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Improving the Access to Knowledge through Curriculum Development — The Experience of Armenian Agricultural Academy

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Abstract

In March 2003, Armenian Agricultural Academy (AAA), after two years of activities, successfully concluded an EU Tempus/Tacis Curricula Development project directed towards the reform of economics disciplines through the introduction of new subjects and improvement of existing ones. The project was contracted and coordinated by Hohenheim University, Germany and assisted by Wageningen University, the Netherlands with the financial support of the EU's Education Training Foundation. This poster depicts the accomplishments achieved during the implementation of the project covering wide range of activities. Thus, along with human capacity building, technical facilities such as a new computer centre, a new, unique language centre and an electronic library cataloging system, fully equipped with the latest computer hardware and software, were installed. They serve the purpose of supporting the more rapid implementation of the reforms in education at AAA, particularly restructuring the curricula of the Agricultural Economics Department. Enhancing the access to modern means of teaching and preparing the classes the project eased the access to knowledge and reinforced knowledge delivery techniques for the teaching staff, and raised the chances of students (future entrants into labor market) to get prepared according to modern requirements of the market economy. Academic staff and younger lecturers stayed in the West and developed lecturing materials and manuscripts which were later either integrated into existing subjects or served as a basis for the introduction of new study subjects/specializations which were promptly approved by the Ministry of Education and Science. Renown professors from the West, as well as from Russia delivered intensive lectures at AAA. Armenian students spent a semester and took part in a MSc-degree program in Hohenheim and Wageningen respectively. We strongly believe that sharing the experience of conducting successful, highly efficient activities would be of value to the students and the staff of education establishments in developing and transformation countries.

Keywords: Armenian agricultural academy, curricula development, economics, education reform, EU TEMPUS Tacis project