

Thematic Area	Summary of Themes cited by Conversation Leaders
Trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnerships and symmetry • Inter-institutional governance modalities • Early wins; infrastructure investments • <i>Budgets and timeframe</i> • Multi-level buy-in at the outset and routine participation in work plan development
Budgets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decentralized; USAID rules inhibiting • Multiple levels of negotiation from institution, ministry to USAID • USAID contracting arrangements; long-term perspective • Lack of national government funding • Transparency in budging; infrastructure & training investments need to be balanced • Funding level needs to be appropriate to the task; local accounting capacity needs to be developed and follow USAID guidelines
Timeframe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long-term • Minimum of 5 years • Donor funding cycle inappropriate; organizational transformation takes time to establish • Impact not measurable in 4-5 year project; question of institutional development arose later
National/ system level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institutional analysis; local ownership • Stakeholder associations; national level challenge • Multiple institutions: diversity of interests (levels & partners); policy development; different levels of maturity allows for development of models for others • Curriculum standardization • Public/private AET institutions have different interests/conditions
Curriculum /pedagogy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Soft skills, leadership, critical thinking • Multiple levels of stakeholders (NGO, private, student, faculty, admin) • Introducing new appropriate (teachable) soft skills demos practical skills • Curriculum change involves faculty composition • Skills and practices (incentives); teaching/research infrastructure & skills in use are required • Lack of student readiness
Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • US based; sandwich; local leadership; study tours • An end or means to an end • Easy buy-in • Teacher skills questionable • Degree training and re-entry of newly trained faculty are important • Teacher training required • Training in project accounting for institutional partners
Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People ‘wired’ for leadership; particularly national level • Across the institution • System level champion; quality assurance • No models or expertise; organizational experiments; mid-level management weak • Dysfunctional processes are often shaped by vested groups satisfied with the status quo • Mid-level management weak
Incentive Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negotiate with teachers • Faculty compensation • Faculty get more work without incentives; infrastructure not sufficient • Lack of interest in outreach; research provides more incentives
Project Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scale of management team; sensitivity of team; practical logistical challenges (differing information, timetables, trajectories, interests) • Local participation in project design; how to manage communication • Conversations that matter • Administrative infrastructure and skills of host institution; USAID contracting, funding mechanisms and timetables • Vested interests of development organizations to reduce risk and assure profits; champions identified and mobilized; universities are best suited for this type of project • Project hiring trade-offs: jealousy/ envy versus performance; physical access to agricultural farm; USAID turnover; in-country office critical; competence and value of contractual middleman