

- Education and capacity-building programmes for rural youth (women and men) must be defined in a more participatory way and focus on agricultural best practices and knowledge sharing;
- Youth platforms (rural youth and young farmer's platforms and councils) must be created to determine training and capacity building needs;

- Trainings on leadership and lobbying should be implemented for rural youth;
- Sensitisation programmes for rural youth on their rights should be put in place;
- The use of innovative information and communication technologies (ICTs) is promoted and provided to rural youth;
- Women and men have equal access to training and education. Gender aspects must be taken into consideration when deciding the themes and setting the timing of these trainings;
- Governments need to earmark and decentralise a significant part of their budget to the agricultural sector of which at least 5% should be allocated to agricultural activities for rural youth and young women;
- Governments and development partners must put the needs and preoccupations of rural youth at the centre of their development policies. This should be done in a participatory manner with the rural youth involvement;
- Rural youth sections within Farmer organisations, national, regional and continental platforms should be put into place.





## 3 Best Practices

### 3.1 Definition

Definitions of Best Practice often focus on the ability of a method or process to consistently show superior results.

**A best practice is a method or technique that has consistently shown results superior to those achieved with other means, and that is used as a benchmark.**

Best practice should also be about using approaches that not only deliver superior results but also consider sustainability and on-going development of the approach. This must include:

#### Consider all stakeholders

A best practice approach looks to find win/win ways to change and improve what is done, respecting the various stakeholders and showing empathy for their situation.

#### Deliver consistent outcomes

A best practice approach uses step-by-step processes to tackle challenges, recording at each stage what works and what doesn't, sharing the results, and then repeating the successful formulae. It looks to create consistency, quality, and repeatability.

#### Minimise resource, maximise results

A best practice approach asks why. It questions what to do and seeks reasons for doing it, both at the strategic and operational level. The goal is to be constantly seeking for the most efficient and effective ways to use available resources.



# SUCCESS FACTORS OF BEST PRACTICES

BENIN ETHIOPIA  
SIERRA LEONE NAMIBIA



## 3.2 Success Factors (Benchmarks) of best Practices

Success Factor	Condition
<b>ATVET is demand orientated</b>	The ATVET System is geared towards improving the competitiveness of the economic sectors through integrated demand driven and competence based ATVET systems / producing a qualified work force responding to labour market demands.
<b>Outcome Based Approach</b>	Create necessary knowledge, information and skills of trainees enabling them to perform according to occupational standards and hence receive certification.
<b>Harmonization with existing National Qualification Frameworks (NQF)</b>	NQF is intended to improve access to work and further learning by ensuring that qualifications are relevant to employment and learning.
<b>Quality and relevance</b>	Effective quality management which continuously monitors the relevance of programmes (to policies and development strategies) and provides support and guidance to private and public ATVET providers.
<b>Open access and equal opportunities / Gender sensitivity</b>	Social inclusion by increasing overall access to ATVET training opportunities by all target groups in need of skills development. ATVET is accessible, irrespective of the level of education, sex, ethnic and religious affiliation: Policies are developed in order to ensure that girls and women are not discriminated.
<b>Permeability</b>	Provide vertical and horizontal mobility between different occupations and different qualification levels.



<p><b>Flexible mode of delivery &amp; modularisation</b></p>	<p>Outcome-based ATVET provides high flexibility in the way of training organisation and delivery according to the needs of target groups and occupational requirements; raining modules are accessible for graduates unable to continuously attend classes.</p>
<p><b>Integration of formal, non-formal and informal Vocational Education and Training</b></p>	<p>Recognition and certification of competencies obtained through formal, non-formal or informal training; Integration of good practices and trainings in value chains into formal training programmes.</p>
<p><b>Combination of theoretical and practical training</b></p>	<p>Curricula of institutional training should provide a higher ratio of practical training compared to theoretical training (70:30); Implementation of internship programmes; Introduction of Co-operative Training (a mode of ATVET provided in partnership between the private sector and training institutions).</p>
<p><b>Stakeholder involvement private sector participation</b></p>	<p>ATVET operates at the interface of different sectors (education, labour market, MSE, farmer and trade associations, farmers, public and private training providers); Involvement of all stakeholders from the early stage of policy discussions as key to build trust and ensure continued participation in the process of change.</p>
<p><b>Financing of ATVET</b></p>	<p>ATVET financing should be anchored in the NAIPs in order to ensure financial resources to build up and sustain the system, allowing adequate investment in infrastructure, equipment and human resources; The system needs to diversify its financial resources and mechanisms. Contribution of the private sector to training is indispensable.</p>

## 3.3 Up-scaling

Best practices need an up-scaling strategy with a strong and well-designed institutional framework involving innovative partnerships among public institutions, financial institutions, CSOs, and the private sector. The African Cashew Initiative (ACI) and the Competitive African Cotton Initiative (COMPACI) are examples of such collaborative efforts. Strong governmental support and its commitment in investing in ATVET are especially needed for up-scaling as exemplified in the frame of the FTCs in Ethiopia and the SC in Sierra Leone. One success factor common to all up-scaling strategies is the participation of trainees and graduates as collaborators in the learning cycle as in Songhai where the cascading information transfer and teaching system creates a large number of farmer resource persons.

## 3.4 Best practice examples from the selected countries

### Benin

The agricultural sector is considered as one of the pillars of the national economy in Benin. The sector accounts for about 32% of the GDP and provides about 70% of total employment in the country. In the process of the CAADP, Benin held its roundtable and signed the CAADP compact in October 2009.

The country's Strategic Plan for Agricultural Sector Recovery (PSRSA) was elaborated with a particular focus on the promotion of value chain development as a major area of intervention. The vision of the PSRSA is to "make Benin a dynamic agricultural power in 2015, competitive, attractive, and environmentally friendly and creating wealth to meet the needs of economic and social development of the population"<sup>2</sup>. The vision will hardly be effective without a strong engagement of the government in human capital development in particular. Yet, amongst other efforts, the government in collaboration with donors and the private sector is gradually investing in technical and vocational training in the agricultural sector.

<sup>2</sup> Plan Stratégique de Relance du Secteur Agricole (PSRSA) Benin, October 2011, page 33



A ten-year development plan (2013-2023) has been elaborated for the education sector, which also defines a formulated vision and strategic guidelines for ATVET at national level, but in terms of vocational training, this strategy remains weak. From the government side, policy mechanisms are in place to ensure consistent management of ATVET in conjunction with broader goals and priorities at the national, regional and local level. This is the case of the National Council for Technical and Vocational Training. However, these mechanisms suffer from the lack of a framework for consultation between ministries in charge of education.

With regard to ATVET administration from the public institution side, the role of the state is more prominent and significant changes have been made in expanding the provision of ATVET through a specific access policy. Before 2012, there were six Agricultural Technical High Schools. From 2012 the number increased to ten. The number of students in agricultural schools, as well as the number of female



students increased from 2008 by almost 200%. Another important initiative was the creation of the Department of Conversion and Integration for young people that facilitates the involvement of young people in the agricultural sector by improving their knowledge through short-term training.

Although a number of gaps and short-comings still exist in the ATVET sector, Benin offers favourable prerequisites, such as the Songhaï Training Centre, coupled with conducive political institutional framework conditions, which can be starting points to facilitating the implementation of an ATVET programme in-country. The following best practice approaches were identified:

➤ **Strong involvement of government**

Strong involvement of the government and in particular the Head of State in agriculture value chain development by creating an enabling environment for producers on the one hand, and strengthening capacities of unemployed young people through tertiary and secondary ATVET training in order to facilitate their integration in agriculture sector on the other hand. The process is supported by the financing mechanisms that are set up to enable the employability of the trained students. For example, there is the Fund for the development of continuing training and apprenticeship for young job seekers (FODEF-CA); and the special establishment programme of youth in agriculture (PSIJA).

➤ **Rapid Expansion of ATVET in the last five Years**

The rapid expansion of ATVET in Benin in the last five years has resulted in a growing number of trained students both at tertiary and secondary level in ATVET system. Four new Agricultural Technical High Schools and two University centres of agronomy have been opened. The government has initiated an innovative approach for mobilising financial resources from the public and other donors to equip the TVET centres and ensures quality education. Gradually, the training curricula are adjusted (through the stakeholders' dialogue) to the needs of the labour market in order to ensure the



self-employment of young people.

The establishment of agricultural technical high schools close to agriculture research institution centres facilitates the implementation of innovative technologies and synergised actions between those two institutions.

In order to ensure better qualification of the ATVET trainers in public centres in particular, there are teacher training colleges of technical education (e.g. Ecole Normale Supérieure de l'Enseignement Technique) that trains the trainers. The school trains teachers for BAPET and CAPET (Certificates of Proficiency for a Teaching Position at Technical Schools). Government intervention in improving the quality of trainers is sometimes supported by training projects in technical and vocational education.

➤ **Growing Collaboration between Ministries involved in ATVET**

There is a growing development of collaboration between the Ministry of Secondary Education and Technical and Vocational Training, of conversion and integration of the young people (MESFTPRIJ) and the local authorities (Municipality) to identify training needs and facilitate young people's access to the Agricultural Technical High Schools. The objective is to improve their knowledge through short-term (2 weeks to 3 months) apprenticeship and training and locally support the settlement of the trained people.

➤ **Public-Private-Partnership Development**

The government of Benin demonstrates a willingness to create an enabling environment for private sector engagement and the development of Public-Private-Partnerships to support ATVET. At the three ministries of education



level, there is a comprehensive legal basis allowing foreign ATVET providers to operate locally. Each ministry has a department that supports the process and delivers the accreditation. The example of the government support to the Songhaï centre is a tangible one. With the support of the local government and

multiple donors, Songhaï centre is expanding its activities not only in Benin but also in Africa due to the practical and entrepreneurial curricula of its ATVET training system.

## Songhaï Training Centre

**Initiated by: Private voluntary organisation**

**Supported by: IFAD, USAID and UNIDO (for capacity development, investment in infrastructure etc.)**

### Description of the initiative

The Songhaï Centre was founded in 1985 in Benin to develop alternatives, allowing young Africans to stand on their own feet through agricultural entrepreneurship. The centre is an economic as well as a social institution which carries out training, production and research, combining traditional and modern methods.

It provides training to young people on sustainable agriculture using local resources, and equips students to establish small-scale businesses in rural areas. The objective of the Songhaï Centre is to promote a continual focus on sustainable socio-economic entrepreneurship and development of human skills for the empowerment of individuals and communities as active members of the society; and to develop sites to make settlements socio-economically viable (Songhaï, 2010). It consists of a wide network of entrepreneurs operating in agribusiness to manage viable agricultural enterprises and to train farmers and other stakeholders in their region in a dynamic socio-economic entity. In this perspective, the Songhaï Centre works as a socio-economic and rural development focal point specialising in agricultural production, training and research. The Songhaï Centre operations can be divided into three key areas: agricultural and entrepreneurial training; production units and research and development into sustainable agricultural practices.

Songhaï provides technical training and material support to farmers and community dwellers. These include trainings in piggery, fishery, vegetable production and post-harvest practices, and the employment of community members as daily hires and or support staff. It supports an integrated production system based on minimal inputs and the use of local resources. Waste from one production unit become inputs for others, and production activities become more profitable because they belong to the system in which the different components strengthen each other through what they provide to or receive from others.

At Songhaï, young people learn the techniques of biological agriculture, agri-food processing and natural resource management. Songhaï has trained and graduated farmers from different countries producing and supporting communities with food and employment services; and has encouraged graduates to establish more than 1.000 successful enterprises in Benin alone, challenging the low levels of productivity, efficiency and employment found in rural areas. Its training contents are



disseminated using a pyramid system. Each trained graduate is encouraged to train another five farmers in his/her home village in GAP derived from Songhaï.

Songhaï's network consists of over 40 public and private partners, associations, universities and inter-national groups. Songhaï runs a network of producers throughout Benin.

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## Lessons learnt

### Success

The Songhaï model presents an integrated system of production where agriculture, animal husbandry and fish farming interact and nothing is wasted. Values such as creativity, taking initiative, competitiveness and organisational capacity are key to its success. The Songhaï model was promoted as a Centre of Excellence for Africa by the UN and is being replicated in 14 other African countries.

### Challenges

Technical challenges include the access to farmers, due to poor infrastructure, in order to organise and coordinate the network of farmers trained.

Interaction between Songhaï and the national research and extension system needs to be strengthened.

The training mode that seeks to attract many young people (e.g. no school fees) weakens the system's capabilities and willingness to see all trained people start-up their own business, since the trained young people do normally not possess the financial means for a business start-up and do not have any collaterals to get access to start-up financing.

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## Success Factors

- Training of farmers on the qualities of entrepreneurs and socio-economic leaders, focusing on the concepts "zero waste" and "total productivity", while including the pre- and post-harvest techniques;
- Facilitation of access to a community of trained graduate farmers starting points of agricultural businesses and managing their own farms, through a network of service provision and market access;
- Intrelationships between environment, agriculture, technology, services and industry;
- Encouragement of the use of local resources, the combination of traditional and modern agricultural practices, technology adaptation and diversification of activities;
- Provision of opportunities for rural communities to use and manage their resources sustainably while promoting local economic development;
- Involvement of the agricultural centres, financially and environmentally in a sustainable manner in the processing of primary products.

## Ethiopia

Ethiopia's agricultural sector, which accounts to 85% of the country's employment and more than 80% of the export, is beginning to show signs of realising its full potential to provide sustenance and income for its 84 million people. The Government has demonstrated a strong commitment to development of the agricultural sector. The CAADP Compact, which was signed by the Government and its development partners in September 2009, sets out a clear roadmap for on-going development of the sector and confirms Government and donor responsibilities in meeting this challenge.

By mid-2012, Ethiopia's ATVET sector was rather advanced in its adaption and preparation of structure and documents to the Ethiopian National ATVET strategy for ATVET colleges. Occupational standards and curricula have been revised and disseminated, shifting study contents to a demand driven approach and thus, responding to labour needs from the private and non-governmental sector.

Two ATVET colleges are successfully implementing strategic plans and the construction of four colleges is now complete and fully operational. More than 22,000 agriculture extension officers (3,000 female) were provided with ATVET skills for knowledge transfer to farmers; 2,400 Farmers Training Centres (FTCs) were provided with relevant infrastructure of which 1,840 are now fully functional.



From the four countries under review, the Ethiopian ATVET system is the most advanced and the ATVET market is more or less saturated. It is therefore questionable if another ATVET programme will significantly contribute to knowledge, information and skills of Ethiopian farmers in the near future.

The following best practice initiatives from the Ethiopian ATVET sector can serve as models for other countries:

### ➤ *Rapid expansion of ATVET Institutions*

The rapid expansion of ATVET in the last ten years in Ethiopia has resulted in an increase in the number of ATVET colleges to 25. There are five federal and 20 regional ATVET colleges. These colleges provide a 3-year training programme to produce middle level work force by admitting people who complete the general education (grade 10) in the Ethiopian education system. The success of the graduates as they employed as Development Agents (DAs) with Ethiopian farmers justifies the investment made in the expansion of Ethiopian ATVET institutes.

### ➤ *High Development Agent to Farmer Ratio*

The ATVET colleges have so far trained around 72,000 DAs who are employed by the government to provide extension services to farmers at the lowest level of the administration (Kebele). Currently, the ratio of Development Agents to farmers is about 1:200. It is widely believed that Development Agents contributed a lot to the improvement of agricultural production and productivity at national level. Farmers are usually willing to receive the advice of the DAs and in doing so the livelihoods of farmers have changed considerably.

### ➤ *Establishment of Farmers training Centres (FTCs)*

The establishment of more than 18,000 Farmers Training Centres (FTCs) in rural Ethiopia has facilitated the consultation and trainings provided by DAs.



➤ **Outcome based ATVET**

Regional ATVET colleges design their training programmes after conducting assessments of training needs of the labour market. They also provide training not only to farmers but also to micro- and small enterprises in the rural areas.

➤ **Development of Centres of Competence (CoC)**

In an attempt to ensure that ATVET institutions graduates possess the required competences, they have to undertake a competence assessment at established Centres of Competence. Such practice helps in improving the competences level of the graduates to qualify as DAs.

➤ **Development and Implementation of a National TVET Strategy**

At the country level, there is a national TVET strategy developed in 2008, which is the guiding document for all TVET programmes in the country, including ATVET. This strategy advocates for a comprehensive and integrated TVET system, which is decentralised and outcome based in its approach. It paves the way for the establishment of the Ethiopian Occupational Standards (EOS) and the Occupational Assessment and Certification procedures, as well as the overall national TVET Qualification Framework.





## Agriculture extension service through Development Agents and establishment of Farmer Training Centres

**Initiated by:** Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) (key actors include the Regional and Woreda office of Agriculture, agriculture research institutes, FTCs, and DAs).

**Supported by:** International development organisations, and NGOs (World Bank, Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau (KfW), the German Ministry of Agriculture (BMELV), OXFAM, GIZ, SG-2000, Nuffic, JAPIGO and others).

### Description of the initiative

The four major components of the Ethiopian extension system are the Participatory Demonstration and Training Extension System, Farmer Training Centres, Agricultural Technical and Vocational Education (ATVET) and Institutional Coordination. Under the overall management of the Extension Service Directorate of the MoA, success has been achieved at strengthening ATVET and FTCs to contribute significantly to the agricultural production and productivity.

The development of extension agents (usually referred to as Development Agents) was aggressively started in 2002 in Ethiopia. This development initiative is being implemented parallel to the establishment and expansion of Farmer Training Centres throughout the country. Since 2007, the Rural Capacity Building Programme (RCBP) of the Ministry of Agriculture has been the major contributor of the success of this massive scale-up of human and infrastructure resources for agriculture. In particular, focus was given to the development of human resources capacity of the ATVETs and supporting FTCs with physical infrastructure, agricultural research, and institutional capacity building.

### Farmer Training Centres

FTCs are established at the lowest administrative units (kebele) as a critical resource needed to enable extension delivery. These centres serve as focal points for farmers to receive information, training, demonstrations and advice, and include both, classrooms and demonstration fields. They serve as a node between extension services of the DAs and farmers. FTCs are managed at the kebele level, but funding for capital, operational, and salary costs come from the upper second administrative unit (woreda) level.

In each of the FTCs, there are usually three DAs at each FTC (one from plant science, animal science, and natural resources management) and one Animal health and one Cooperative DA are shared between 3 to 5 FTCs in the vicinity. These FTC are instrumental in facilitating the cross learning between farmers through experience sharing among model farmers. Furthermore, each DA is expected to train 120 farmers per year in his/her field of specialisation. The DAs provide training to 60 farmers every six months in their respective areas of specialisation.



## ATVET Institutions

Generally, more than 25 ATVET colleges in Ethiopia provide a 3-year regular training programme in the areas of animal science, plant science, natural resources, animal health and cooperatives. So far about 72.000 DAs have been trained to provide extension services to farmers at kebele level by working in the Farmer Training Centres. The DAs are trained in five major areas: animal science, plant science, animal health, natural resource management and cooperative promotion. Farmers' training (mainly through ATVET graduates or DAs and FTCs), improved access to agricultural inputs and products. Development and expansion of markets are key support programmes that help these initiatives. In the current academic year, 20.434 trainees are attending their training provided by 1.132 trainers.

## Lessons learnt

### Success

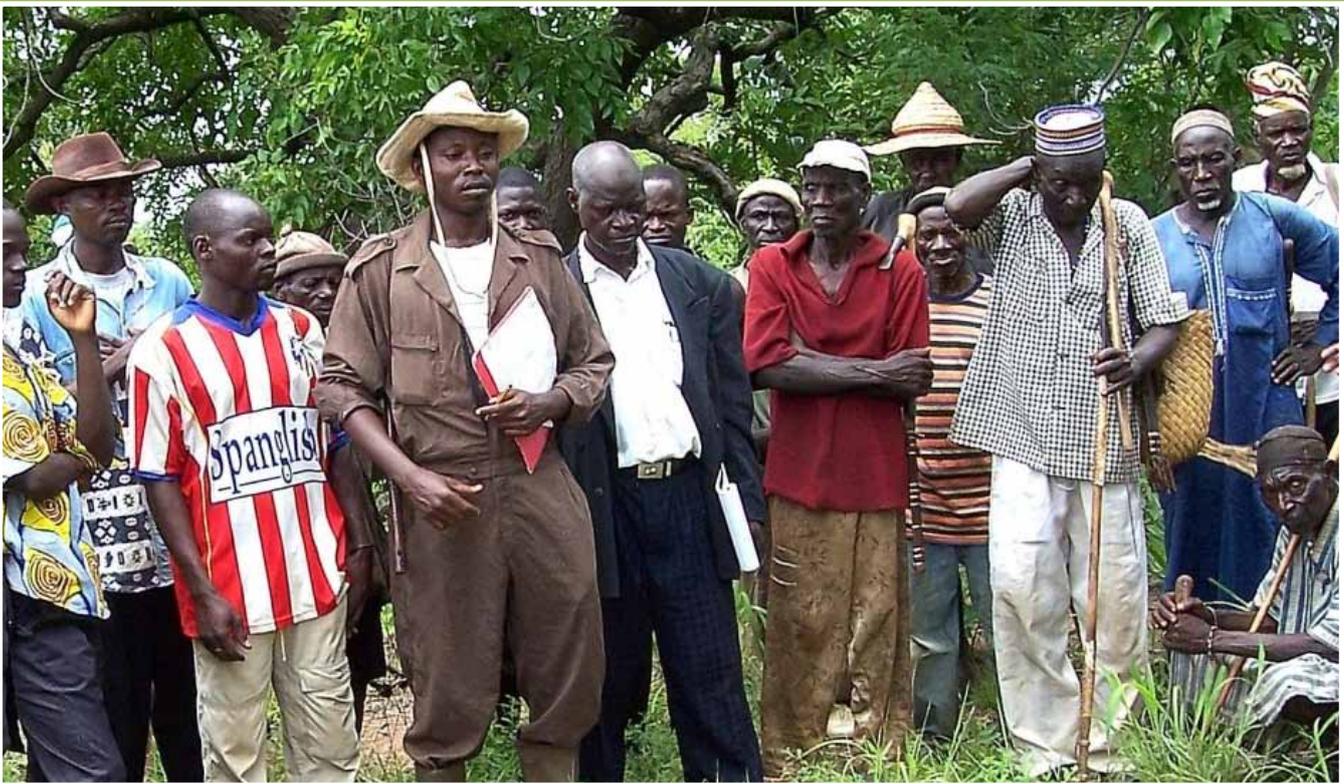
The deployment of DAs to the FTCs through the agriculture extension programme has markedly contributed to the improvement of the agriculture sector via transferring agriculture knowledge to the farmers. Since 2005/6 the agriculture sector has registered more than 6% growth in productivity per annum except in 2011/12. Recently, the agriculture sector has grown by 9 per cent and 4.9 per cent, in 2010/11 and 2011/12 respectively.

These increments in agriculture sector have been achieved through the establishment of 18.000 FTCs and the 72.000 DAs from more than 25 ATVET colleges. Currently the ratio of Development Agents to farmers is about 1:200. The "Global Forum for Rural Advisory Service fact sheet"\* of June 2012 has indicated that Ethiopia is a country with the world's highest extension agents to farmer ratio. [http://www.farmingfirst.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/Global-Forum-for-Rural-Advisory-Services\\_Fact-Sheet-on-Extension-Services.pdf](http://www.farmingfirst.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/Global-Forum-for-Rural-Advisory-Services_Fact-Sheet-on-Extension-Services.pdf)

### Challenges

The following points could be considered as the main challenges in terms of the DAs and the utilisation of the FTCs:

- Limited public and private funding to provide quality training;
- Low quality of training as some DAs lack practical skill and experience;
- DAs high staff turnover, approx. 10-15% per annum;
- Trainers work overload due to self-contained training delivery system, continuous assessment, industry - extension service, development of curriculum, preparation of teaching, training and learning material, etc.;



- Shortage of training resources at FTCs due to limited budget;
- Weak linkage between stakeholders in particular the limited participation of the private sector and lack of collaboration among ATVET colleges;
- Unwillingness of some stakeholders to engage in training;
- Occupational Standards for some fields do not consider the indigenous knowledge of farmers.



### Success Factors

- Participatory approach adopted as a number of stakeholders have played critical roles in the continuous achievement of sustained agriculture productivity growth in the last eight years;
- Political Commitment of the Government and Ministry of Agriculture to improve agriculture production and productivity;
- Adopting extension service as a key long term strategic intervention to improve agriculture production and productivity;
- Allocation of resources for the development of FTCs and ATVET;
- Development of ATVET occupational standards and assessment tools;
- Collaboration among different stakeholders including beneficiaries, and the private sector.

# BEST PRACTICES NAMIBIA

## Namibia

Despite the high proportion of farming land and households depending on agriculture in Namibia, the sector contributes a relatively low percentage to its GDP. The small contribution is due to several factors: low production capacity as a result of aridity and poor soils, small market demands within the country and elsewhere for Namibian products and the lack of market development in most communal areas. In addition, there is relatively low value addition through local processing. In terms of importance for the economy, livestock production is the most relevant agricultural sector in Namibia. A formal CAADP Working Group was only established in June 2010, but Namibia has not yet met its obligation arising from the signing of the CAADP Compact.

Although education is deemed to be the key to realising the Vision 2030 (Namibia's education sector received the highest single allocation of 23.6% of the total expenditures in the 2012/2013 budget), ATVET is only in an early stage of development.

The government is supportive of ATVET and has ambitions to develop a competence based ATVET system, based on a comprehensive and flexible Namibia Qualifications Framework (NQF), implemented by both the Namibia Training Authority (NTA) and the Namibia Qualifications Authority (NQA). A key area of the Namibia Development Plan 4 (NDP4) for 2012/2013 – 2016/ 2017 is to increase the percentage of candidates that meet the entry requirements for ATVET. Improving the availability of secondary education teaching and learning resources is a crucial factor. Key areas of skills shortages will be identified and targeted for development over the next five years with specific strategies that will also include the increase of provisions for opportunities for ATVET.



Opportunities and challenges in implementing an ATVET programmes are evenly balanced. The GIZ/NPCA programme could start an initiative by supporting NPCA in installing CAADP structures in-country to pave the way for future ATVET cooperation.

Some best practices on which further development can be based have been identified:

➤ ***Inclusion of ATVET in the Namibia Development Plan 4 (NDP4)***

The NDP 4 considers local food production critical in Namibia's efforts to become self-sufficient and food secure. Education, including ATVET, is acknowledged as the single most important aspect of human development and a critical success factor for economic advancement and increased equality. The focus of agriculture under NDP4 includes large-scale development of the agri-business and agro-industrial sectors. These two sectors, supported by a comprehensive training and education programme are seen as vital in determining pathways to agriculture-led economic transformation in Namibia.

➤ ***Establishment of Vocational Training Centres***

Five major centres providing non-formal farmer ATVET have been established. With respect to promoting youth training



in agriculture, the Mashare Irrigation Training Centre in the Kavango region, northeast of Namibia, commenced operation in 2008 and is providing intensive training in practical and theoretical aspects of irrigated farming.

In addition, 17 research stations and centres involved in agriculture throughout the country have been established.

The Namibian government places great importance in the success of the Green Scheme, which was born out of the drive to expand irrigation by investing in irrigation infrastructure. Through irrigation development, government aims to bring the private sector to remote and underdeveloped areas, thereby building local capacity in terms of production, marketing management, and general development.

## Farmers' Support Project

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**Initiated/supported by: Implementing partner is the Agricultural Bank of Namibia. 54% funded through the Federal Republic of Germany, 46% through Agribank.**

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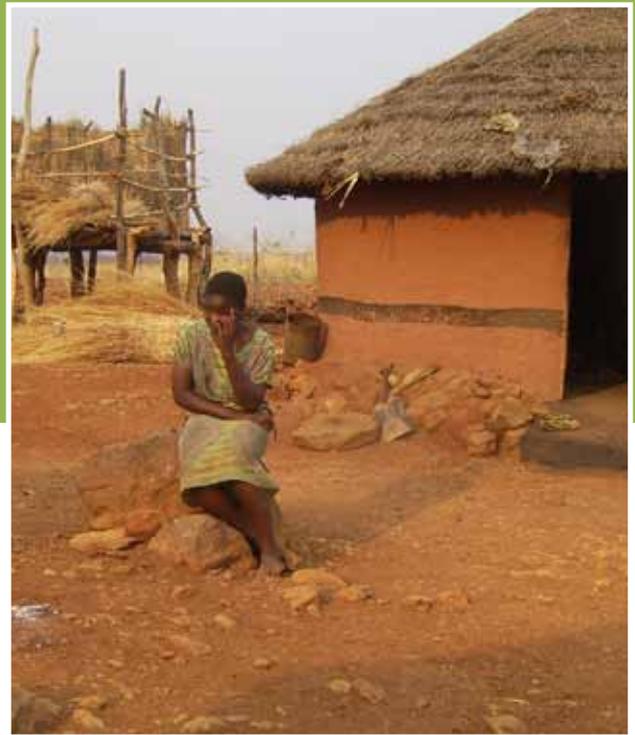
## Description of the initiative/project

The “Emerging Commercial Farmers’ Support Programme” (ECF-SP: 2007 to 2009) was the predecessor of the “Farmers Support Project” (FSP). It is EU funded through the 9th EDF and implemented by the Joint Presidency Committee south of the Veterinarian Cordon fence.

The FSP, implemented by GIZ, was initiated in 2010 and is in operation until 2014. It covers Namibia as a whole and besides newly emerging farmers it also incorporates communal farmers.

Major project activities include mentoring, range land management, excursions, information days, topic related short-courses, record keeping, and pre- and post-settlement support courses.





## Lessons learnt

### Success

The main success factor has been the mentorship programme where established farmers are encouraged to mentor “new” farmers and visit and guide them on a regular basis.

Besides the number of farmers that attended training interventions, not much can be said as yet about the impact of this project to date. However, although there is no “hard evidence”, it is assumed that this approach to support “new” farmers will prove to be highly successful in future.

### Challenges

- Many farmers do not have sufficient knowledge in agriculture;
- Farmers do not have sufficient assets;
- Most farmers are reluctant to participate in record keeping;
- Absence of landlords;
- Access to farms (especially in the rainy season) is difficult;
- Huge distances between farms.

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### Success Factors

- The approach is highly participative and courses are tailor-made to address certain immediate challenges. The mentorship component can only succeed through the whole hearted commitment of the mentor and the mentee.
- This initiative empowers participants to better manage their farms and make better decisions in order to increase the yield and production capacity of their farms.

## Sierra Leone

Following the end of a decade of civil war, Sierra Leone's economy has grown rapidly. With the support of the international community, infrastructure is being rebuilt and peace and stability have been consolidated.

Agriculture accounts for more than half of the country's GDP and 80% of women and 60% of the population are employed in this sector. However, while production increased dramatically after the war, the sector continues to be driven by subsistence farming rather than commercial agriculture and crop yields remain low.

The rural and agricultural sector effort is guided by multiple strategic directives, led by the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food Security (MAFFS). The CAADP compact, which was signed in August 2009, sets out a clear roadmap for on-going development of the sector and confirms government and donor responsibilities in meeting the challenge of rebuilding and restructuring of the agricultural sector. This has resulted in the National Sustainable Agriculture Development Plan 2010-2030 (NSADP) under the umbrella of CAADP with the broad involvement of all stakeholders and the Smallholder Commercialisation Programme (SCP) to operationalize the plan. The SCP aims to reduce rural poverty and household food insecurity on a sustainable basis, and to strengthen the national economy. The SCP Investment Plan is Sierra Leone's National Agricultural Investment Programme (NAIP) under the CAADP process. Under NSADP and Sierra Leone's compact, the government of Sierra Leone has prioritized the SCP for immediate development and resource mobilisation.

Sierra Leone's ATVET policy is incorporated into the general education policy, and aims at improving young people's chances of acquiring skills, helping them find employment and intends to provide a range of skills development opportunities linked to jobs in the formal and informal sectors.

A programme component under SCP, the Smallholder Commercialisation (SC) puts ATVET at the centre of its activities. The objective of the SC is to promote commercialisation of smallholder agriculture through increasing productivity, value addition, and marketing with emphasis on commodity chain development and institutional strengthening of farmer-based organisations (FBO).

The ATVET component of the SC intends to:

- Create and strengthen Farmer Business Organisations (FBOs);
- Implement additional 650 Agribusiness Centres (ABCs) until the end of 2014;
- Provide technical and marketing services to smallholders.

The policies of Sierra Leone are conducive to ATVET and are planned to be put into action. However, bureaucratic procedures are complicated and challenging. Knowledge and experience gained from the implementation of Farmer Field Schools (FFSs), FBOs, and ABCs create a fertile ground to set up further ATVET programmes that use the following best practice experiences from existing programmes:

- **Smallholder Commercialisation (SC):** a key element of this component of the SCP is the formation of FBOs, which members are trained in FFS and will be organised into a network of ABCs. Commenced in 2009 with ATVET pilot interventions, the enactment of the SC is one major investment sub-programme to transform agriculture into a business model. This calls for single-mindedness, constant learning and practice and clear understanding of the principles of Good Agricultural Practice (GAP) thoroughly taught to farmers through ATVET. The SC is supported by various donor organisations;
- **Employment promotion for youths:** together with its national and international partners, GIZ is pursuing an integrated approach to promoting (agricultural) employment in Sierra Leone. This involves increasing the demand for labour

(economic development), improving the supply (training of young workers) and coordinating demand and supply. The programme includes needs-oriented training for a number of agricultural value chains. Through quality improvements and increased sales, more than 10,000 cocoa farmers have achieved a rise of about 30% in their annual income. Around 600 people have found employment in the cocoa processing centres supported by the programme and reintegration activities of the programme have enabled 2,500 young people to return to their home villages. After just one year, their average annual family income from agriculture has increased significantly;

- **Government support to the Youth Programme:** the Youth Employment Strategy for 2009–2011, the government's most concerted effort to date to address youth unemployment, aimed to help 300,000 young people find jobs. With the assistance from donors, government has supported 40 ATVET projects until 2012 reaching 20,000 youth in establishing and managing private sector enterprises and apprenticeship and on-the-job training;
- **Farmer Field School Programme:** the government has built on an existing system of FFSs,



training over 40,000 farmer facilitators in 1,465 FFS. Government is now looking to build on this network to create FBO's and a service network of ABCs.. The FFS had a major impact on crop productivity in the communities, with crop yields increasing by over 80% among FFS participants.

## Smallholder Commercialisation / Sierra Leone

**Initiated by:** Government of Sierra Leone under the Smallholder Commercialisation Programme (SPC)

**Supported by:** Multi-donor funded (Global Agriculture and Food Security Programme, GAFSP), IFAD, FAO, EU and World Bank)

### Description of the initiative / project

Effective strategic and operational planning of the whole SCP ensured efficient coordination between and amongst SCP components and between the various sources of funding and implementation partners and overall monitoring of progress and evaluation of impacts.

The specific objective of the SCP is to promote commercialisation of smallholder agriculture through increasing productivity, value addition, and marketing with emphasis on commodity chain development and institutional strengthening of FBO. The ATVET component of the SCP intends to:

- Intensify production intensification through FFS and FBO development.
- ABC establishment.
- Improved agricultural financial services.

Increased multi-donor funding has strengthened agricultural services to provide training, exchanges, and the development of commodity chains through public-private partnerships implemented through out-grower schemes.

The use of small-scale irrigation infrastructure in order to boost rice production, is leading to increased market surplus (particularly for lowland smallholders) and to the creation of wealth and employment, notably for the youth.

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## Lessons learnt

Since the start of the initiative in 2009, success and impact have been measured through regular M&E.

## Successes

- There are presently 193 functional Agricultural Business Centres;
- 40,000 people (groups and individuals) have received project services (training, marketing, processing);
- 241 Farmer Based Organisations (FBO's) have received farm inputs (seeds, fertilisers, equipment etc.);
- Rehabilitation of 1,300 hectares of Inland Valley Swamps (IVS);
- Gross Portfolio from Financial Services Associations (FSA) to individual farmers and farming groups amount to USD196,000;
- Construction of 55 FSA out of 77.

## Challenges

- Very high illiteracy rate;
- Weak communication / lack of coordination among government ministries;
- Unavailability of collateral;
- "Free-rider" mentality, thus making it difficult for some farmers to conduct proper business activities;
- Unavailability of software to link Financial Services to Bank of Sierra Leone.



## Impacts

- Increased income of farmers by linking farmers to available markets;
- Improved production practices of farmers through training (FFS);
- Enhanced capacity of extension staff;
- Improved capacity building for local NGOs;
- Increased production from 4% to 7%
- Increased access to finance through the construction of FSA's and Community Banks;
- Agricultural offices nationwide revamped.

## Success Factors

- The initiative is highly participatory with the inclusion of National Federation of Farmers, International NGOs, International Government Agencies, FBOs, CBOs, Cooperatives, Marketing Association, private companies and Government Ministries.
- The measurable impact on the livelihoods of farmers and the rural population was also achieved through donor harmonisation and effective coordination between national and international partners.

Roles of stakeholders were divided as follows:

### GAFFSP:

- Coordinate and monitor implementation of the project;

### NAFFSL:

- Act as lobbying group for farmers to government;

### International Agencies:

- Guide planning and implementation process;
- Provide technical assistance, especially FAO on training of farmers;
- Support module development and identify service providers for ABC/FBO/FFS capacity building;

### Njala University:

- Provide venue to train FFS extension agents;
- partner with Government and other agencies to conduct agricultural research.



### 3.5 Regional Initiatives

Among the many training and education activities all over Africa, the following benchmark initiatives, good practices and experiences from large scale skills agricultural training and extension programmes with strong influence on and relation to ATVET are considered as best practices with a high potential for up-scaling to other countries or contexts:

- **Competitive African Cotton Initiative (COMPACI)**
- **African Cashew Initiative (ACI)**
- **Sustainable Cocoa Business Project**



These initiatives are supported through collaborations and partnerships between international and local companies, donor agencies (e.g. GIZ) and private foundations (e.g. Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation). Their outreach is currently mainly in West and East Africa. The following matrix presents a summary of the initiatives, specific solutions adapted and success factors of these initiatives.

Africa Cashew Initiative	Competitive African Cotton Initiative	Sustainable Cocoa Business
Ghana, Cote d'Ivoire, Burkina Faso, Benin, Mozambique	Benin, Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Malawi, Mozambique, Ghana, Cameroon, Tanzania	Nigeria, Ghana, Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire
<b>What?</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Extension for better yields and quality;</li> <li>▪ Investment promotion for processing.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Extension for better yields and quality;</li> <li>▪ Investment promotion;</li> <li>▪ Policy advice.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Business skills training;</li> <li>▪ Access to inputs, information on Good Agricultural Practices (GAP);</li> <li>▪ Financial services.</li> </ul>
<b>Good Agricultural Practices</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Increase productivity and improve quality of raw nuts;</li> <li>▪ Knowledge about market and price development mechanisms;</li> <li>▪ Investment decision on a rational economic basis;</li> <li>▪ Use planting material from proven, high yielding origin.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Diversification strategies;</li> <li>▪ Knowledge about financial services / input provision by cotton companies;</li> <li>▪ (Cotton) farming as a business;</li> <li>▪ Management of a farmer based organisation;</li> <li>▪ Sustainable production systems, certification / verification according to standards.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Manage farm as enterprise in line with cropping calendar;</li> <li>▪ Knowledge of units and plot size;</li> <li>▪ Intensification and diversification strategies;</li> <li>▪ Financial management at farm and household level;</li> <li>▪ Knowledge of financial services;</li> <li>▪ Farmer organisations receive benefits;</li> <li>▪ Investment strategies for cocoa.</li> </ul>

Africa Cashew Initiative	Competitive African Cotton Initiative	Sustainable Cocoa Business
<b>Specific solutions adapted</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Extension contents focused on easy to implement skills and proven practices, giving quick results;</li> <li>▪ Relevant communication packaged in an appealing manner e.g. messages compressed and told in picture stories;</li> <li>▪ Training content adapted to non-specialised extension services, considering absorption capacities;</li> <li>▪ High ratio of trainers to farmers allocated to enable training of farmers within 2-3 weeks;</li> <li>▪ ICT used for extension and traceability.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Working directly with established companies, already having a large scale outreach to farmers and qualified technical staff;</li> <li>▪ Sharing of experiences, harmonising approaches and tools for training;</li> <li>▪ Specific expertise delivered based on demands expressed by partners;</li> <li>▪ Subsidiarity principle applied with least interference.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Regional standard curriculum for business skills training with country specific information;</li> <li>▪ Standardised monitoring of delivery and reporting based on mobile technology;</li> <li>▪ Producer references on techniques and economics of cocoa and maize. Total edition so far: 120,000 copies;</li> <li>▪ Cooperation with private partners on business services;</li> <li>▪ Standard financial products based on viable GAP;</li> <li>▪ Business skills and technical training as part of the loan to reduce default risk;</li> <li>▪ Curricula for bankers and MFI.</li> </ul>

### Success Factors of the Initiatives

#### ***Design and organisation for large scale outreach***

- Visibility attracts new partners with resources
- Regional approach
- Flexibility for innovation and incentives for regional scaling-up

#### ***Cooperation among private partners that are competitors in business***

- Completion among implementing partners across countries
- Cost benchmarks plus regional standard approaches
- Low delivery cost
- Reduced transaction and fixed cost per delivery units

#### ***Public-Private-Partnership***

- Business spirit and strategies drive implementation
- Business relevant interventions with thorough M&E systems
- Value proposition to funding partners i.e. ex ante cost / benefit ratio
- Significant impact after relatively short period



## 4. Conclusions

The agricultural sector has long been the main employer in rural Africa. Presently ATVET absorbs only a small portion of school graduates after primary and secondary school levels. It is in the interest of both government and the private sector to improve the performance of ATVET and make it attractive for youths. This is an opportunity to expand ATVET and increase its graduate absorption capacity.

There is scope for enacting reforms within this sector so that agriculture can draw skilled professionals. With this it can create a demand for developing relevant curricula to guarantee that ATVET graduates have the relevant knowledge and information to ensure enhanced productivity in Sub-Saharan-African (SSA) agriculture. Paramount in this regard is that African countries not only adopt ATVET models or structures from high income countries systems, but also endorse the aligned approaches in regard to Knowledge and Information Systems (KIS) in building innovative capabilities and responsiveness into their systems. Relevant in this context is the raising awareness of climate change as a topic which has direct impacts on yields, income, food, and nutrition security.

Additionally, the inclusion of Gender perspectives and the consideration of the interests of the youths in ATVET curricula have to become more visible. Innovative examples in this respect are ACI, COMPACI, Songhai and the Sustainable Cocoa Business which offer advanced modern and contemporary, culturally adapted contents in agricultural extension and VCD. This is done often in conjunction with PPPs to make ATVET attractive to youths. They have an opportunity to halt and even reverse urbanisation among this group. The appropriateness of these ATVET facilities will enhance the performance of future agricultural production in the rural environment. The additional integration of business skills training, economics and advanced technology present in programmes like FBOs and ABCs in Sierra Leone, FTCs in Ethiopia and the GIZ-Technical Cooperation supported projects will efficiently offer the opportunity to support future farmers. The business training will enable them to gain access to local markets and rural financial services, equip them with up-to-date market information, and train them to negotiate effectively.

The urbanisation of Africa will create a high demand in agricultural produce, which is another point of opportunity for ATVET to train more people who will meet the rising demand.

Agriculture is generally seen as a strategic sector due to its growth and employment generation potential. In Africa, it is expected to grow steadily at an annual average of more than 5% over the next five years with a gradual shift away from traditional to mechanised farming. This is proven by in the general high political commitment of governments towards agricultural development, increased interest and activity in ATVET and enlarged extension services in the countries under investigation therefore presenting an opportunity for ATVET expansion.



Alongside this, there is a general increasing awareness of the necessity of further policy development in ATVET. This is highlighted by the fact that a number of African countries are seriously considering the implementation of NQFs, Educational Occupational Standards and Educational Occupational Assessments as has been demonstrated for Namibia and Ethiopia. The quality of ATVET, its trainers and trainees thus has the opportunity to benefit from policy support resulting in improvement.

CAADP institutions have the opportunity to expand their roles in implementing successful ATVET in its forecast expansion capacity and demand. An innovative example is ReSAKSS' paramount role in the development of national M&E systems. Other cases are TEAM Africa's and CAADP Country team's engagement in identifying and prioritising conceptual bases and implementation of action plans to align national policies to development strategies. FARA also plays a major role in the implementation of support programmes developing extension strategies and fundraising activities.

A wide range of ATVET activities and opportunities identified have the potential to make future graduates fit for employment, meet challenges of food security, market demand, and climate change.



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