



Agricultural Tertiary and Vocational Education and Training (ATVET) in Africa

Panel 47 of the Africa Knows! Conference

On December 3, 2020, the Netherlands Food Partnership facilitated Panel 47 entitled "Agricultural Tertiary and Vocational Education and Training (ATVET) in Africa: integration within the broader Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation System". The panel was organized in collaboration with RUFORUM, Wageningen University & Research and Nuffic and was part of the "Africa Knows! It is time to decolonise minds" conference. It focused specifically on how ATVET can bridge the gap between higher education, other forms of learning, and the business community.

“Africa Knows!” is the closing activity of the 2020 Year of Leiden African Studies Association. The [conference](#) started with an online opening event on December 2-4, 2020, involving many partners from Africa and Europe, and introducing keynote speakers. The conference continued with 50 thematic panels during the following 3 months, of which [Panel 47](#) on ATVET in Africa was one, consisting of two, ninety minute sessions conducted virtually.

Policy Reforms for ATVET in Africa

The first session of the panel focused on ATVET policies in Africa and highlighted continental policy strategies and programmes. Key insights and successful approaches to tackle ATVET challenges were presented by Caroline Mutepe from AUDA-NEPAD and Eusebius Mukhwana from the Kenya National Qualifications Authority.

Caroline Mutepe provided an [overview](#) of the most important macro, meso and micro level insights concerning ATVET in Africa. She presented a successful roadmap to strengthen ATVET, i.e. [CAADP ATVET project](#) implemented in 12 African countries. The project’s primary approach is systems-based ATVET reform training aligned to the Continental TVET strategy. Amongst a broad range of activities and many lessons learnt, the project offers useful tools to engage the private sector through articulating their needs and becoming involved in curriculum development and apprenticeship.

Eusebius Mukhwana presented an [overview](#) of the Kenyan national framework, and what has been achieved in Kenya in recent years. These achievements include ensuring coherence between ATVET programmes and other academic programmes, and harmonising qualifications within Kenya.

Despite the success stories presented by both speakers, they identified several key challenges, three important challenges being investments and sustainable funding, the need to link demand and supply and women’s access and participation in ATVET.

They also called for continental action on three issues:

1. The establishment of a network to learn from each other. Within the university sector there is often a very clear network of universities, with different associations, councils and umbrella organisations. However, TVET has been a neglected area in this sense.
2. The need for continental policy standards as well as guidelines to support the ATVETs. The continental policy should support each country’s reform agenda to make its ATVET more vibrant and attractive to industry and young people.
3. Research outreach and promotion of the ATVETs, e.g. through positive role models in the agrifood sector.

David van Kampen from Nuffic closed the first session by stating that from the Dutch policy perspective attention to gender and inclusivity is key and requires attention within ATVET. He also addressed the benefits of a system approach as explained in the Kenyan case. The system of diploma recognition and structuring of training certifications facilitates individuals as well as the labour market (the private sector). It becomes clear what the added value is and to students what they will gain from investing their time and tuition fees.

Integration of ATVET into broader systems of agricultural knowledge, skills and innovation

During the second session of the panel, a background [report](#) providing an [overview](#) of how the ATVET sector is organized, and how it relates to the broader national agricultural knowledge and innovation systems (AKIS) in Africa, was presented by Richard Hawkins of iCRA. This report looks at efforts in the region by reviewing TVET and ATVET policies, the institutional landscape and experience in the region and selected countries (Benin, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria and Uganda). In addition the report includes nine case studies from these countries to illustrate challenges/successes of individual ATVET institutes. During this session different ATVET links were explored, such as those between ATVET and the private sector, universities, government policy and extension.

Four break-out sessions enabled individual cases from Ethiopia, Kenya, Ghana and Nigeria to be presented and discussed. During these sessions, successes and lessons learnt were shared, including the mutual benefits of relationships for example between ATVETs and universities, NGOs and the private sector, and how these relate to enrolment of women and possibilities for self-employment, for example. It became clear that there are still many challenges to address. These include better enabling students to move through the education sector and into the productive sector, provision and availability of equipment for trainees, accessibility of private ATVET for poorer people. Not only different linkages were stressed, but the importance of a holistic approach was mentioned as well. This means looking at several levels of education and finding common ground; e.g. through sharing infrastructure, influencing curriculum development including competency-based education and training, and building teacher capacity.

David van Kampen from Nuffic closed the panel by emphasizing that collaboration and partnerships are key, not only within country borders, but also between countries. He encouraged ATVET colleges to also seek peers across the border and see how they can influence policy and make sure that ATVET is put on the agenda. He also expressed that Nuffic will share the knowledge exchanged during this panel with the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Key take away from the panel

Part of the missing link in the ATVET sector is that there are many efforts and good reforms at national policy and institutional level, in collaboration with private sector and universities, in education and training modules. However, these islands of success remain isolated from each other and achieving scale is still a challenge. Building continental momentum for ATVET will require facilitating these islands of success, which can be found all over Africa, to inspire others and share their experiences to build competency and vibrancy for this vital sector. The partnership which prepared and organised the panel is now exploring ways to support the initiative for a continental and African owned network to drive the agenda for ATVET In Africa.

This is a summary report of panel 47, an elaborate report can be found [here](#).