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Innovation for Agricultural Training and Education



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InnovATE Semi-Annual Report Year 3

Oct. 1, 2014 – March 31, 2015

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Innovation for Agricultural Training and Education (InnovATE) Semi-Annual Report, Oct 1, 2014 – March 31, 2015

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All pictures and images courtesy of InnovATE and OIRE

Cover Photo: Hulbuk Fortress, Khatlon Province, Tajikistan

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For more information about the InnovATE project and other publications visit our website at <http://www.oired.vt.edu/innovate> or join the discussion in our Community of Practice at www.innovate-community.oired.vt.edu. Contact us at innovateprogram@vt.edu or call 540-231-1875.

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List of Acronyms

- AET - agricultural education and training
- AFU – Agriculture and Forestry University
- AIAEE - Association for International Agricultural and Extension Education
- AKIS – Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation System
- ANSAB - Asia Network for Sustainable Agriculture and Bioresources
- AOR - USAID Agreement Officer Representative
- APLU – Association of Public and Land-grant Universities
- BIFAD – Board for International Food and Agricultural Development
- BFS - Bureau for Food Security
- CARSI – Central American Regional Security Initiative
- CRSP – Collaborative Research Support Programs
- CFCN – Call for Concept Notes
- CPCD – Community Participatory Curriculum Development
- CoP - Community of Practice
- DEVTEC – Development Technology Services
- DRC – The Democratic Republic of Congo
- E3 - USAID Bureau for Economic Growth, Education, and Environment
- ERA - Education and Research in Agriculture
- FTF – Feed the Future
- HICD- Human and Institutional Capacity Development
- ICT – Information and Communications Technology
- InnovATE - Innovation for Agricultural Training and Education Project
- IOF – Institute of Forestry
- ME – Management Entity
- MEAS – Modernizing Extension and Advisory Services
- OIRED - Office of International Research, Education, and Development
- PAC - Program Advisory Council
- Penn State or PSU – The Pennsylvania State University
- RUFORUM - Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture
- SOW - Statement of Work
- TU - Tuskegee University
- TVET – Technical and Vocational Education and Training
- UF - University of Florida
- USAID - United States Agency for International Development
- VT - Virginia Tech

Glossary of terms

- **AET assessment report** – An AET assessment report documents an institutional or system-wide analysis conducted at the request of a USAID mission. These reports identify gaps in the human and institutional capacity of in-country AET systems. Examples of good practices are identified and recommendations for next steps are specified.
- **Assessment brief** – Short paper of 3-5 pages presenting assessment report analysis and scoping trip findings and results in a concise and clear manner.
- **Background study** – Background studies are studies conducted on a country's AET system, at times with attention paid to a particular AET institution or program. Background studies are based on USAID mission interest, the presence of interesting AET activities or problems, and/or geographical balance. Most of the initial work on the studies will be done through desktop review of available literature and communication with experts.
- **Fact sheet** – A fact sheet is a two-page document which is used to build awareness and inform stakeholders about various AET-related subjects. InnovATE creates country fact sheets which highlight major findings in background reports.
- **Good practice paper** – Short paper of 500-1000 words that offers guidance and recommendations for good practices on specific topics (i.e. mentoring, financial administration). Good practice is strategic action that moves the country AET toward system-wide FTF goals. Ideas for good practices are solicited from a range of AET practitioners in the field.
- **Thematic study** – InnovATE thematic studies examine a particular AET system, cross-cutting theme, model, or technique and offer an analysis of the subject in question. These studies often highlight AET innovations in good practices. Case studies examine how agricultural education and training intersects with other development issues which benefit from AET capacity building.
- **Thematic brief** – Short paper of 3-5 pages presenting findings and analysis from a thematic study in a clear and concise manner. These briefs summarize thematic study findings.
- **Scoping Tools** - The InnovATE project team has developed scoping tools which are used to assess AET systems in country. These include a general scoping methodology which is adapted to each Mission request, institutional and landscape tools, and general and gender focused interview and focus group questions and guidelines.
- **Scoping trip** – InnovATE will serve USAID interests by responding within its resources to requests by missions and bureaus to undertake scoping trips. Scoping trips are rapid assessments conducted to gather information about the AET system in a particular country, at times with attention paid to a particular AET institution or program. During scoping trips, InnovATE team members utilize InnovATE scoping tools.

Introduction

Innovation for Agricultural Training and Education (InnovATE) works to support capacity development in agricultural education and training (AET) in order to stimulate agricultural sector innovation and entrepreneurship throughout the developing world. The mission of the InnovATE project is to achieve sustainable food security, reduce poverty, promote rural innovation and stimulate employment by building human and institutional capacity. The program focuses on all aspects of agricultural training and education including: youth, gender, and workforce development at the primary, vocational/technical, university and post-graduate levels.

InnovATE is organized around three programmatic components: LEARN, DESIGN and TRAIN. The activities within each component interact to create a value chain focused, student-centered methodology. Effort will be allocated to documenting AET lessons learned and good practices, expanding the network of AET professionals and institutions, providing technical assistance to USAID missions, and offering associated training for USAID personnel and implementing partners tasked with AET reform.

These integrated LEARN, DESIGN, and TRAIN components aim to strengthen the full range of AET institutions that engage agricultural professionals—from primary and secondary institutions to vocational schools, technical colleges, and universities—in areas such as curriculum review, pedagogy reform, faculty development, gender balance and equity, infrastructure, administration and management, outreach, student services, and educational policy. The InnovATE project defines and disseminates good practice strategies, approaches, and investments for establishing efficient, effective and financially sustainable agricultural education and training institutions and systems. The project is implemented by a consortium of US universities including Virginia Tech, Pennsylvania State University, University of Florida and Tuskegee University.

This semi-annual report for Year 3 provides a summary of progress towards completion of InnovATE project activities during the period from October 1, 2014 through March 31, 2015. As requested in the cooperative agreement, the format for this report follows the outline of the FY14-15 InnovATE work plan. Following this introduction the report provides an overview of Year 3 activities organized by the LEARN, DESIGN, TRAIN components. The subsequent three sections provide further detail of activity in each category. The last section of the report details administrative tasks completed in the first half of Year 3. This report also includes an appendix providing an outline that compares the priority themes identified at the InnovATE Symposium held in Year 1 with InnovATE's portfolio of products.

This report was prepared with input from collaborating faculty and staff of the Management Entity (ME) Virginia Tech (VT), the InnovATE consortium partners: the Pennsylvania State University (PSU); Tuskegee University (TU); the University of Florida (UF); the Program Advisory Council (PAC) and the USAID Agreement Officer Representative (AOR) and colleagues in the Bureau for Food Security (BFS). As work continues throughout the remainder of the year, lessons learned will be incorporated into the project implementation strategy. Program adjustments and re-orientations will be managed through subsequent annual work plans approved through the AOR in USAID/BFS.

Overview of Year 3 Activities

LEARN

The LEARN component consolidates information and lessons learned from past experiences that will guide the DESIGN and TRAIN project activities. To improve agricultural education and training systems, we need to gather current AET information on issues that impact AET systems and make this accessible for examination. This component documents good practices and assessment tools to address specific problems at AET institutions and at the country level.

In Year 3, InnovATE is continuing to develop studies of national AET systems based on the demand of USAID missions. These studies map the AET system in each country and look at existing and/or past AET capacity development interventions if there are models which warrant analysis. Country studies for DRC and Tajikistan were finalized and a study for Mozambique was completed in the first half of Year 3. A country study for Mali is underway. Country factsheets for DRC, Mozambique and Tajikistan were completed in this time period.

Each year InnovATE chooses topics for scholarly examination to better understand opportunities for AET capacity building in developing countries. The selection of topics for studies to be undertaken in Year 3 was based on USAID mission interest, Year 1 Symposium priorities, follow-on inquiry of topics undertaken in Year 2 and consideration of partner expertise and experience. The thematic study topics for the LEARN component have been informed by recommendations of the Program Advisory Council (PAC) which convened in early March. InnovATE also identified relevant topics in discussions that unfold through the Community of Practice (CoP) and from themes identified through the Call for Concept Notes (CFCN). In the first half of Year 3, InnovATE completed one thematic study on degree training and curriculum development to support human and institutional capacity development (HICD). Five additional thematic studies are in production.

The creation of InnovATE good practice papers has been a major focus of Year 3. InnovATE has solicited concepts for good practice papers via practitioner interviews at all AET conferences, scoping trip interviews with stakeholders and CoP discussion and resource sharing. In the second half of Year 2 and Q1 of Year 3, InnovATE developed guidelines and procedures for solicitation and created a review committee, to guide the collection and publication of short documents coming from the AET community. Good practice papers are featured as part of the AET knowledge sharing platform in the CoP and on the InnovATE website to provide exposure for the work of AET professionals and organizations.

In Year 3, InnovATE is producing new academic literature that is built on work completed in the first two years of the project. Discussion following the annual partners meeting, held in late March, will also guide thematic areas. In the second half of Year 3, concept notes will be completed by the recipients of the CFCN and will be reviewed for potential development and implementation in the remaining life of project. Nine proposals were identified to be awarded funding; upon review one institution withdrew their proposal.

DESIGN

The objective of the DESIGN component is to identify approaches and strategies for strengthening specific AET institutions and systems based on information gathered through LEARN activities in response to local USAID Missions. The DESIGN component applies assessment tools and other methods that adapt good practices to provide project design guidance. This assures that AET investments meet the needs of USAID missions and local AET partners. The end result is a set of analyses and recommendations that lead to systemic capacity improvements in agricultural education and training.

In the first half of Year 3, InnovATE conducted scoping trips in Honduras and Tajikistan and provided AET assessment reports based on information gathered during scoping trips that have been submitted to the respective USAID missions. InnovATE is always available to serve USAID interests by responding to requests by missions and bureaus to undertake scoping trips and conduct AET assessments to guide decision making in AET project design, allowing for the availability of resources within InnovATE core activities and funding.

TRAIN

This component focuses on sharing LEARN and DESIGN experiences. In particular, good practices, analyses, and thematic studies are made available when and where appropriate to USAID missions, national/international AET professionals, user groups and other interested parties through online training modules, a database of training activities, pedagogy workshops, and short courses. TRAIN activities assure that InnovATE extends learning opportunities throughout the AET Community of Practice.

InnovATE made considerable progress in this component in the first half of Year 3. In Q1, InnovATE co-hosted a USAID Staff training on rural workforce development, facilitated discussion as part of the three day AgExchange webinar, continued expansion of the short term training database and published the Gender in AET online training module. In Q2, InnovATE faculty facilitated sessions at the International Conference on Climate Change Innovation and Resilience for Sustainable Livelihoods in Nepal, presented papers and held conversation sessions at regional professional association and higher education conferences and hosted a symposium on US-Africa Higher Education Partnerships focused on student success at the University of Florida.

I. LEARN: AET system analysis and pilot projects

InnovATE provides intellectual leadership in AET for generating practical policy guidance to USAID and AET reformers in host countries by learning from the field and from academic analyses. InnovATE examines how efficient and sustainable AET institutions can support a vibrant AKIS from a broad range of agricultural development practitioners, AET specialists and private sector entities. The stakeholders include those working with youth or workforce development, training centers, private sector trainers and primary, secondary, vocational and higher education institutions.

LEARN activities during Year 3 will be structured under three activities: 1) gathering information and creating AET knowledge; 2) making this information accessible to a global audience; and 3) fostering the further development of the AET Community of Practice.

ACTIVITY 1: Gathering information and creating AET knowledge

Review and summarize literature about AET topics

InnovATE continues to build its online AET bibliography by reviewing grey and peer reviewed literature. In the first half of Year 3, literature has been collected for studies on AET professional development for educators, AET curriculum development and reform to support workforce development and employers' needs, and AET programs to support rural workforce development and regional security initiatives in Central America. Resources and bibliographies in relation to these studies have been submitted to a shared project databank. Submissions are organized by country as well as key topic. InnovATE is exploring options for sharing this information outside of the consortium including through the CoP.

Conduct gender focused research

InnovATE conducts specific research on gender issues surrounding AET systems. The objective of the research is to identify constraints and opportunities for increasing women's participation in AET. The research replicates the gender research already conducted in Mozambique during Year 2. This involves interviews with male and female students, faculty members, and administrators in institutions of higher education. One product of this study is a list of recommendations and good practices for addressing gender issues within AET institutions that was presented at the Symposium on US-Africa Higher Education Partnerships at the University of Florida in Q2. This research provides the foundation for a thematic study on gender in university agricultural programs that will be completed in the second half of Year 3.

Complete background studies of AET systems

In the first half of Year 3, background studies for Tajikistan and DRC were finalized and one for Mozambique was completed. A draft for the Mali study has been circulated and is anticipated to be complete in Q3. Country fact sheets have been completed for DRC, Mozambique and Tajikistan in the first half of Year 3. Background studies are responses to USAID mission interest, the presence of interesting AET activities or problems, and/or a geographical balance. Following the completion of background studies, information is consolidated into country fact sheets.

Complete thematic studies

Thematic studies analyze a particular AET system, or focus on a cross-cutting theme, private sector based investment opportunity or emerging educational innovation. This activity has, in certain cases, led to the generation of good practice papers. These studies examine how agricultural education and training intersects with other development issues which are important to creating a sustainable AKIS. Additionally, thematic studies will be distilled into concise thematic briefs to make research analysis and lessons learned accessible to a wide audience.

In the first half of Year 3, Dr. Kristal Jones, Claudia Rojas and Dr. Tom Gill, of The Pennsylvania State University, completed and published a thematic study for InnovATE. This report analyzes lessons learned from decades of Collaborative Research Support Programs (CRSPs) activities and identifies how these lessons might be transferable to the current Feed the Future Innovation Labs for Collaborative Research (ILs). This thematic study is timely as the ILs are beginning to articulate their approach to HICD within their focused research areas.

- [Degree training and curriculum development to support HICD: Good practices from USAID Collaborative Research Support Programs and Feed the Future Innovation Labs for Collaborative Research](#)

Five thematic studies are in progress that we anticipate to be completed in the second half of Year 3. A paper on Muslim Women and AET is complete and has been circulated to reviewers for edits. A draft paper on the multi-country study on how education and training programs can support rural workforce development and regional security initiatives in Central America is underway. Literature search and review have been completed for thematic studies on AET assessment indicators, professional development for AET educators and AET curriculum development and reform to support workforce development and employer's needs.

Complete good practice papers

InnovATE is committed to soliciting good practices from AET practitioners around the world. A good practice is strategic action that moves the country food system towards system-wide AKIS viability. The goal of the good practice papers is to tap into the knowledge of AET practitioners, distill their ideas and publish them in an accessible format available to a wide audience. InnovATE works with the practitioners to develop their good practice ideas and to publish the good practice documents.

InnovATE has solicited concepts for good practice papers via practitioner interviews at all AET conferences, scoping trip interviews with stakeholders and CoP discussion and resource sharing. In the second half of Year 2 and Q1 of Year 3, InnovATE developed guidelines and procedures for solicitation and created a review committee, to guide the collection and publication of short documents coming from the AET community. Good practice papers will be featured as part of the AET knowledge sharing platform in the CoP to provide exposure for the work of AET professionals and organizations. The first round of papers solicited through the consortium partners and faculty networks have completed review and are being finalized for publication. The second call for submissions has been sent through a broader network of consortium and donor partners and through the InnovATE CoP. The review committee for good practice papers includes:

- Dr. Jack Elliott, Agricultural Leadership, Education and Communications, Texas A&M University
- Dr. Susie Whittington, Agricultural Communication, Education and Leadership, Ohio State University
- Dr. Matt Raven, Community Sustainability, Michigan State University
- Dr. Daniel Foster, Agricultural Economics, Sociology, and Education, The Pennsylvania State University
- Dr. Keith M. Moore, Office of International Research, Education and Development, Virginia Tech

Develop additional tools for the AET toolkit

An AET toolkit that includes methodological tools and standard protocols for InnovATE activities has been developed. A sub-committee has been formed to generate additional AET assessment tools, refine existing tools and align with monitoring and evaluation indicators. The committee is also developing new indicators for USAID HICD projects focused on AET and rural workforce development. The research for InnovATE’s thematic study on AET assessment indicators helps to identify and review existing tools, including many developed by other USAID funded projects, to inform the development of InnovATE’s toolkit. The team composition for evaluation and assessment includes:

Nikki Kernaghan, UF – Lead
 Jessica Childers, UF
 Rama Radhakrishna, PSU
 Ntam Baharanyi, TU
 Lila Karki, TU

Keith Moore, VT
 Emily Van Houweling, VT
 Tom Archibald, VT
 Johanna Cricenti, VT
 Clara Cohen, USAID

Additionally, a handbook outlining the Community Participatory Curriculum Development (CPCD) process and tools based on the workshops held in Senegal in Year 2 is in production.

Implement InnovATE RFA Program

InnovATE issued a Call for Concept Notes (CFCN) at the end of Year 2 to accept applications for discussion papers that address *Contemporary Challenges in Agricultural Education and Training*. InnovATE is tasked with compiling the best ideas on how to build the capacity AET institutions and programs and disseminating them to AET practitioners around the world. These concept papers will define the state of the art in the theory and practice of AET, in their focus domains and explore promising strategies and practices for strengthening AET systems and institutions. Topic areas of interest solicited for the concept papers were:

- Pathways that Link Extension and Education
- AET Public-Private Partnerships
- Rural Workforce Development
- Institutional Leadership and Change Management
- Youth Development for Citizenship, Employment, and Leadership
- Strengthening Agriculture and Nutrition Linkages
- Other Areas of Successful AET Intervention

The review panel for the RFA included representatives of all our partner institutions and a sitting PAC member. The panelists for review were as follows:

Henry Findlay, TU
 Tom Hammett, VT
 Kurt Richter, VT
 Grady Roberts, UF

Rick Rudd, VT
 Sandra Russo, UF
 Nicole Webster, PSU
 Donna Westfall-Rudd, VT, PAC

In order to ensure that no reviewer evaluated a proposal from their home institution, each reviewer completed grading on 5 or 6 of the 23 assigned by the ME. Each proposal was evaluated by 2 reviewers, using the criteria outlined in the call for concept notes. The final scores were then averaged to make a final ranking. The top proposals were selected based on the reviewer’s ranking. Nine proposals were accepted for funding in the process; on review one institution withdrew their application. The table below includes the principal investigators, title of the proposal and the affiliation of the recipients. The 20-30 page concept papers will be submitted by the end of Year 3 accompanied by a 2 page research brief.

Investigators	Title	Institution
Hassen et al.	Assessing Pathways that link AET and Extension to Enhance the Quality of Learning	Haramaya University, Ethiopia
Suvedi and Ghimire	How Competent Are the Agricultural Extension Agents and Extension Educators in Nepal	Michigan State University
Mukembo	Project-based Learning: A Way to Equip Youth with Valuable Life Skills while Linking Secondary Agricultural Education to Communities for Improved Livelihoods	Oklahoma State University
Brennan and Eissler	Review of Research and Practice for Youth Engagement in Agricultural Education and Training Systems	The Pennsylvania State University
Baker and Lawver	Developing the Capacity of Middle-Level Tertiary Education Systems: Entrepreneurship Education, Community-Based Agricultural Extension, Workforce Development, and Institutional Leadership and Change Management	Texas Tech University
Heinert and Roberts	Engaging Rural Youth in Entrepreneurship through Extracurricular and Co-curricular Systems	University of Florida
Vreyens	Modernizing Moroccan Vocational Technical Schools to Develop a 21st Century Credentialed Work Force	University of Minnesota
Friedel and Spindler	The Effect of Problem-Solving Style on Institutional Capacity to Manage Change	Virginia Tech/SUNY

Connect and collaborate with AET practitioners around the world

During Year 3, the InnovATE program continues to develop linkages and conduct outreach activities, expand the program’s network of U.S. collaborators, present the results of our work, and synthesize the experience of other AET organizations at conferences and meetings. To support this work, InnovATE faculty attended and participated in the following events during the first half of Year 3:

- Agricultural Extension and Food Security in Africa, Extension Africa Conference, Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio October 20-21, 2014
- International Conference on Climate Change Innovation and Resilience for Sustainable Livelihood, Kathmandu, Nepal January 12-14, 2015
- 7th Annual Conference on Higher Education Pedagogy, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, VA February 4-6, 2015

- USAID/ERA Symposium on Educational Innovations in Education and Training in Agriculture, Dakar, Senegal, March 3-5, 2015.
- African Higher Education Summit, Trust Africa, Dakar, Senegal March 10-12, 2015
- Tropical Agriculture Platform (TAP), Workshop of the Capacity Development Expert Group, Montpellier, France March 19-20, 2015

InnovATE faculty prepared and submitted multiple papers and panel presentations for the upcoming Association of International Agricultural and Extension Education (AIAEE) conference in the first half of Year 3. AIAEE is a professional organization for agricultural and extension educators who share a common goal of strengthening agricultural and extension education programs and institutions worldwide. The 2015 conference will be a joint session with the European Seminar on Education and will be held from April 27 - May 1, 2015 at Wageningen University in the Netherlands. This event will congregate the most knowledgeable participants in agricultural education and training from higher education institutions globally.

The event provides a platform for discussion and dissemination for the papers that InnovATE faculty and partners are producing. The AIAEE conference provides a further opportunity for faculty and graduate researchers to collect the latest insights on AET topics through engagement with the leading scholars in the field. Consortium partners from Penn State, University of Florida and Virginia Tech will participate in the conference.

ACTIVITY 2: Making this information accessible to a global audience

As part of activity 2, making AET knowledge accessible, InnovATE develops outreach communications targeted towards USAID to share AET knowledge. The team has maintained and expanded InnovATE's presence in social media platforms to engage with stakeholders directly for sharing news and resources.

The team will maintain InnovATE's website as a knowledge sharing platform, and a place to disseminate InnovATE publications and resources. The project website has had over 4,700 users with a 79% return rate and over 21,500 views.

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DID YOU KNOW?

1 in 8 people in the world are chronically hungry. The world will need to feed 9 billion people by 2050. 70% of global agricultural production must increase to feed everyone. 1 in 3 people in the world work in agriculture.

What does innovATE do?

The program's integrated learning, diagnostics and training components are to strengthen the full range of institutions that train agricultural professionals.

InnovATE takes a whole-system approach, working with all levels of institutions: primary and secondary institutions, vocational schools, technical colleges, and universities.

The program works in areas such as curriculum and faculty development, gender balance and equity, administration, management, outreach, infrastructure, student services, and educational policy reform.

How does innovATE Learn, Design & Train?

Learn: innovATE carries out diagnostic work to provide developmental practitioners with local, evidence-based on-ground practices, giving practitioners a global online community of practice to increase capacity building.

Design: innovATE carries out assessments, designs projects, and makes policy recommendations to improve the effectiveness of agricultural education and training. These assessments, projects, and recommendations are tailored to fit the needs of the particular institution and agricultural sector being addressed by the program.

Train: innovATE provides training materials, conducts training and hosts workshops and symposia.

innovATE provides thought leadership in agricultural education and training capacity development... including helping USAID and other partners improve the funding and design of work with agriculture education and training systems.

How can we increase agricultural production?

Strengthening and improving:

- curriculum
- teaching
- administration
- finance
- infrastructure

InnovATE is a USAID-funded project that works with USAID missions and agricultural education and training institutions in developing countries. These partnerships are used to strengthen institutions through:

- professors
- teachers/trainers
- agricultural workers
- agricultural students

This leads to better education and training for:

- professors
- teachers/trainers
- agricultural workers
- agricultural students

This in turn means that better trained agricultural workers are being produced, and businesses can find qualified employees.

Develop their partnerships produce a STRONGER agricultural sector. Sustainable, relevant educational systems. Increased agricultural production. Increased food security & reduced poverty.

Keep in touch!

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InnovATE poster presented at VT Conference for Higher Education Pedagogy

The team also continues to produce and update informative materials to introduce and engage stakeholders and donors to our program mission, approach and objectives. Nargiza Ludgate of the

University of Florida translated the InnovATE handouts in Russian in preparation for the Tajikistan scoping assessment.

Project Website:
21,522 total page views



Most popular pages	Unique page views
Events	2,034
About InnovATE	1,803
Publications	1,593
Tools	770
News	741
Training Module: 203 page views (Nov 14 –Jan 15)	



365 likes
17% increase in 2015



854 tweets
471 followers
6% increase in 2015

ACTIVITY 3: Fostering the development of the AET community of practice

In Year 3, InnovATE is continuing to recruit and engage an active AET Community of Practice (CoP) among USAID personnel and implementing partners, AET reformers in host-countries, educational institutions at all levels, and AET professionals in international and regional organizations. Year 3 activities include the expansion of the web-based community in both breadth of users and subjects, as well as the depth of engagement and interaction. Through the virtual CoP platform, InnovATE facilitates communication and participation and provides a forum for agriculture educators.

As of the mid-point of our project, the online CoP has 287 registered users enrolled since the site launch in May 2014. The CoP houses over 500 document and discussion topics and has an active French language area and capability for discussion and posting in Spanish. In the first half of Year 3 resources and groups were added for HICD and Good Practices to be highlighted on the CoP.

In order to best utilize and refine the platform, InnovATE has created a sub-committee to define strategies for community involvement, focus of discussion and to address technical challenges. The team meets on a monthly basis and has engaged with the site developers at 7 Summits and Jive software to evaluate progress in the first year since site launch and work on search engine optimization for the CoP site. InnovATE has also engaged in discussion with Feed the Future: Partnering for Innovation who host the AgTechXChange on the same Jive platform as the InnovATE CoP. Our conversation has helped gauge our achievement, look for potential collaboration and help plan strategy for continued growth and engagement of our community. The sub-committee for the CoP includes:

Donna Westfall-Rudd, VT – Lead
Keith Moore, VT
Amy Vu, VT
Laina Schneider, VT

Johanna Cricenti, VT
Kristal Jones, PSU
Kumudu Perera, UF
Lila Karki, TU

II. DESIGN: Technical support and design

Year 3 DESIGN activities and tasks focus on applying what InnovATE has learned to help USAID missions develop investments that lead to country specific goals. InnovATE has developed tools that identify constraints that are hindering the creation of a vibrant food system and a supportive AKIS. The end goal of the design phase is to help missions make programming decisions and design projects that sustainably strengthen value chain workforce development. InnovATE offers project design services including proposal and work plan preparation, establishment of monitoring and evaluation systems, and impact measurement.

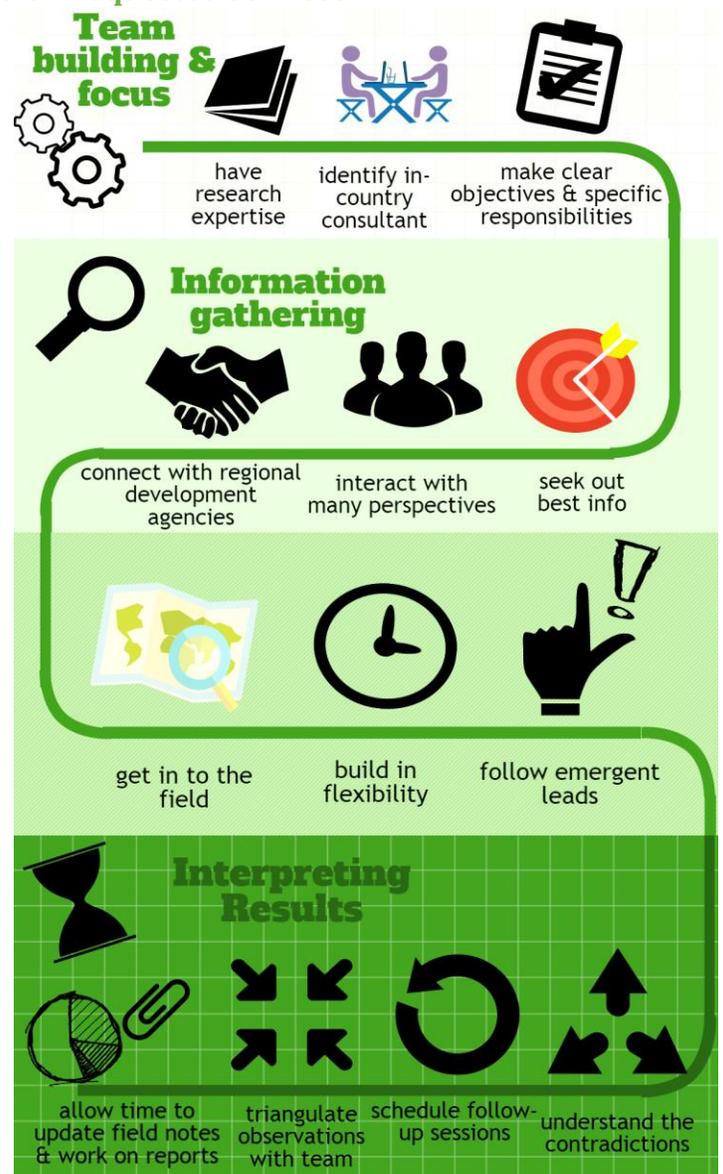
ACTIVITY 4: Draft statements of work for mission-requested services

InnovATE designs statements of work (SOW) that are responsive to the unique needs of each USAID mission. InnovATE begins the process of developing the SOW for a Mission by listening to country specific needs. An important part of the conversation is to clearly meet USAID goals, bring in team members and consultants with the required expertise, and set clear objectives and responsibilities to maximize the efficacy and efficiency of the rapid assessment.

No new SOWs were requested in the first half of Year 3. Previously developed SOWs were implemented in Honduras and Tajikistan. There is potential to revisit Missions in Mali, Nepal and other countries where InnovATE established a presence and to start dialogue with Missions in Liberia, Rwanda and Bangladesh to gauge the possibility of future assistance. InnovATE continued dialogue with the USAID Nepal Mission in the first half of the year, laying groundwork for a potential scoping activity in the second half of Year 3.

ACTIVITY 5: Build project design capacity for missions

Complete scoping visits and AET assessment reports
In response to prior expressions of interest, InnovATE conducts scoping visits to evaluate AET institutions and systems at the request of USAID Missions. In the first half of year 3 InnovATE completed scoping activities in the Honduras and Tajikistan and submitted AET assessment reports to both Missions as a result.



Infographic developed for InnovATE Scoping Methodology

The USAID/Honduras Mission asked a team of specialists from InnovATE to conduct a scoping assessment focusing on the current and future demand for agricultural education and training (AET) for rural youth in the North Atlantic coastal region of Honduras, with a particular attention to the Garifuna communities. As such, this assessment contributes to the Mission goals to: enhance citizen security through engagement with marginalized groups, improve education, and develop economic opportunities for the rural poor. This assessment is also aligned with the U.S. Department of State Central America Regional Security Initiative (CARSI) efforts to support community-based activities to prevent crime, including the provision of basic education, life skills and vocational training for at-risk youth in the northern coastal region of Honduras. The assessment was conducted from November 1 – 17, 2014 and team was comprised of faculty from partner and consortium institutions:

Nikki Kernaghan, UF - Lead
John Ignosh, VT
Janelle Larson, PSU

Nickey Jefferson, TU
Lori Unruh Snyder, NC State
Clara Cohen, USAID-Washington, D.C

The USAID/Tajikistan Mission sought assistance from InnovATE to provide specialized and strategic thinking on how to make formal agricultural education and training more relevant to the current and future needs of Tajik agriculture. AET deficiencies were brought to light through the attempt to reform the extension system in Tajikistan for both the public and private sector. It has been difficult to locate sufficient young professionals with relevant skills to fill the positions for the current pilot extension program, which is expanding under the new USAID FASTER program. A gap in this process is funding for curriculum modernization. The InnovATE scoping visit was critical in addressing these challenges and the assessment has been submitted to provide technical input and address AET system and capacity gaps. The scoping was conducted from February 6 – 28, 2015 with the following team:

Kristal Jones, PSU - Lead
Nargiza Ludgate, UF

Kurt Richter, VT
Karen Duca, USAID-Washington, D.C

ACTIVITY 6: Provide technical assistance to missions project design

No Associate Awards were contracted in this time period. Follow up calls were conducted in the first half of Year 3 with USAID Missions in Nicaragua and Cambodia and communication has been maintained with the Jordan and DRC Missions to receive feedback on assessment reports and keep dialogue open to future strategies.

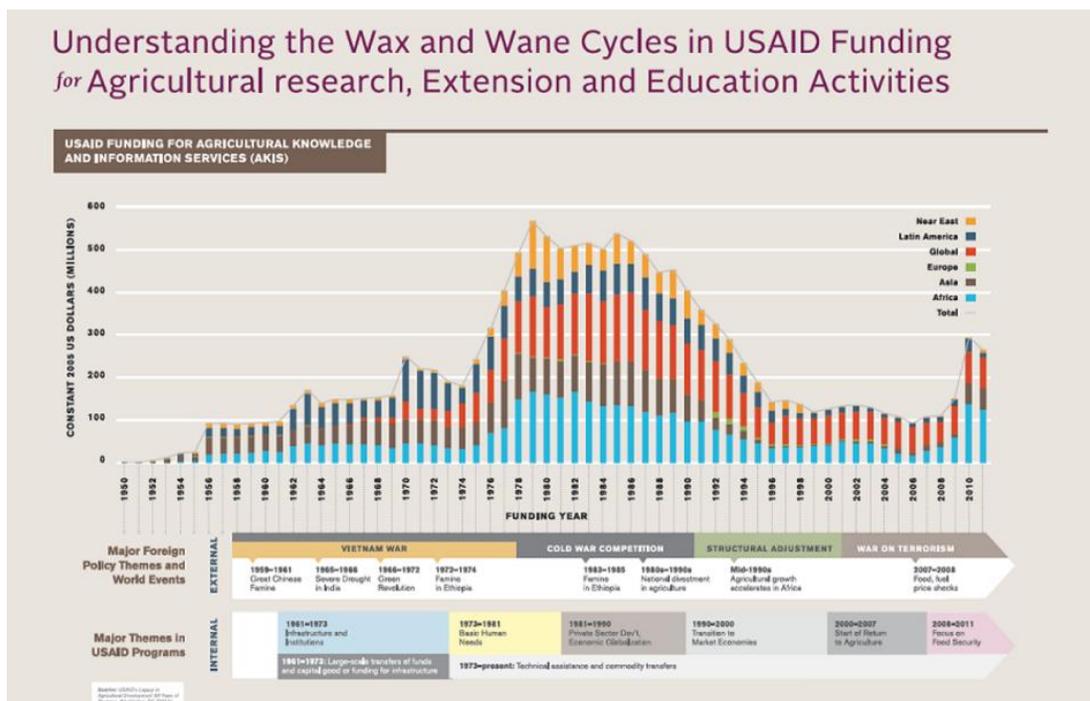
III. TRAIN: Direct investment in Human Capital Development

Tasks for the TRAIN component are closely tied to the assessment and design tools developed in the LEARN and DESIGN components. In the first half of Year 3, we have focused on the development of online training modules, continued expansion of the training events database, implementation of a workforce development training, and held the U.S.-Africa Higher Education Partnerships Symposium.

ACTIVITY 7: Give country-specific support for administrative and student services

InnovATE gives country-specific support for training to develop the capacity of administrative and student services. During Year 3, workshops will be conducted in various countries and on particular AET topics and themes to address specific challenges and circumstances.

Dr. Kurt Richter and Dr. Sandra Russo, in collaboration with Lara Goldmark, John Lindsay and Dr. Alec Hansen on the Workforce Connections team at FHI360, presented a training on “Employment and Workforce Development Programming for Rural and Food-Based Economies” focused on opportunities and challenges inherent to rapidly transforming food and agriculture sectors. The training was held on October 1-3, 2014 at the USAID Washington Training Center in Crystal City, VA. Training participants broke into teams to tackle case studies focused on real world development challenges. Based on these case studies, teams worked through various exercises to analyze theories of change and ultimately develop a final project appraisal document. Invited speakers from Winrock International, RTI International and EARTH University presented on promising practices and successful experiential education models from past USAID funded projects.



Infographic Developed for USAID Employment and Workforce Development Programming for Rural and Food-Based Economies Training
Credit: Gary Alex USAID

On November 17-19, 2014 AgExchange held a three day web event on “Feeding the World in 2050: How Human and Institutional Capacity Development (HICD) Can Support Agricultural Innovation Systems.” This webinar brought together key stakeholders to share experiences and input on how HICD can contribute to a high performing agricultural innovation system to feed the world by 2050. Featuring authors and contributors from three integral reports, commissioned by the Board for International Food and Agricultural Development (BIFAD), the Bureau for Food Security (BFS), and the Africa Bureau, the panel summarized key information and defined important terms to frame the AgExchange discussion. On day 1, Dr. Tom Hammett served as a facilitator for discussion focused on tools and resources to measure institutional transformation. The second part of the discussion addressed challenges of measuring institutional performance. In particular the participants focused on the challenges of using Organizational Capacity Assessment Tools to measure institutional change for different types of organizations including farmer groups, agribusinesses, NGOs, educational institutions and others.

The workshop scheduled for Q2 at the International Conference on Climate Change Innovation and Resilience for Sustainable Livelihoods was led by the Livestock Innovation Lab, however InnovATE did not contribute as key faculty were unable to attend. InnovATE maintained a presence at the conference along with participants from 30 countries engaged in discussions and presentations on topics relevant both to rural families navigating climate change adaptation, and to populations in growing cities around the world. Presentations included an analysis of regional data, a review of the impacts on food security, and strategies for coping with the effects of a changing climate. Dr. Tom Hammett represented InnovATE at the conference and gave a presentation highlighting the importance of building climate change curricula into agricultural education and training programs for technicians and farmers. This conference served as an opportunity to connect with partners in the region at the USAID Mission and the Agricultural and Forestry University of Nepal to plan a workshop focused on Teaching and Learning Excellence scheduled for Q3.

On March 24-25, 2015, InnovATE hosted a symposium on US-Africa Higher Education Partnerships: Strategies and Practices for Success at the University of Florida in Gainesville that centered on preparing successful students, faculty and institutions. On day one, keynote speakers Dr. Clara Cohen from USAID Bureau for Food Security, Dr. Carl Larsen from World Bank, and Marilyn Crane from Higher Education for Development (HED) started the sessions speaking on donor investment in African higher education and the challenges of human and institutional capacity development. On day two, panels including both domestic and international faculty presented on preparing successful students, moderated by Dr. Youssouf Diabate, and on preparing successful faculty, moderated by Dr. Grady Roberts, and including a presentation from Dr. Emily Van Houweling about strategies and good practices for gender equity. A third panel of international faculty currently studying in the U.S., moderated by Dr. Tom Gill in a



Matrona Kabyemela speaking about her experience as a woman university lecturer in Tanzania

talk show style, discussed the challenges of returning home, and strategies for ensuring re-entry success. Dr. Keith M. Moore and Dr. Kurt Richter concluded the last panel discussion focused on successful institutions highlighting experiences in Senegal and South Sudan. Dr. Rick Rudd and Dr. Donna Westfall Rudd wrapped up the two-day symposium with a break out exercise to capture AET good practices identified from each panel introducing and utilizing the web-based Community of Practice as a platform to house and develop the ideas generated.

ACTIVITY 8: Complete and disseminate USAID training modules

In the first half of year 2, the gender in AET module was finalized and published on the InnovATE website. InnovATE defined the process for the development of training modules for USAID, using the gender module as a pilot. The steps to creating each training module will include: the creation of a storyboard, identification of key personnel to interview, writing of video content, video production, online training pilot testing, refinement and finalization of training, and the launch of the training module on-line. A final storyboard and alpha version of a module on Agricultural Technical and Vocational Education and AET were completed in Q2. The sub-committee identified for the development and steering for training modules includes:

Kurt Richter, VT – Lead
Mary Harmann Parks, VT
Tom Gill, PSU

Sandra Russo, UF
Ntam Baharanyi, TU
Henry Findlay, TU



[Follow this link to the Gender in AET Module](#)

ACTIVITY 9: Produce a database of agricultural training opportunities

In Year 1 and Year 2, the consortium began gathering information on worldwide training programs related to building AET capacity and compiling program information into an online database housed on the CoP. During Year 3, InnovATE continues to add short-term agricultural training opportunities to this database and will begin to engage relevant stakeholders in the database maintenance and facilitation. The database is expanded and updated on a daily basis and is open for public use to add information about international agricultural training events, workshops and courses. The training database has generated over 9,500 page views to date with over 100 trainings currently posted and a total of 39 trainings posted in the first half of Year 3.

ACTIVITY 10: Publish and disseminate results of prior studies

In the first half of Year 3 Dr. Kristal Jones, Rebecca Williams and Dr. Tom Gill have drafted an article on student perspectives on AET in country of origin that will be submitted to the Journal of Agriculture and Human Values in Q3. Dr. Tom Gill, Dr. Tom Hammett and Dr. Kristal Jones have also submitted an article on InnovATE and African capacity development to a special issue of the Journal of Development and Communication Studies, as a result of the OSU conference in October 2014 on Africa extension.

InnovATE publishes and disseminates results of all fact sheets, papers, reports, technical notes and case studies for use in capacity building activities through our website and CoP. Additionally, InnovATE aims to add to the AET scholarship through peer-reviewed journal publications and articles. Papers drawing from thematic and background study research are important products that the program will create to add to the scholarly literature of the field.

IV. Administrative Tasks

ACTIVITIES 11-15: Administrative tasks

Throughout Year 3 the InnovATE team conducts administrative tasks such as preparing a semi-annual report, an annual report, and quarterly financial reports. InnovATE continues to network with AET practitioners, USAID missions and AET professional associations, maintain contact with BFS, USAID/Washington, E3, regional bureaus, and has conducted one meetings with the Program Advisory Council (PAC) and will plan one more before the end of the year. The PAC will be used to help generate priorities for future AET interventions/studies. Our project also held an annual partners meeting as a mid-point assessment of progress hosted by University of Florida in the second quarter of Year 3.

Reporting

All partners submitted quarterly financial and program reports for Q1 & Q2 in Year 3. This semi-annual report was compiled with contribution from all partners.

Networking with AET practitioners, USAID Missions and AET Associations

In Q1 and Q2 InnovATE continued to network with AET practitioners, USAID Missions, and AET associations in order to expand its activities throughout the globe. Listed below are key presenters engaged, meetings held and contacts made through activities and events that InnovATE participated in during the first half of Year 3.

- Honduras – During the scoping visit to Honduras, the InnovATE assessment team conducted interviews and focus groups with more than 50 stakeholder groups representing the formal and non-formal education sectors, community and Garifuna organizations, NGOs, government agencies and private-sector employers. Mission contacts for the InnovATE team were Scott Hedlund and Kelly Flowers in the USAID/Honduras Democracy and Governance Office.
- Tajikistan - During the scoping visit to Tajikistan, the InnovATE assessment team conducted field visits, with support from and in consultation with USAID and implementing partners. To gain insight into current projects in Tajikistan, meetings were held with USAID Farmer Advisory Services and the World Bank. The team visited with faculty and administration at multiple higher education and vocational institutions and met with regional, district and national level governmental representatives. Over the three week scoping, the team held more than two dozen meetings with stakeholders that serve farmers, producer groups, water user associations and NGOs. Mission contacts for the InnovATE team were Steve Welker, Senior Food Security Specialist, Aviva Kutnick, Agricultural Development Officer and Mukhiddin Nurmatov, Economic Growth Office.
- USAID Training, Crystal City, VA – The “Employment and Workforce Development Programming for Rural and Food-Based Economies” training was a collaborative effort with partners at FHI360. Lara Goldmark and John Lindsay provided leadership as part of their Workforce Connections program with support from Dr. Alec Hansen of the Economic Competitiveness Group and Kristin Brady, Youth Coordinator. The training was facilitated by Rachel Blum, USAID Senior Advisor for Youth Workforce Development, E3 and instructional design was informed by Stacy Cummings, USAID Education Field Technical Advisor with contribution and support provided by Dr. Clare Ignatowski, Senior Advisor for Workforce Development and Youth in USAID’s EGAT/ Office of Education and Dr. Shana Gillette, USAID Advisor, Human and

Institutional Capacity Development, BIFAD USAID Bureau for Food Security. Key presenters at the training were Erin Hughes, Senior Program Officer at Winrock International, showcasing the EIG Nepal project, Julie Lustumbo, Senior Economic Development Specialist from RTI International, with the Haiti LEVE project and Dr. Daniel Sherrard, Provost, highlighting experiential education and entrepreneurship at EARTH University, Costa Rica.

- International Conference on Climate Change Innovation and Resilience for Sustainable Livelihood, Kathmandu, Nepal - Dr. Tom Hammett spent additional time before and after this conference to meet and build rapport with USAID/Nepal, to reconnect with our partners including the Agriculture Forestry University (AFU), Asia Network for Sustainable Agriculture and Bioresources (ANSAB), Development Technology Services (DEVTEC), and the Institute of Forestry (IOF) to develop strategies for AET capacity development; and to develop partnerships with ongoing USAID funded programs and determine the scope of their capacity building needs. Sulav Poudel of IDE Nepal provided in-country coordination of meetings with Mercy Corps, Winrock Farmer-to-Farmer and other NGOs. USAID Mission contacts in Nepal are Danielle Kneuppel, Amy Prevatt and Navin Hada in the Food Security Program.
- Tropical Agriculture Platform (TAP), Workshop of the Capacity Development Expert Group, Montpellier, France - In 2013, the G-20 initiated the Tropical Agriculture Platform (TAP), designed as a multi-partner mechanism to close the gap for agricultural innovation in the tropics. Dr. Tom Hammett was invited to represent the TAP partner from North America (USAID) as a member of the Capacity Development Expert Group in a workshop to make TAP operational. The group of invited experts was sequestered for a two-day workshop to set up a TAP framework for assessing the needs for and develop ways to meet needs for agriculture innovations systems capacity development. This group represented a cross section of donors, CGIAR institutions, and key implementing agriculture development agencies from over 20 countries. About 30 specialists were in attendance; four represented FAO; several were from one of the key TAP funders in the UK; a few were from the CDAIS program identified to carry out some of the initial TAP activities, and about 15 outside experts including Paul McNamara with the MEAS project.
- Symposium on US-Africa Higher Education Partnerships: Strategies and Practices for Success, Gainesville, FL – The University of Florida team led by Dr. Sandra Russo and Dr. Nicola Kernaghan planned, coordinated and facilitated the two-day symposium with support from Rebecca Williams, Jessica Childers and Nargiza Ludgate. Key faculty including Dr. Leonardo Villalon, Dean UF International Center, Dr. Allen Wysocki, Associate Dean of the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, Walter Bowen, Director of the Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences and Dr. Brijesh Thapa and Dr. Renata Serra of the Center of African Studies participated in the event. InnovATE hosted international faculty, Dr. Serigne Ndiaye and Dr. Mamadou Cisse from the Universite Cheik Anta Diop de Dakar, Senegal and Dr. Francis Zotor from the University of Health and Allied Sciences, Ghana as panelists. Dr. Gretchen Neisler of the Center for Global Connections in Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources at Michigan State University attended as an invited panelist. Dr. Carl Larsen, Senior Agricultural Education Specialist at the World Bank and Marilyn Crane, Senior Program Specialist at HED were keynote speakers for the symposium.

Maintaining contact with BFS and USAID/Washington

All partners participated in regular bi-weekly InnovATE consortium conference calls with BFS and USAID Washington. These calls were adjusted to a monthly basis in March 2015.

Plan and conduct two meetings of the Program Advisory Council (PAC)

InnovATE utilizes expertise and guidance of the PAC membership to set priorities for future AET interventions/studies. On March 2, 2015, the management entity convened a call with the PAC to review progress to date and discuss focus for the remaining life of the project. The meeting was attended by:

- Andrea B. Bohn, Manager, Modernizing Extension and Advisory Services (MEAS)
- Dr. Deborah Rubin, Director, Cultural Practice LLC
- Dr. Glen C. Shinn, Professor Emeritus & Borlaug Senior Scientist, Department of Agricultural Leadership, Education, and Communications, Texas A&M University
- Dr. Donna M. Westfall-Rudd, Associate Professor, Department of Agricultural, Leadership, and Community Education, Virginia Tech
- Dr. Clara Cohen, USAID-Washington, Bureau for Food Security
- Dr. Keith M. Moore, Interim Director, InnovATE, OIRED, Virginia Tech
- Johanna Cricenti, Program Coordinator, InnovATE, Virginia Tech

Partners meeting

InnovATE held the Year 3 Annual Partners meeting on March 23-24, 2015 at the University of Florida. Objectives of the meeting were to take stock of the activities and progress of the project as a mid-point assessment and to set priorities and direction for the remaining life of project. Participants of the meeting were as follows:

Keith Moore, VT	Johanna Cricenti, VT	Lila Karki, TU
Kurt Richter, VT	Sandra Russo, UF	Tom Gill, PSU
Emily Van Houweling, VT	Nikki Kernaghan, UF	Kristal Jones, PSU
Rick Rudd, VT	Jessica Childers, UF	Ed Rajotte, PSU
Donna Westfall-Rudd, VT	Becky Williams, UF	Clara Cohen, USAID
Tiffany Drape, VT	Nargiza Ludgate, UF	Karen Duca, USAID
Martin Sebit, VT	Grady Roberts, UF	
Laina Schneider, VT	Kumudu Perera, UF	

Administration

In Q1, Tuskegee University hired Dr. Lila Karki to work on thematic studies, background literature reviews, and other activities as necessary. In Q2, Dr. Tom Hammett stepped down as InnovATE project Director and Dr. Keith M. Moore was selected as Interim Director.

Appendix A: Priority themes and InnovATE product comparison

At the InnovATE symposium in 2013, attendees were surveyed to determine priority themes in AET by responding to three questions:

1. What are AET tools that you would like to see created?
2. What are studies and other AET scholarships you think need to be done?
3. What are your suggestions for focal themes of a subsequent AET symposium?

The responses to these questions were aggregated, re-categorized into common elements and ranked based on frequency. The top 10 total thematic areas are included in the numbered list below. Beneath each theme, are the corresponding InnovATE products that address that particular topic.

1. Training/Teaching

- a. Challenges and Opportunities for AET in Post-Conflict Sub-Saharan Africa, Austen Moore, University of Florida, M.D. Mutaleb and Ntam Baharanyi, Tuskegee University (thematic study)
- b. Elements of Reasoning, Rick Rudd, Virginia Tech (Good Practice Paper)
- c. Gender, agriculture and nutrition symposium proceedings, Kristal Jones Penn State, Maria-Elisa Christie, Virginia Tech

2. Gender

- a. Preliminary Study: Gender, Higher Education and AET, By: Laura Zselezcky, Emily Van Houweling, Maria Elisa Christie, Virginia Tech (thematic study)
- b. Lost in the Educational Roadmap: Gender Roadblocks from Primary School through Agricultural Vocational Training, By: Rebecca J. Williams, Sandra L. Russo, Nicola J. Kernaghan, University of Florida (thematic study)
- c. Gender and AET Brief By: Rebecca J. Williams, Sandra L. Russo, Nicola J. Kernaghan, University of Florida (thematic brief)
- d. Gender in AET (training module)
- e. Gender scoping tools

3. Partnerships

- a. N/A

4. Distance Learning

- a. Training modules
- b. Using ICT for AET, Laina Schneider, Virginia Tech (Good Practice Paper)
- c. Online CoP resources

5. Best Practices/Models

- a. Degree training and curriculum development to support HICD, Kristal Jones, Claudia Rojas and Tom Gill, Penn State (thematic study)
- b. Good practice papers
- c. Concept notes

6. Youth Development

- a. The Role of Agricultural Technical and Vocational Education and Training in Developing Countries: A Review of Literature and Recommendations for Action, Kristal Jones, Penn State (thematic study)
- b. Youth development, Nicole Webster, Penn State (Good practice paper)

7. M&E

- a. N/A

8. Community of Practice

- a. Developing and Using Communities of Practice – Donna Westfall- Rudd, VT
- b. Using Communities of Practice in AET, Amy Vu and Donna Westfall-Rudd, VT (Good practice paper)

9. Country Assessment

- a. Scoping methodology and tools
- b. AET assessment reports: Armenia, Cambodia, DRC, Honduras, Jordan, Nicaragua, Tajikistan, Uganda
- c. Background Studies/Fact Sheets: Armenia, Cambodia, DRC, Honduras, Jordan, Nicaragua, Tajikistan, Nepal, Mozambique

10. PR & Outreach

- a. N/A

Listed below are the same top ten themes, listed with InnovATE products that are currently in development.

1. Training/Teaching

- a. CPCD Handbook – Henry Findlay, Ntam Baharanyi, Yousouff Diabate, Tuskegee University
- b. Professional development for AET educators –Kumudu Perera, University of Florida (thematic study)
- c. WFD and employer needs – Tiffany Freer, University of Florida (thematic study)
- d. Teaching strategies and course design – Tiffany Drape and Rick Rudd, Virginia Tech (training module)
- e. AET challenges in post conflict countries, Kurt Richter, Virginia Tech (training modules)

2. Gender

- a. Methods for encouraging girls in Higher education– Emily Van Houweling, Virginia Tech (thematic study)
- b. Muslim women in AET – Nargiza Ludgate, University of Florida (thematic study)

3. Partnership

- a. N/A

4. Distance Learning

- a. N/A

5. Best Practices/Models

- a. Good practices in development

6. Youth Development

- a. ATVET (training module)

7. M&E

- a. Institutional self-assessment paper – Keith Moore, Virginia Tech (thematic study)
- b. AET assessment indicators– Jessica Childers, University of Florida (thematic study)

8. CoP

9. Country Assessment

- a. Student perspectives on AET – Kristal Jones, Tom Gill, Penn State and Rebecca Williams, University of Florida (thematic study, publication)
- b. Assessment briefs – Tajikistan and Honduras

10. PR & Outreach

- a. Research and extension models, Tiffany Drape and Rick Rudd, Virginia Tech(training module)

Other themes:

- Regional security and WFD – Rebecca Williams, University of Florida (publication, thematic study)