

Ghanaian industrial training project builds skills for future economy - report

A six-year project to develop industrial skills among Ghana's workforce has improved the engineering and manufacturing skills of young people, promoted economic competitiveness and contributed to an improvement in the quality of life of beneficiaries and a reduction in poverty, according to an African Development Bank report issued on 15 July 2020.



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The Development of Skills for Industry Project (DSIP) was implemented between 2013 and 2019 with \$95.2 million in financing from the African Development Fund of the African Development Bank. Its goal was to support the Ghanaian government's efforts to reform the Technical and Vocational Education Training (TVET) sector and enhance technical and professional schools' capacity at the intermediate level.

The project achieved significant results. Over the period, 2,010 students enrolled in two technical universities and 10 technical institutes (40.7% of whom were women) were aided by scholarships, with the goal of increasing the participation of disadvantaged groups. In addition, 2,500 apprentices, more than half of them women, benefited from this scholarship programme. In total, scholarships were granted to 4,510 people, including 2,173 disadvantaged students," according to the Project Completion Report prepared by a team led by Efua Amissah-Arthur, social development specialist at the African Development Bank.

"The project improved access to 13 public technical institutions in 38 districts of Ghana's 10 former regions, through the development of new infrastructure such as laboratories, workshops, classrooms, dormitories, and housing for instructors.

The project strengthened TVET capacity by training 149 instructors (20% of them women) and 800 master craftspeople in 38 districts to support the traditional apprenticeship programme. Twenty masters-level degree-training sessions that focused on a Competency Based Training (CBT) approach to skills training were provided, as were five doctoral programmes for personnel at the College of Technology Education, Kumasi (CoLTEK). Furnishings, workshop equipment, ICT tools, and training manuals were also provided.

The report emphasises that production units and entrepreneurial operational models for student use were successfully piloted in each of the 10 technical institutes that developed and strengthened students' entrepreneurial and professional skills.

The programme of study for skills-focused training was developed in three areas: mechanical engineering, welding and manufacturing, and electronics. The associated training manuals were prepared and printed for distribution. Another area of interest was the hospitality and tourism sector, which received a boost from the project.

"The project was beneficial for students and for the entire country as it aligned with the government's TVET reform agenda. Women, girls in particular, benefited from increased access to high-quality training, especially skills training, at the diploma, masters and doctoral levels," the report concludes.

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