



How AgriFI is aiding the revamping of agricultural training in Kenya

BY EVANS ONGWAE

The AgriFI Food Safety Programme, by the Micro Enterprise Support Programme Trust (MESPT), is helping to boost food safety in Kenya.

The programme, funded by the European Union (EU) and the Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA) and implemented in 13 counties across Kenya, has already made significant contributions to the imparting of critical skills and knowledge to the people who handle produce from farm to fork, thereby improving the safety of the food on the consumer's plate.

MESPT is implementing the programme in Kilifi, Nyandarua, Nakuru, Kisii, Bungoma, Kakamega, Migori, Kiambu, Kirinyaga, Makueni, Machakos, Meru and Embu counties. By addressing the food safety concerns of domestic and international markets, the programme is enhancing the competitiveness of selected agricultural value chains. It focuses on food safety, and plant and animal health.

The programme is guided by two result areas.

Result Area 2 seeks to strengthen the capacities of actors along dairy, horticulture and aquaculture value chains through the Agricultural Technical and Vocational Education and Training (ATVET) model. The ATVET model is applied in the capacity building process and encompasses the curricula development aspect.

Result Area 3, on the other hand, seeks

to increase the capacity of the private sector and county governments to implement and enforce standards on animal health, plant health, and food safety.

MESPT began the journey of contributing to agriculture training centres by reviewing the competency-based curricula for dairy, horticulture, and aquaculture, to include food safety elements. The TVET Curriculum Development Assessment and Certification Council (CDACC) approved the curricula. This step was important because even though Agriculture Training Centres (ATCs) may continue to provide training in agriculture, they can only give internal certificates that cannot be used or transferred for progression in institutions of higher learning.

Secondly, there was a need to focus on developing learning and training guides and trainees' assessment tools for the various ATVET occupations. These resources were completed and approved by TVET CDACC for use in 2020. It should, however, be noted and appreciated that there are so many teaching and learning (T&L) materials out there, only that they are not customised to the competency-based curricula like the one MESPT developed.

Overall, the programme set out to review four curricula with the aim of addressing the inclination of ATVET centres to theory. This objective aimed at making the centres more oriented to practical skills delivery, and to subsequently address the concern of mismatch between



EU delegation visit to Kaguru ATC in Meru, led by Amb. Simon Mordue. The delegates were hosted in a hall renovated and furnished by MESPT through the AgriFI programme.

the skills learnt and real application.

Apart from the review of curricula, the AgriFI Food Safety Programme helped revamp 12 previously dilapidated Agriculture Training centres for use in training. The programme supported the centres in terms of capacity development and sustainability plans, amongst other resources needed to address the constraints limiting their operations. These interventions help to reduce food safety skills gap among value chain actors.

The 2017 Ministry of Agriculture Capacity Building Strategy for Agriculture Sector noted capacity gaps at three levels: individual, institutional and enabling environment.

At individual level, the ministry identified inadequate knowledge, skills and

competencies among technical staff and service providers, as the critical gaps. Further, the staff did not have adequate hands-on and pedagogy skills to transfer the same to value chain players. Notably, pedagogy skills are a requirement for accreditation.

At the institutional level, the ministry listed lack of harmonised curricula for agricultural vocational training and qualification framework, and low participation of youth in agriculture as the key impediments.

At the enabling environment level, the legal and regulatory frameworks and political commitment were found to be inadequate to drive the sector forward.

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Preparing ATCs for accreditation as ATVETs

BY EVANS ONGWAE

The AgriFI Food Safety Programme is supporting 13 Agriculture Training Centres (ATCs) to gain accreditation to agricultural technical, vocational education and training (ATVET) institutions. Towards this, the programme has implemented a series of initiatives that have so far achieved the following, with more activities planned for this year:

- Accreditation of 65 institutional trainers to offer training in the ATVET centres. The accreditation was based on one's qualification in relation to their chosen specialisation. Most of the trainers did not have pedagogy certificates except three. Pedagogy training will be done this year.

- Training of 465 trainers of trainers and 2,000 value chain actors. The latter include food handlers, aquaculture producer groups, horticulture producer groups, and dairy producer groups. The training applied the revised curricula and the developed sanitary and phytosanitary standards training guide. About 43 percent of the trained value chain actors were youths (below 35 years of age).

- Accreditation of seven institutions by the Technical and Vocational Education and Training Authority (TVETA). Four of these have been confirmed and licensed by TVET CDACC to offer Competency-Based Education and Training (CBET). They are Mtwapa, Kaguru, Bukura and Kisii.

- Induction and training of 10 county officers per county on the ATVET Model and CBET is scheduled for this year and will be conducted by TVET CDACC with the support of AgriFI.

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Programme transforms 13 ATCs to model ATVET centres

BY EVANS ONGWAE

Improving the capacity of agricultural technical, vocational education and training (ATVET) centres is critical to the implementation of the AgriFI Food Safety Programme.

The initiative, implemented by Micro Enterprise Support Programme Trust (MESPT) with funding from the EU and DANIDA, has supported the accreditation and licensing of the trainers, and infrastructure development in 13 ATVET centres across Kenya.

The interventions are aimed at making the ATVET centres attractive and profitable training institutions.

The programme conducted an assessment of all the 13 centres to establish their appropriateness to deliver training. From the assessment, infrastructure emerged as a common challenge.

Consequently, the programme offered infrastructure support to the centres in 2019 through to 2020. Key beneficiary institutions included Embu ATC, Kamweti ATC in Kirinyaga, Machakos ATC, Miyare in Migori, Mabanga in Bungoma and Warui

hu in Kiambu, and the selected seven model ATVET centres of Kaguru ATC in Meru, Mtwapa ATC in Kilifi, Kwa-Kathoka ATC in Makueni, Njabini ATC in Nyandarua, Nakuru ATC, Kisii ATC, and Bukura ATC in Kakamega.

The support for Embu and Kamweti ATCs was towards furniture and ICT equipment. Machakos ATC infrastructure support involved the renovation of a dilapidated training hall.

The seven model ATVET centres were selected based on the willingness of the counties to provide additional support

for developing the needed infrastructure. The selected counties were Kakamega, Kisii, Kilifi, Nakuru, Meru, Makueni, and Nyandarua. These model regional ATVET centres received additional resources to address food safety knowledge gaps and stimulate private sector engagement.

The support commenced in 2020 and will be completed this year. This phase of investment was focused on the development of infrastructure of the targeted value chains of dairy, horticulture, and aquaculture.

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Commissioning of a newly renovated and furnished training hall at Nakuru ATC by MESPT CEO Rebecca Amukhoye and DANIDA Programme Office Charles Wasike.



Renovated hall at Miyare ATC.



Computer lab renovation at Kwa Kathoka ATC.



Construction of a Dairy Unit at Mtwapa ATC