

# African Union: Gender-transformative skills development for women in agriculture

Under the Skills Initiative for Africa (SIFA), Agricultural Technical Vocational Education and Training for Women (ATVET4W) improves employment prospects, especially for women, in agriculture and food security in selected countries in Africa through innovative and gender-transformative skills development.

Project name	Agricultural Technical Vocational Education and Training for Women (ATVET4W) through AUDA-NEPAD
Commissioned by	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and co-financed by the Royal Norwegian Embassy in Malawi
Implementing organisation	AUDA-NEPAD and GIZ
Project region	Africa (based in South Africa)
Lead executing agency	African Union Commission (AUC)
Duration	01.01.2017 – 31.10.2022
Financial volume	22.000.000 EUR



## Our approach

In response to employment challenges in Africa, especially for youth and women, the African Union Commission (AUC) and the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) initiated the Skills Initiative for Africa (SIFA) in 2016. The Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH supports the African Union Development Agency (AUDA- NEPAD) and the AUC in facilitating a continental dialogue on employment-oriented skills development with a strong involvement of the private sector. The gathering and disseminating of good practice approaches in African countries aims at improving quality, access and relevance of skills development projects. Exchange and dialogue take place both online through the [African Skills Portal for Youth Employment and Entrepreneurship \(ASPYEE\)](#) and offline through national, regional and continental dialogue platforms like Africa Creates Jobs (ACJ).

ATVET4W brings experience on gender-transformative skills development from 6 AU Member States to the continental dialogue. The partner countries are Benin, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi and Togo where the project implements gender-sensitive, job-oriented education and training in agriculture and food security in close collaboration with national partners from the public and private sector. These measures are for women who i) are going through the formal vocational education system; ii) as small-scale farmers,

## The challenge

Women play a significant role in the agricultural sector in sub-Saharan Africa. They produce 80 per cent of food and make up 50 per cent of the agricultural workforce. The formal education sector in agriculture is underdeveloped in most African countries and does not meet the needs of the labour market nor the needs of the women.

Women working in the agricultural and food sector in many African countries do not have adequate employment prospects. As a result, women's potential to increase their economic and social empowerment as well as agricultural productivity and profitability on the continent remains untapped.



Photos (left): Agnes, a graduate of the Women in the Driving Seat tractor training in Ghana © GIZ/ AgricToday

Photo (middle): ATVET training session in Benin © GIZ

Photo (right): Continued practical training session in Togo © GIZ



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Photo (left): Women at a co-creation workshop on gender equality advocacy in Burkina Faso © GIZ/ Butterfly Works

Photo (center): Ngaba and Dziko Chatata, successful agribusiness owners and ATVET partners in Malawi © GIZ/ Maria Thundu

Photo (right): ATVET student Caroline at the Dairy Training Institute (DTI) in Kenya © GIZ

have not yet had access to formal or non-formal education and training; and iii) are micro- and small-scale entrepreneurs.

Key starting points in this project include promoting on-the-job training as part of formal training courses, job-oriented, non-formal training measures and cooperation between training providers and the private sector in general.

Furthermore, the project aims to promote business models and employment opportunities for women. Running agribusiness training courses such as the Gender Makes Business Sense programme helps to promote entrepreneurship with the aid of gender-transformative approaches.

## Results in figures...

**38 training modules** in segments of selected agricultural value chains with great employment and earning potential have been developed and implemented. The project has supported **22 partner institutions to introduce gender guidelines**, making it easier for women to access and take advantage of training courses and preparing both women and men to successfully engage in the labour market.

**17 partner institutions offer gender-sensitive training** programmes and are thus helping to make participants aware of the issue of equality, which has a positive impact on employment prospects, especially for women. Following on-the-job training, **97 per cent of the employers surveyed** confirm that those who have undergone training can be employed immediately. As of 2019, **13,900 people** had already taken part in training and continuing professional development programmes.

## ...and in stories

In all six countries, gender-transformative pilot initiatives have been set up. Being gender-transformative means that interventions focus on actively questioning established norms and gender stereotypes and on dismantling existing structural inequalities.

*"I have brought together several women in groups who carry out several agricultural activities, including the production of compost. We manage to sell our products even outside of Benin, in Togo. The women now manage to send their children to school and to support the household alongside the men."*

**Salatou Orou Adohi**, ZARA Compost Manager, Benin

*"The activities were exciting. Women who didn't go to school were able to express themselves. Women who had never been to school... could use a pen or pencil to visually portray their lives and daily needs. The women took pictures to represent what they want to decide, helping us to choose what information we want to give to other women and men. Honestly, it gave us confidence."*

**Maïssata Soutra**, Departmental Union of Rice Steamers in Douna, Burkina Faso

**Ngaba and Dziko Chatata** are a successful wife and husband duo. Together they are paving the way as leading vegetable producers in Malawi. Seven years ago, the Chatatas established and now co-own Thanthwe Farms, an innovative agribusiness venture that specialises in horticulture, livestock and community outreach. With support of the project, Ngaba and Dziko offer mentorship and skills training to budding farmers surrounding their farm. This outgrower scheme uses a household approach to champion joint decision-making for farm and home-related management decisions. This approach has proven successful for Ngaba and Dziko as equal and empowered partners, both in marriage and their agribusiness. As a husband and business owner, Dziko understands that joint ownership and management of Thanthwe Farms gives the couple higher chances of success. If women are empowered both socially and economically, prospects for the future look brighter. The Chatatas now serve as role models for other households and agribusiness partnerships in Likuni, Malawi and beyond.

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