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Kyrgyz Republic: Second Vocational Education and Skills Development Project

Asian Development Bank

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Abstract
The seven priority sectors outlined in the Kyrgyz Republic's Medium-Term Development Plan include construction, mining, energy, tourism, textiles and garment, land transport, and agriculture/agroprocessing. These sectors jointly constitute 54% of gross domestic product and 63% of formal employment and are expected to drive the economy and create jobs for the growing number of unemployed, particularly among youth. However, many enterprises experience difficulties in finding skilled workers, underscoring the mismatch between the outputs of the education and training sector and labor market needs.

The Kyrgyz Republic's technical and vocational education and training (TVET) system is meant to develop skilled workers and craftspersons, technicians, and middle-level staff. It aims to address the Kyrgyz Republic's human resource needs to achieve its economic objectives.

However, enrollment in the TVET system is small. The quality and relevance of TVET also suffer from outdated curriculum and pedagogical practices, aging teaching staff, inadequate and obsolete equipment, weak institutional management, insufficient funding, and weak links with industry. Coordination between the different type en managing between the different type organizations is also weak.

Keywords
Kyrgyz Republic, vocational education, skills development

Comments
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Challenge

The seven priority sectors outlined in the Kyrgyz Republic’s Medium-Term Development Plan include construction, mining, energy, tourism, textiles and garment, land transport, and agriculture/agroprocessing. These sectors jointly constitute 54% of gross domestic product and 63% of formal employment and are expected to drive the economy and create jobs for the growing number of unemployed, particularly among youth. However, many enterprises experience difficulties in finding skilled workers, underscoring the mismatch between the outputs of the education and training sector and labor market needs.

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However, enrollment in the TVET system is small. The quality and relevance of TVET also suffer from outdated curriculum and pedagogical practices, aging teaching staff, inadequate and obsolete equipment, weak institutional management, insufficient funding, and weak links with industry. Coordination between the different types of TVET providers and between managing organizations is also weak.

Solution

To improve skills development in the Kyrgyz Republic, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) approved in September 2012 the Second Vocational Education and Skills Project.

IMPACT AND OUTCOMES

ADB’s Second Vocational Education and Skills Development Project is helping the Kyrgyz Republic to strengthen its technical and vocational education and training (TVET) program to support seven priority sectors.

The project will help to

• Rationalize and modernize the country’s TVET system. A TVET rationalization strategy is being implemented, along with an action plan.

• Improve TVET teaching and learning environments. Workshops, computer classrooms, and dormitories are being renovated and provided with modern equipment.

• Develop curriculum, teaching, and learning materials. Competency-based training, and new competency standards are being implemented. Trainers are being retrained, and new curricula and materials for new occupations are being developed. Libraries are provided with new materials.

• Strengthen the quality of TVET delivery. School principals, deputies, administrators, and teachers of vocational schools are attending in-country and international training; teachers are being certified by the Teachers’ Qualification Framework; students are educated and trained under an improved quality assurance system.
The project will help to alleviate labor market constraints by supporting the modernization of the TVET system in rural and urban areas. It engages closely with employers to identify key occupations for which training is needed and determine the skills they require.

The project builds on the achievements under the first Vocational Education and Skills Development Project, which supported reforms to the primary TVET system, designed to develop skilled workers and craftspersons. It also complements the Investment Climate Improvement Program of ADB, which includes policy actions to leverage TVET reforms.

Students will benefit from long-term training programs, and adults and out-of-school youths will have access to short-term training courses during the project. New demand-driven curriculum modules, rehabilitated and upgraded training workshops, and practice-oriented training programs will improve graduates’ employment opportunities and wage prospects.

Because over 50% of youths and adults participating in the training programs are from low-income families, the project will contribute to enhancing earning opportunities for vulnerable groups. Vocational schools will be able to generate more income, which will supplement state funding and pay for training consumables and additional income for teachers.

Local enterprises will benefit because of a better-skilled workforce that will contribute to the country’s economic competitiveness and growth.

Sector maps for the seven priority sectors were prepared to identify new priority occupations that will be supported under the project. A survey was conducted to establish a comprehensive list of technical occupations in each of the seven sectors. Employers working in priority sectors were asked to select the most critical occupations and skills needed for their operations, number of skilled workers required, difficulty in filling vacancies, and length of time needed to train new hires before they become productive.

By improving access to short- and long-term training programs and strengthening their labor market relevance, the project will help to produce graduates with the technical skills required by the country’s seven priority sectors, and will foster greater productivity and competitiveness.

The program is in line with the ADB Education Sector Group’s strategic priorities. The Education Sector Group, anchored in the Sustainable Development and Climate Change Department, provides operational support to the regional departments, plans and monitors ADB support to education, conducts analytical studies on education issues, and promotes interagency coordination for education.

**Cost and Financing:**
- Asian Development Fund, $10 million; Asian Development Grant, $10 million; Government, $3.5 million

**Program approval date:**
28 September 2012

**Status:** Ongoing

**Modality:** Project loan

**Executing agency:** Agency for Vocational Education

For more information:
Second Vocational Education and Skills Development Project