InnovATE seeks to bridge the gap between the supply of trained agricultural professionals and the market’s demand for skilled employees, including the demand for youth and women workers.
InnovATE works with existing public and private sector education and training organizations in developing countries to ensure that agricultural professionals are receiving education and training which responds to market demand. The program, in partnership with local stakeholders, analyzes capacity gaps in the specified country’s agricultural value chains. This collaborative approach ensures the development of country and sector specific training which is effective and resource efficient, creating a stronger workforce and agricultural sector in the process.

Most agricultural education and training (AET) capacity development has focused on one or two levels of education within a country, separating investments in primary and secondary education or vocational education, or higher education. InnovATE takes a whole-system approach to AET capacity development — a new way of looking at the relationship between agricultural education and the agriculture sector it serves. Innovate collaborates with educational and training organizations working at all levels of agricultural education and training to:

- diagnose and address issues in AET programs and institutions (i.e. gender, pedagogy, governance, student services);
- analyze needs and potential investments in agricultural vocational and technical training, including secondary level vocational training and primary education;
- address AET needs for agribusiness development and agricultural commercialization; and
- identify priorities for support necessary to improve private sector development, commercialization of small farmers, and increase in agricultural trade.

InnovATE provides technical assistance to its selected host country’s AET organizations and utilizes stakeholder expertise to create successful innovation. The program seeks to improve educational and workforce development organizations, strengthen admissions and recruitment systems, encourage expanded involvement of universities in national agricultural research systems, and promote outreach activities that tie AET institutions to the practical development needs of the sector.

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