Addressing Food Security Through Educational Capacity Building in Tanzania

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Many educational institutions in Sub-Saharan Africa are limited by a lack of capacity to develop and deliver relevant, up-to-date, competency-based training courses. There is a particular need to focus on land stewardship, sustainable agricultural practices, small business management, and food processing technology. This is especially important in Tanzania where 80% of the economy is based on agriculture, and food security is a major issue. Competency Based Educational Training (CBET) in appropriate fields of study is essential for addressing challenges faced in small farm management. Acquiring the necessary skills will also increase employability, or assist in creating self-employment opportunities. The objective of this project was to build instructional capacity at Kihonda College, a regional vocational training and service centre in Morogoro, Tanzania. An assessment of the training needs and operational status of agri-businesses in the Morogoro region was conducted in June 2010. Seven key subject areas for training were identified. These included: soil management practices; water and irrigation; fertility management; seeding practices; integrated pest management; horticultural crops; and food processing. Using Canadian subject matter expertise, and instructors at Kihonda College trained in the CBET approach, a suite of courses has been developed to meet specific regional needs for the enhancement of food production. Through the training of instructors, and development of these tailor-made courses, Kihonda College will now be better equipped to deliver Competency-Based Educational Training in core areas of agriculture and agri-food to meet the future needs of regional farmers and employers.