



Hybrid DREAM Event 02 February 2022

# **TVETs: Establishing a consortium for a demand-oriented skill program in support of lowland development**

## **Proceedings**

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## Abstract

This Hybrid DREAM II Pre-Event took place on February 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2022. A group of over 80 participants gathered in the online setting and at venues in Jigjiga and Semera. As part of the program there was an opening statement by Tezera Getahun on behalf of the Pastoralist Forum Ethiopia. There were several discussions and reflections on the experiences with training colleges. The scope of collaboration around vocational education in the lowlands was discussed: what would be the scope and nature of such cooperation? The DREAM event also took stock of recent experiences of alumni students on the labour market.

The proceedings of the event are available on the website <https://sdr-africa.com/>.

## Welcome – Frank van Steenbergen (MetaMeta)

Frank van Steenbergen welcomed all participants to the hybrid DREAM event which is a follow-up on the event from the 15<sup>th</sup> of December ([proceedings](#)). The topic of this event is “Establishing a consortium for a demand-oriented skill program in support of lowland development”. In December, the need for capacity building and experiences from three TVETs were presented and discussed. Hoped is that via TVETs, training can be provided in line with the requirements in the region. Matching the needs, supplies and demands is part of today’s event.

Frank van Steenbergen also mentions that a physical event is planned in March 2022 and that more information on this will follow. He then introduced the program of the event, consisting out of an opening speech, testimonials by alumni, responses from ministries, development partners and others. Furthermore, there were parallel discussions in both Jigjiga and Semera as well as online.

## Opening speech – Tezera Getahun (Executive Director PFE (Pastoralist Forum Ethiopia))

Dear ladies and gentlemen, dear representatives of distinguished organizations,

I am pleased to deliver this keynote speech on today’s Hybrid DREAM Event on capacity building. I am a long-time advocate and a senior advisor on pastoralism and pastoral development with three decades plus experiences, and the founder and Executive Director of Pastoralist Forum Ethiopia (PFE). The Forum has worked tirelessly to bring positive changes in the lives and livelihoods of pastoralist through capacity building, promoting commercialization and entrepreneurship, research and technology transfer, networking and partnership, good governance, and climate change adaptation. The main objective of the Forum is to promote potentials of pastoralism and lowland dwellers at large – in particular the natural, social, and human capitals - for the sustainable and transformative pastoral development.

I am closely engaged in lowland development and have been a regular contributor to the GiZ supported DREAM events that aim to foster coordination and cooperation in lowland development. Capacity building is an integral part of lowland development. To develop the opportunities of the lowlands we need a new set of capacities – at many different levels, for women and men as well as youth. Think of skills to facilitate water and land management, skills in veterinary care, skills in agriculture, skills in construction. Without such skills it will not be possible to achieve what we want to achieve: to develop the lowland potential for the well-being and economic self-development of the lowland population. I was a team member of researchers developed “Comprehensive Youth and Workforce Development Assessment in Rural Ethiopia” in June 2012. The core findings from the pastoral setting were lack of skill to diversify their livelihoods. Thus, your intervention on capacity building is paramount in the lowlands of Ethiopia,

We have witnessed in the last 5 to 10 years how many young people in Africa feel demoted out of the system they used to support their livelihoods. This has fuelled discontent and sometimes been at the root of many disturbances. I consulted the Afar youth, women, men, elders, and government officials in 2018 during the study of Poverty and Vulnerability in the Ethiopian Lowlands: Building a More Resilient Future. The research team has found out the capacity of TVETs were challenging and recommended overwhelming capacity building program for the colleges as well as the potential students and families of the students.

In the past DREAM Conference (15 December), I have come to understand encouraging developments in three Agricultural Colleges in Afar and Somali Regions, i.e Gode, Gewani and Adadale. These colleges have started changing their education approach. They are giving standard courses not necessarily related to demand, but they provide courses against payment either of trainees or their sponsors. In this case they have invested in the quality and sustainability of their services and can increase their contribution in capacity building in the lowlands.

I encourage the distinguished participants of this hybrid conference to adopt this model and consider placing groups of students for demand-based training with the colleges.

If we are ambitious in lowland development, we need to be ambitious in capacity development. Moreover, we need to be creative, smart, and put all pieces together. We must not have trainings as one-off-event instead we need to strengthen the educational systems. We have to make sure that the education system is strong enough and attractive. It must prepare young generations with the necessary technical skills, but also with the spirit to self-organize and be entrepreneurial. Moreover, we need to match the overall ‘production’ of graduates with the demand for talented young people in the development projects, in the private sector and also as self-employed businesspeople.

To create this bigger picture, in my view, we need to work together. We need to connect the large ongoing lowland development programs of government and CSOs with the capacity building centre, making sure trainees of the right orientation graduate and find a good place in

these programs – either as staff or as local entrepreneurs. We need to use the on-going programs as training grounds and jumping board for our young people. We need to better understand what is required and how young people experience training and work. This is a palatable agenda for the DREAM event.

We need to develop a strong interface between demand and supply, between usefulness and talent. As the title of this event goes, we need to promote skill development and employability for a new generation of pastoralist and agro-pastoralist youth. For the agenda for this learning event wants to discuss how we can better cooperate, better strategize, create a total picture on lowland development capacity building that is consistent and in which all our efforts fit together.

Myself I am in favour of creating a Capacity Building Consortium where all of this comes together and hope the DREAM event aligns us and helps us develop common goals. It is also imperative to closely work and grab opportunities of the newly established ministry-Ministry of Irrigation and Lowlands (MoILL) and regional pastoral bureaus, Furthermore; I advise the organizers to approach the Core Advisory Team (CAT) and Pastoral Multi-actors initiative under the MoILL.

I wish you a productive DREAM session! Thank you very much!

## Testimonials of Alumni

Following the welcome and keynote speech, alumni from the three colleges (Adale, Gewane & Gode) provided testimonials on their mason, dry stone measures and nursery trainings via a pre-recorded video. The video is available on [TheWaterChannel](#).



Figure 1 Screenshot from the video with testimonials from recent graduates

Mr. Tamrat Sitotaw (Gewane TVET) shared that he learnt about land rejuvenation. He mentions that the training was very appropriate and good, considering the erosion problems in the area. Different methods to prevent erosion were part of the training. However, the focus was too strongly on building with stones, while depending on circumstances, other materials would be more convenient.

Mr. Kedir Hussein (Gewane TVET) shared that the training was great, and he wishes for continuation of the training for others and at other locations. He mentions that including videos in the trainings would be beneficial. He appreciated the practical experience gained at a diversity of locations in the training.

Mr. Adahas (Adadale TVET) mentions to not have found a job after the training. He mentions to have learnt many new things in the trainings. As a point of improvement, he shares that forming groups based on expertise to find work together would be helpful.

Mr. Abduseid Ahmed (Gewane TVET) found the training very good and well-tailored to the needs of the arid region. The combination of theoretical and practical aspects was appreciated. He was also positive about the business training. In relation to employment, he mentions that more focus is needed as not all graduates have found employment. Increasing positions in the work field (agricultural sector) might help to put more graduates to work.

Mr. Sadiq Hussien (Gode TVET) was trained on masonry works and has learnt a lot regarding construction skills. Regarding the market linkage, he mentions that government and projects should let the certified graduates do the constructions work.

Mr. Tahir Hayi Hasen (Gode TVET) mentions that the training was excellent. The theoretical part was challenging, but he was able to learn a lot.

Mr. Akil Ahmed (Gode TVET) is using the skills obtained in the training to generate income. To make the training more effective, it is essential to provide trainees with tools and kits after completion of the trainings, so that trainees can start working directly. He highly recommends the training to others. Financial capacity to pay for the training is very low, therefore fees should be minimised if there are no sponsors.

## Plenary responses

Frank van Steenbergen thanks the trainees for their views. He mentions that important topics have been highlighted in the video. Frank asks the participants, regional governments, ministries, and development partners to provide reflections. Elisabeth van den Akker mentions that the recommendations from the videos are very helpful and hopes to develop a system in which these recommendations can be considered.

From Jigjiga, it was shared that the video clearly showed the existing challenges. The needs to expand the training to other areas and to create linkages between governments at different levels are emphasised. A representative from the bureau of job creation shared that a joint action plan might help to create jobs. There should be a focus on the skills that are needed in the lowlands. TVETs are seen as very important in that respect. A representative from the bureau of agriculture mentioned the need to create linkages between TVETs and the lowland programs.

From Semera, a representative from Adadale TVET mentions that this event and the GIZ program increases awareness on the importance of TVETs. It is added by someone else that the program from GIZ has helped the TVETs to continue in the future. A third speaker mentions that training the capacity of the trainers is important as well. The importance of a consortium in addressing the challenges is emphasised. There should be linkages with universities.

Abdi (representative from a TVET) shared that is a good idea to establish a consortium as discussed today and mentions that GIZ is unique on its focus on lowland livelihoods. He emphasises the need of creating nurseries for rainfed food production / fruit trees. This was also included in a recent training, as well as the importance of soil moisture via water spreading weirs. The focus should always be on improving the livelihoods of people in the lowlands – thereby one should focus on skills needed to achieve that. He mentions that livelihoods have improved thanks to recent trainings and that a consortium is the right way forward.

A representative from the bureau of livestock, agriculture and NRM (Afar) mentions that many masonry trainings took place with a good output. The bureau recommends to also have courses on similar topics at universities as well. Mesfin Berhanu (GIZ) addresses the issue of curricula and complements the points made before. He mentions that for official recognition and approval, one must go through certain processes, which can take a lot of time and should be considered for long-term continuation. There is some flexibility in the curricula, which is now being used, but for the mid-term / long-term goals, one should start these long procedures. Elisabeth van den Akker adds that the trainings should indeed be much more integrated in curricula, but that will not immediately help the pastoralist communities. For the immediate need for practical skills, we need a different route.

Tezera Getahun makes a comment on labour gaps in some flagship programs, which are still there. There is a need to monitor the job demands and supply all over the country and to see what happens after the trainings.

## Reflection from Ministries

Ato Teshome (Ministry of Agriculture) emphasised the importance of balancing theory and practice in the trainings. There also a need to get more organised regarding job creation and to have more monitoring and evaluation of what happens after the trainings. Increased support

from stakeholders to support youth and women is also needed. He also emphasises that trainings on the right topics should be given, such as nurseries and biological conservation.

Ato Seid (Ministry of Irrigation and Lowland Development) shared that strengthening the livelihoods of people in the pastoral areas is important to him and that training by TVETs is important within that. Currently, he is planning to create linkages with TVETs on skills training in an ongoing project. Common interested groups organise themselves and are diverse. They develop business plans and receive support at Woreda level. There is an ambitious target regarding number of people trained in several regions in the coming three years. A good start with this has been made.

## Reflection from Development Partners

From LLRP, it is shared that last year training has been given in Somali region and this year there are plans have trainings in more regions. When TVETs are ready to give the training in these regions, there is funding available to support the trainings. There is also funding for grants to start businesses after the trainings.

From PSNP, Zekarias shared that PSNP has a big capacity building program and that there is opportunity for linkages with TVETs. There can be a lot of learning from each other between PSNP and others. As was also mentioned by the trainees in the videos, it is good to share experiences between trainings at different places. Wendessen shared experiences from another project in multiple Woredas. Trainings are also a key part of this project and this project has linkages with TVETs.

Sara Worku, coordinating Alliance2015, shared that Alliance2015 has so far not directly worked with TVETs in the lowland area but has good experience with working with TVETs in highland and urban areas. She recognises the difficulties in finding skilled people. Trainings are therefore very important as well as collaborations between NGOs, private companies, and governments. To formalise and structure this, we need a platform / consortium to synergise the efforts. The role of private sector is important, especially for a sustainable long-term future.

Ahmed Adem mentions that in pastoralist areas, there are too few people with construction skills. Therefore, training is important, as well as creating job opportunities. Linking trained people with potential business areas is crucial to be effective. Another opportunity can be found in linking between projects and business areas.

Abdi adds that regarding lowland development, we should focus on both urban and rural areas. Trainees should be trained while considering the market demand. Market assessment is therefore important. Trainings should also be adjusted to the local context of trainees.

## Parallel Discussion (online, Jigjiga and Semera)

In the parallel discussion, three main questions were discussed. The outcome of the discussion is summarised in this document.

### ***What are the opportunities and needs for skilled technicians in the lowland development?***

Regarding uptake:

- Current programs (LLRP, PSNP and other resilience building programs) should not just give training but also hire/engage with skilled technicians.
- Other government flagship programs (on e.g. sugar, tourism, mining) can also absorb skilled youth. There is also opportunity for training within these programs.
- For the implementation of programs, NGOs also need skilled youth.
- Several labour market studies have been done. Combining and reviewing these will be useful.
- Making matches between high demand for (skilled) people and the many people without a job.
- Creating job opportunities through land rehabilitation and range land rehabilitation.
- The WSW have their own opportunities in creating more jobs for skilled technicians.
- There is opportunity in sharing of experiences, e.g. via youth platforms but also within trainings.
- There is potential for improved market links between skilled producers and market parties.
- Overall TVETs capacity should be in line with demands as assessed in the labour market studies.
- High quality and updated trainings, combining both theory and practice.

Regarding content:

- There is opportunity in engaging in
  - Participatory watershed development
  - Forest products
  - Animal husbandry (fodder / animal health)
  - Honey production
  - Boswelia myrrh management
  - Leather production
  - Soil conservation
  - Food security
  - Environmental rehabilitation
  - Agricultural knowledge
  - Construction sector
  - Water harvesting
  - Electric technicians for irrigation
  - Better utilising resources with good market
  - Solar schemes

- Entrepreneurial and business skills
- Crisis / stress management and life skills

***How do we go forward and organize an integrated capacity building program? Would a consortium be useful? What would it look like?***

Overall, the idea for a consortium is much appreciated. There should be a focus on employment opportunities for youth. There is need for a common agreement on what a consortium is (platform/special project/multistakeholder platform). Proposed is to meet twice a month and to start informally on a basis of common interest. The consortium approach is useful in terms of responsibility sharing, flow of information, and enhancing partnership. The consortium can contribute to assessing the capacity gaps and to go forward accordingly, as well as contribute to an integrated way of capacity building. With the help of a committed consortium, cooperatives can be established.

- Tasks of a consortium
  - A consortium can address coordination by matching skill options with skill needs in flagship programs and to prevent overlaps or mismatches.
  - Coordinate the ongoing efforts and link with overall coordination in lowland development.
  - Make labour employment plan for youth.
  - Make sure that the practical component in TVETs training is secured and supported. Therefore, trainers with practical and up to date abilities are needed.
  - Make sure training material is updated by working together with NGOs and others.
  - Monitor what happens with the trainees.
  - Review the existing curriculum and see the gap regarding new technologies on NRM.
  - Bring the existing technicians on board and include in cooperatives to empower.
  - Address funding and awareness raising.
- The challenges of a consortium
  - Different organizational modality on implementation procedures.
  - Inconsistency of implementation strategies.
  - Different financial management strategies.
- To make the consortium effective, there should be
  - Control mechanism
  - Monitoring and evaluation strategy
  - Coordination among organizations
  - Common implementation modality
  - Diversity of partners on board, including Department of Youth Employment, Department of Agriculture, universities, TVETs, research institutes and NGOs.

### **Who may fund capacity building activities? What would be the funding arrangement?**

- Anyone who has interest in lowland development could fund.
- Banks and micro-finances could contribute by at least arranging loans and revolving funds.
- Arrangements could be via already existing institute for youth training and capacity building.
- Donors can be invited, for instance connecting with the EU focus on job creation.
- The local job creation job bureaus can contribute. Interest has for this has been shown in todays event.
- Private sector can contribute, as this sector has a high demand for skilled workers.
- Furthermore, there should be links between graduates and financial service providers to provide them access to finance.
- The need to include capacity building activities at Woreda level is also addressed, especially for youth.
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### Wrap up and closure

Elisabeth van den Akker announces the upcoming physical DREAM event in March and an upcoming masonry training on the 14<sup>th</sup> of February. She mentions that the event was very lively and that opportunities and bottlenecks have been observed and discussed. Regarding the video, she mentions that what was learnt from the young people in the video, should be taken up. We should coordinate our efforts towards skills and trainings. She wants to further push business skills in the GIZ program. What she takes out of the session, is amongst others that the issue is burning issue for all stakeholders in the sector and that there are several technical issues that she wants to take up. She thanks everyone for the lively well-attended event and for the interests in the topic. Tezera Getahun proposes to continue discussing this topic and ways to move forward regarding the consortium at the next event in March where experiences can be shared. Frank van Steenberg closes the meeting and thanks everyone.

The presentations of the Hybrid Event can be found on the website <https://sdr-africa.com>.

