

Nepal Fact Sheet

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Background: Nepal

The Kingdom of Nepal is a largely agrarian society with 60 percent of its population dependent on the agricultural sector for their livelihood. Agriculture contributes one third of the country's Gross Domestic Product. However, smallholder production systems remain the norm even though modernization of agriculture has been on the political agenda of the government for some time. While there are many complex factors that influence overall sustainable agricultural development and food security in the country, agricultural education and training can contribute greatly to the overall development of Nepal. Developing the human and institutional capacity to meet the challenges of rural poverty, unemployment, and food insecurity will require an effective and resilient educational system. Academic institutions with programs in agriculture need to respond to current trends in agricultural production and demands on the agricultural workforce, to provide relevant skills and training that can increase sustainable production and employment in agricultural fields.



Present Status

Agricultural education in Nepal is quickly changing. Agriculture programs currently operating in Nepal can be classified in two ways: a) universities that offer degree-granting programs and b) technical schools and polytechnics that offer a mix of short and long-term training programs in agriculture and related fields. Currently, there are around 3,500 agriculture graduates working in Nepal and as of 2012, 400 agriculture, veterinarian or forestry graduates were being produced annually by different institutions. Among the 12 universities in Nepal, there are only a few institutions that offer agricultural courses. In addition, there are public and private technical educational institutions that offer certificates, diplomas and bachelor's degrees in agricultural fields. Currently, these programs have an average yearly enrollment of 13,000 students. Key agricultural education and training institutions include:

A) Universities with agricultural curricula in Nepal

Tribhuvan University

Agriculture and Forestry University

Himalayan College of Agriculture Sciences and Technology (affiliated with Purbanchal University)

B) Technical schools of agriculture in Nepal

Nepal Poly-technique Institute (affiliated with Purbanchal University)

Schools under the Council of Technical Education and Vocational Training (CTVET)

Challenges and Issues

Agricultural education and training in Nepal faces several challenges, including:

- Lack of investment from government and universities in human and institutional capacity in agricultural education
- Negative attitudes toward agriculture that contribute to a perception of limited agricultural employment and career options
- A top-down approach to agriculture research and education
- A separation of education, research and extension into different ministries and agencies
- Academic curricula that do not cover the needs of actual farmers, and that do not cover the different agro-ecological challenges around the country
- Technical and vocational programs that do not prepare graduates for employment in agriculture



Next Steps

Building capacity and increasing effectiveness in agricultural education and training systems will require:

- Creating effective programs to address public misconceptions about agriculture as a discipline and possibilities for agricultural employment
- Strengthening support for high school students to improve enrollment in agricultural disciplines at the post-secondary and technical levels
- Developing adaptive approaches to technical training, like mobile trainings in rural areas to ensure the inclusion of underrepresented groups
- Building capacity in curriculum design by connecting across institutions
- Strengthening connections between private industry and educational institutions to ensure relevant and appropriate curricula for the agricultural employment sector
- Motivating young agricultural scientists to stay in Nepal by upgrading facilities and offering attractive packages
- Improve the infrastructure of educational and agricultural institutions
- Developing a monitoring and evaluation system to improve agricultural education and training programs and assess their mid- and long-term impacts



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