Catalyzing the Potential of Afghan Girls through Formal Agriculture Education

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Agriculture Top Growth Sector

Backbone of the Afghan economy
- 45% of all jobs are in the agriculture

High female participation in informal sector
- 70% rural women are directly or indirectly involved in agriculture

Urgent need for formal skills development
- Severe drought, COVID-19 impact, economic crisis, conflict, acute hunger
- Food production and food security

Sources: AREU 2017, World Bank 2018
Girls’ Participation in Education

1. Girls representation in General Education: 38%
2. Girls representation in Islamic Education: 27%
3. Girls representation in TVET: 25%
4. Girls representation in Agriculture TVET: 12%

Sources: MoE 2019, TVETA 2020
Barriers Previously Identified

- Distance to TVET schools and institutes
- Lack of female teachers and female-only spaces
- Lack of trades favored by young women and girls
- Lack of security, transportation and other factors

Sources: GIZ 2020, MoEC 2019, NAEC 2017, TVETA 2020
Policy Context

2015

National Strategy on Women in Agriculture
• Women’s skills development essential to inclusive growth

2016

Comprehensive Agriculture Development Priority Program
• Enhancing women’s skills to increase food production and ensure food security

2018

National Human Capital Development Priority Program
• TVET Authority established
• 380 TVET schools and institutes – half dedicated to agriculture

Sources: TVETA 2020, MoF 2018
Research Question

How to increase girls’ participation in formal agriculture TVET

- What factors support girls’ participation?
- What factors inhibit girls’ participation?
- Which policies can help address barriers?

Data Collection

- Over 300 participants
- 240 female students
- Female teachers, TVET directors, public officials and experts
- Through cellphones, online and emails, and in person
Key Finding #1: Negative Social Perceptions

Among Students
- “I want to become a medical doctor in the future.” AHS student

Among Teachers
- “When I heard that through the Kankor exam I got [accepted] to the agriculture faculty, I cried for one week. I wanted to become a doctor.”

Among Families and Relatives
- 37% lack of parental permission
- 40% AVI students pushed from agriculture.
Key Finding #2: Inhibitive Education System Practices and Policies

- Lack of sector coordination
  - Difficulties transferring from general education

- Lack of Pathways to a higher degree
  - 90% AVI students want higher degree in applied agriculture
  - 87% want to become teachers in agriculture

- Lack of female teachers
  - 3% permanent contracts
  - 43% want more female teachers

- Quality concerns
  - 50% say top priority
Key Finding #3: Absence of Pathways to the World of Work

- Lack of practical trainings
  - 9% AHSs/AVIs labs and farms
- Lack of jobs after graduation
  - 7% of female workforce – MAIL
  - 70% of AVI students – increasing internships and employment will encourage families
Where are we NOW?

Recent developments!
- 90% technical and financial resources drained
- Gradual permission
- Single sex classrooms policy
Recommendation #1

Introduce agriculture as first-class education
- Cultivate early awareness
- Benchmarks for enrollment, retention and successful graduation
Recommendation #2

Improve quality of agriculture TVET
- Distribute all textbooks and learning materials
- Increase labs and agriculture learning farms
- Customize the curricula to real world needs and local contexts
Recommendation #3

Hire more female teachers
- Separate Teacher Recruitment Guidelines
- Recruit female AVI graduates to become teachers
- Fill the gap with women from the informal economy
Recommendations #4

Provide viable career pathways to the world of work
- Facilitate pathways towards higher degrees within agriculture
- Provide linkages – internships – jobs
Thank You