

## Skills Development for the Agricultural Sector

**Country/Region:** Tanzania / Africa

**Timeframe/Status:** Current project phase I: 2010 – 2012

**Needs:** Agriculture contributes about 45% to GDP and 60% of export earnings and it employs about 82% of Tanzanians providing a livelihood to 87% of the population. Although agriculture is the major economic contributor, human resource development such as skills training at the farm level has not received much attention yet. Based on the potential and constraints in the agricultural sector and growing unemployment and migration to urban areas, the Vocational Education and Training Authority (VETA) developed a Strategy for Vocational Skills Development in the Agricultural Sector (SVSDAS). The strategy aims at improving the standard of living of rural communities. It is against this background that Swisscontact has developed the Skills Development in the Agricultural Sector (SDAS) project.



**Objectives:** The rationale is that the livelihood of farming families has improved and thus the prevailing poverty in these areas can be reduced and the food security increased. The goal contributing to the rationale is that the capacities and performance of farmers and youth through a Pro Poor Growth (PPG) strategy has increased and that it will lead to higher income for farmers and youths taking up farming or more employment for those seeking a job instead. It is expected that farmers' income and sales will increase and that involved youth will be gainfully employed or self-employed. Young people who were not able to finish secondary school are involved in Learning Groups (LG) in which they learn how to farm in farm field schools and also acquire life skills such as teamwork and communication, decision-making and problem solving, health issues (AIDS prevention) and financial literacy etc. The purpose contributing to the goal is that through a system change various relevant agricultural skills development services will become available for and are utilized by the farmers and youths in rural areas.

**Target groups:** Smallholder farmers and unemployed youth with a low educational background are the target groups with special attention to women and rural families as a whole.

**Focus / Activities:** Swisscontact provides technical assistance to VETA to develop a training offer for the agricultural sector.

**Human and Financial Resources:** 5 staff employed (1 international, 4 nationals), Budget for phase: CHF 1'362'300, financed by SDC

**Results:** Expected project outcomes are that in the 2010 – 2012 phase 70% of 700 farmers have increased their income by 20% and sales by 15%. 70% of 700 youth are expected to become gainfully employed or self-employed in the agricultural sector. The indirect number of beneficiaries is estimated to be 4000. The capacity of 20 agricultural and life skills development providers will be strengthened. Ten training modules will be developed and tested. It is expected that the experience and the training products will be fed into the system and replicated through VETA and other providers. In 2010 the collaboration with VETA as the institutional partners was started. So far two modules were developed and two youth Learning Groups (LG) and one Farmer Group (FG) formed. 90 beneficiaries are currently being trained in agricultural skills and the youth also in life skills.

**Particularities:** Tanzania's young population in rural areas with a low educational background do not find many local employment opportunities and often migrate to urban areas. The project addresses this while making them interested in agriculture back home through relevant tailor-made agriculture and life skills training. Further the project supports VETA's efforts that are backed by a national strategy of Kilimo Kwanza or Agriculture First. In addition VETA and other involved stakeholders will be supported to find ways to further up-scale the project and disseminate its training products.

**Implementing agency:** Swisscontact

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Partners: The Ministry of Education and Vocational Training (MEVT) and the Vocational Education and Training Authority (VETA) are functioning as the line ministry and lead agency respectively. The Ministry of Regional Administration and Local Government (RALG) and the Ministry of Community Development, Gender and Children (MCDGC) at the district level will also be involved. Local NGOs, farmer groups, youth clubs and Saving and Credit Cooperatives (SACCOs) and other Community Based Organisations (CBOs) and private service providers shall be involved.

**Special Challenges, Risks, and Opportunities:** Agriculture at a small scale despite its potential is not considered very attractive and especially the youth normally do not show much interest in it. Therefore, the project invests in awareness creation through various means such as art (street drama and music) and linking them with input providers and buyers. Also the VET system is not accessible to youth with a low educational background and training programmes are formalised and often found only at the urban district centre. Hence the project supports the VET system with expertise in innovative learning arrangements, e.g., youth learning groups and farm field schools catering to the needs of the target groups at their village itself. Though decentralised government funding is in place, it is not easily accessible to rural communities, which is an area the project together with VETA intends to work on.

**Useful Tools, Documents, Resources:**

[http://swisscontact.ch/english/pages/PR\\_Dn/PR\\_Dn\\_106.php](http://swisscontact.ch/english/pages/PR_Dn/PR_Dn_106.php)