

Contributing to rural transformation through skills development: the role of University-Community and TVET Linkages with experiences from Egerton University

Abstract

This paper provides highlights of Egerton University engagement with farming communities and TVETs and demonstrates the inherent potential that the University-Community and TVET partnership can achieve in rural transformation. Egerton University, is one of the best agricultural universities in Kenya running a unique model of agricultural training that is focused on practical skills development. Staying on its foundations as an agricultural college, the university has continued to train working in partnership with the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) institutions in Kenya. Running a practical competency based oriented curriculum with a strong focus on agricultural commodity value chains, industry, and communities; Egerton University has demonstrated that it is possible for a university to be a nucleus for rural transformation. For example, through the farm attachment programme, farmer's skills have been enhanced and the profitability of the commodity value chains especially the dairy value chain has been enhanced. Additionally, both rural and urban youth have been able to find employment opportunities in profitable commodity value chains as well as in value addition. Similarly, smallholder farmers engaged with the university are transitioning from subsistence focus towards being agripreneurs within Kenya.