How AgriFI is aiding the revamping of agricultural training in Kenya

BY EVANS ONGWAE

The AgriFI Food Safety Programme, by the Micro Enterprise Support Programme Trust (MESPT), is helping to boost food safety in Kenya.

The programme, funded by the European Union (EU) and the Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA) and implemented in 13 counties across Kenya, has already made significant contributions to the imparting of critical skills and knowledge to the people who handle produce from farm to fork, thereby improving the safety of the food on the consumer’s plate.

MESPT is implementing the programme in Kilifi, Nyandarua, Nakuru, Kisii, Bungoma, Kakamanga, Migori, Kimbui, Kirinyaga, Makueni, Machakos, Meru and Embu counties. By addressing the food safety concerns of domestic and international markets, the programme is enhancing the competitiveness of select-agricultural value chains. It focuses on food safety, and plant and animal health.

The programme is guided by two result areas.

Result Area 2 seeks to strengthen the capacities of actors along dairy, horticulture and aquaculture value chains through the Agricultural Technical and Vocational Education and Training (ATVET) model. The ATVET model is applied in the capacity building process and encompasses the curricula development aspect.

Programme transforms 13 ATCs to model ATVET centres

BY EVANS ONGWAE

Improving the capacity of agricultural technical, vocational education and training (ATVET) centres is critical to the implementation of the AgriFI Food Safety Programme.

The initiative, implemented by Micro Enterprise Support Programme Trust (MESPT) with funding from the EU and DANIDA, has supported the accreditation and licensing of the trainers, and infrastructure development in 13 ATVET centres across Kenya.

The interventions are aimed at making the ATVET centres attractive and profitable training institutions. The programme conducted an assessment of all the 13 centres to establish their appropriateness to deliver training. From the assessment, infrastructure emerged as a common challenge. Consequently, the programme offered infrastructure support to the centres in 2019 through to 2020. Key beneficiary institutions included Embu ATC, Kamweti ATC in Kirinyaga, Machakos ATC, Miyare in Migori, Mabanga in Bungoma and Waruhu in Kimbui and the selected seven model ATVET centres of Kaguru ATC in Meru, Mtswapa ATC in Kilifi, Kiwa-Kathoka ATC in Makueni, Najibi ATC in Nyandarua, Nakuru ATC, Kisii ATC, and Bukura ATC in Kakamiga.

The support for Embu and Kamweti ATCs was towards furniture and ICT equipment. Machakos ATC infrastructure support involved the renovation of a dilapidated training hall.

The seven model ATVET centres were selected based on the willingness of the counties to provide additional support for developing the needed infrastructure. The selected counties were Kakamega, Kisii, Kilifi, Nakuru, Meru, Makueni and Nyandarua. These model regional ATVET centres received additional resources to address food safety knowledge gaps and stimulate private sector engagement.

The support commenced in 2020 and will be completed this year. This phase of investment was focused on the development of infrastructure of the targeted value chains of dairy, horticulture, and aquaculture.

EU delegation visit to Kaguru ATC in Meru, led by Amb. Simon Mordue. The delegates were hosted in a hall renovated and furnished by MESPT through the AgriFI programme.

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