



STRENGTHENING SKILLS DEVELOPMENT IN ETHIOPIA Through the Ethio-German Sustainable Training and Education Programme (STEP)

Implemented by





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Strengthening Skills Development in Ethiopia
with the Sustainable Training and Education Programme

Preface

Welcome to this concise booklet, which encapsulates the important developments and ongoing efforts in Ethiopia's Technical and Vocational Training (TVT) sector. It provides an insightful overview of the sector's progress, highlighting the significant role of the Ethio-German Sustainable Training and Education Programme (STEP).

Since its inception in 2014, STEP has been instrumental in enhancing vocational training and education across Ethiopia. Implemented by GIZ on behalf of the German government and co-funded by the European Union, STEP collaborates closely with various ministries including the Ministry of Labor and Skills and other key stakeholders. The programme focuses on improving access to quality training, bridging the skills gap, and fostering employability, particularly among the youth and women.

Within these pages, you will find brief accounts of STEP's phases, key initiatives, and notable achievements, alongside inspiring testimonials and success stories from programme participants.

As you explore this booklet, we hope you gain valuable insights into the significant strides made in Ethiopia's TVT sector and the pivotal role of STEP in this journey. We believe this document will not only inform but also inspire further collaboration and innovation in the field of vocational training and education.

Enjoy your read!

Country Profile

Ethiopia Country Profile

Ethiopia, with a population of approximately 126.5 million, stands as the second most populous nation in Africa and showcases one of the continent's fastest-growing economies. Despite averaging nearly 10% economic growth annually over the past decade, driven largely by public infrastructure investments, Ethiopia remains one of the world's poorest countries, with a per capita income of \$1,020. Rapid population growth at an annual rate of 2.37% intensifies the need for job creation and economic diversification (World Bank).

Economic Landscape

Predominantly agricultural, Ethiopia's economy sees over 70% of its population residing in rural areas. The country faces significant challenges such as food insecurity, high inflation, and the necessity to generate about 2.2 million jobs annually to accommodate its expanding labour force. A highly trained workforce is essential for sustaining economic growth, driving industrial expansion, and enhancing productivity in crucial sectors like manufacturing and services, vital for the nation's economic transformation (World Bank).

TVT Landscape

Ethiopia's Technical and Vocational and Training (TVT) sector is pivotal in bridging the skills gap and boosting youth employability. With the government expanding TVT institutions to over 1,568, serving around 400,000 trainees annually, substantial investments have been made. However, challenges persist, such as outdated curricula, inadequate infrastructure, and a significant mismatch between the skills taught and those demanded by the labour market.

To address these issues, there is a pressing need for curriculum reform to align TVT programmes with industry needs and future job market trends. Investment in infrastructure is crucial for providing hands-on, practical training with modern equipment. Strengthening public-private partnerships can ensure training programmes meet real-world demands, while inclusivity efforts must be enhanced to provide equitable access to TVT for marginalized groups, including women and rural populations.

Ethiopia's dedication to TVT reform is key to its broader goals of economic development and poverty reduction. By tackling these challenges head-on, Ethiopia can better utilize its youthful population, propel industrial growth, and improve the overall standard of living (World Bank).



HE Muferiat Kamil

Minister, Ministry of Labor and Skills

Dear Colleagues,
It brings me great satisfaction to witness the positive impact of one of our collaborative programmes with the German government on the lives of Ethiopians. I know for decades, Ethio-German cooperation has contributed immensely in the transformation Ethiopia's training and education sector. Germany's unwavering technical expertise and financial support have been instrumental, and we in Ethiopia hold this in deep admiration.

Ethiopia recognizes that Technical and Vocational Training (TVT) is a cornerstone of the nation's development. Equipping individuals with practical skills and industry-specific knowledge is essential for building a skilled workforce that can drive economic growth and social progress. This understanding has led the Ethiopian government to prioritize TVT as a strategic investment in the country's future.

Seeking to accelerate this progress, Ethiopia has actively sought collaboration with Germany. Germany's long history of success in transforming its own TVT sector and fostering skilled workforces makes them a natural partner. This collaboration aims to leverage Germany's expertise and experience to adapt and improve Ethiopia's TVT programs, ensuring they are even more effective in meeting the needs of the Ethiopian economy and empowering its citizens.

The Ethio-German Sustainable Training and Education Programme (STEP) serves as a landmark achievement born from this remarkable collaboration. Germany's long-standing support in education and training has been invaluable, and STEP builds upon this foundation by pioneering innovative and, sustainable approaches.

This booklet serves as a compelling showcase of the transformative initiatives we've jointly implemented through the Ethio-German Sustainable Training and Education Programme (STEP). It beautifully captures the programme's impact by highlighting some of the most impactful results achieved through the effective execution of these interventions.

As Minister, I'm dedicated to STEP's continued success. Together with our partners, we're building on this strong foundation to create a future where every Ethiopian can thrive through skills development.

This booklet is more than a report. It's an invitation to celebrate STEP and envision an even brighter future. Explore the programme's journey and be inspired by the stories within.

Thank you, and enjoy the read!



HE Dr Teshale Berecha

State Minister, Ministry of Labor and Skills

Dear Colleagues and Partners,

Equipping our youth with practical skills empowers them to flourish. Investing in TVT is an investment in Ethiopia's vibrant future. The impact is undeniable: graduates secure meaningful jobs, fueling economic growth and prosperity. Moreover, TVT institutions are strengthened, delivering high-quality training aligned with industry needs.

Ethiopia's TVT sector deeply appreciates the invaluable contributions of the German development cooperation. Their unwavering support has been instrumental in propelling our sector forward.

We are grateful for GIZ expertise that has been central to our success. Their collaboration has strengthened our ability to manage reforms effectively, develop relevant occupational standards that mirror industry needs, and create modern training curriculums. The focus on practical skills through effective cooperative training is equipping graduates with what employers demand. Additionally, GIZ's support has been crucial in improving our competency assessment systems, guaranteeing graduates are workforce-ready.

In my role as Chair of the Ethio-German Sustainable Training and Education Programme (STEP)

Steering Committee, I have had the privilege of witnessing its transformative impact firsthand. STEP exemplifies the power of our collaborative partnership with GIZ. Through its innovative approach, it has revolutionized TVET delivery in Ethiopia. By bringing together instructors from both businesses and institutions, STEP ensures that the curriculum reflects real-world needs, fostering a stronger industry-institution connection. Students benefit from valuable hands-on experience through internships, apprenticeships, and other market-oriented short-term training measures, graduating fully prepared to contribute to the workforce.

The achievements celebrated in this booklet are a testament to the effectiveness of our cooperation with GIZ. We extend our sincere gratitude to all partners whose dedication and contributions have positively impacted the lives of many Ethiopians.

The Ministry of Labor and Skills remains dedicated to collaborating with GIZ and other partners to ensure TVT remains accessible and affordable for all Ethiopians. Together, we can build a stronger and more prosperous Ethiopia through a robust and effective TVT system.

Wishing you an inspiring read,



Dorothee Hutter

GIZ Country Director Ethiopia and Djiboti

Dear Readers,

On behalf of GIZ Ethiopia and Djibouti, I am delighted to present this booklet showcasing the profound journey of the Ethio-German Sustainable Training and Education Programme (STEP) in empowering Ethiopians with the skills they need to thrive in the job market.

Since 1964, the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH has proudly partnered with Ethiopia on behalf of the German Government to foster sustainable development across various sectors. Our commitment to excellence and our passion for making a positive impact have guided us through many groundbreaking initiatives.

One such flagship initiative is the STEP Programme. Launched in 2014, it embodies the spirit of Ethio-German cooperation, working diligently with the government of Ethiopia and other key stakeholders to advance skills development throughout the country.

The programme's multifaceted approach addresses the needs of diverse demographics, focusing particularly on enhancing employability and bridging the skills gap. By expanding Technical and Vocational Training (TVT) access and quality, fostering work-based education systems, strengthening institutional capacities, and promoting digital transformation, STEP has made significant strides in its support to Ethiopia's education and vocational training landscape.

Our efforts extend beyond the education and training sectors. GIZ's diverse portfolio in Ethiopia includes supporting displaced populations, promoting health and renewable energy, enhancing social and environmental standards in industries, the support to peaceful and inclusive societies, and transforming the agriculture sector. These endeavors, coupled with our development partnerships with the private sector, highlight our holistic approach to sustainable development.

This booklet celebrates the stories of our programme participants—testaments to the impactful nature of our collective efforts. From empowering local entrepreneurs to advancing gender equality, each story reflects our unwavering dedication to creating lasting, positive change.

As we celebrate these successes, we remain committed to addressing the challenges ahead. Together with our partners, we will continue to shape a better future for the people of Ethiopia and beyond.

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to everyone who has contributed to the success of our projects. Your hard work, passion, and dedication inspire us all. Thank you for your continued support and collaboration.

Warm regards,

Overview

Ethiopia's Technical and Vocational Training system is witnessing a remarkable transformation. Within a span of two decades, the number of institutions has grown rapidly from a modest 20 schools in 2002 to an impressive network of over 1,568 at present. These institutions now cater to around 400,000 trainees each year, highlighting Ethiopia's strong dedication to providing its workforce with necessary skills for success.

This journey is further enhanced through collaboration with international development partners. By utilising their expertise and resources, Ethiopia is making strides in developing a capable workforce to propel its economic growth and national prosperity. The Ethio-German Cooperation (EGC) plays a vital role in this partnership.

Placing skills development at the forefront, the EGC has made significant investments through development cooperation, facilitated by GIZ for technical expertise and KfW for financial resources. These collaborations have resulted in impactful initiatives like the Engineering Capacity Building Programme (ECBP), the Labour Market Oriented Education and Training Programme (LMOETP), and the ongoing Sustainable Training and Education Programme (STEP).

These programmes have been instrumental in transforming Ethiopia's TVT ecosystem as we see it today. They have facilitated

improvements in the national education and training system, strengthened institutional capacity, established an outcome-based programme delivery system, and introduced a work-based training and education approach.

However, significant hurdles remain. Formal training currently reaches only 3.5% of youth, and the quality of training often falls short of equipping graduates with the practical skills employers seek. Additionally, the TVT system requires a stronger institutional capacity for policy implementation and quality governance. The potential of digitalisation to expand access and ensure quality training also remains largely unexplored.

These challenges are further amplified by Ethiopia's demographics. With a rapidly growing youth population (over 70% under 30), an estimated 2.2 million new job seekers enter the labour market annually. This creates an urgent need for the economy to generate jobs and for the education system to equip graduates with relevant skills.

The high unemployment rate amongst young Ethiopians, including graduates from TVT institutions and Universities of Applied Sciences, underscores these issues. Skills gaps continue to hamper growth and productivity in key sectors like manufacturing. Limited involvement from the private sector in this sector further hinders the employability of both graduates and informal sector workers.

Ethio-German Sustainable Training and Education Programme (STEP)

Since 2014, the Ethio-German Cooperation has consolidated its commitment to Ethiopia's skills development journey through the Ethio-German Sustainable Training and Education Programme (STEP). This flagship initiative is implemented by GIZ on behalf of the German government. Working collaboratively with the Ministry of Labor and Skills (MoLS) and other key stakeholders, STEP spearheads skill development initiatives across various regions of Ethiopia. Co-funded by the European Union, STEP is currently in its third phase, with the fourth phase under appraisal.

Through the preceding phases, the STEP programme has spearheaded several impactful initiatives that have considerably impacted the Ethiopia's skills development landscape. Here are some key highlights:

➤ **Expanding TVT Access and Quality:** STEP has supported the growth of TVT institutions and student enrolment. Furthermore, it has been instrumental in establishing an outcome based TVT delivery system. This system incorporates occupational standards development, competency assessments, competency-based curriculum development, and

improved Teacher Training and Learning Materials (TTLM). Notably, the private sector has been actively involved in these processes.

➤ **Bridging the Skills Gap:** STEP has fostered a work based TVT and higher education system. This includes introducing cooperative training for TVT delivery and qualifications, as well as qualified internships in higher education. These initiatives ensure graduates possess the practical skills demanded by employers.

➤ **Strengthening the System:** STEP has also contributed to increased capacity in policy development, institutional governance, and evidence-based performance management. This has been achieved through providing policy advice and supporting the establishment of the Higher Education Management Information System (HEMIS). Additionally, STEP has offered governance advice to institutions setting up leadership selection and appointment systems and provided higher education leadership training.

➤ **Enhancing Employability:** STEP has taken a proactive approach to enhance the employment prospects of young people in Ethiopia, particularly women. This involves implementing initiatives on multiple fronts. On the supply side, efforts include providing short-term training for TVT and UAS instructors, enhancing market-oriented TVT programme delivery, and digitising the TVT and UAS systems. On the demand side, STEP also works with the government and industries through various engagement modalities.

In its current phase, (third phase) the Ethio-German Sustainable Training and Education Programme (STEP III) employs a multifaceted approach to enhance employability across diverse demographics. The programme targets graduates from Technical and Vocational Training (TVT) institutions, University of Applied Sciences (UAS) students, job seekers, and even self-employed individuals in the informal sector, with a particular focus on empowering women.

STEP achieves this by strategically expanding skill development opportunities within six key economic sectors: automotive, building construction, electrotechnology, hospitality and tourism, health, and agro-processing. A crucial aspect of the programme is fostering collaboration between the education and training sector, the private sector, and the healthcare sector. By bridging the gap between the skills offered by the educational system and the actual demands of the job market, STEP directly contributes to the German government's core theme of "Training and Sustainable Growth for Good Jobs."

STEP's approaches encompass five key result areas:

Strengthened Steering Mechanisms:

STEP fosters closer collaboration between public actors, education providers, the private sector, and healthcare institutes to ensure a more coordinated and effective TVT and UAS system.

Upskilled Workforce: By targeting instructors, in-company trainers, and UAS lecturers, STEP strengthens their technical, pedagogical, didactical and leadership skills, leading to a more capable TVT and UAS workforce.

Labour Market Oriented Qualification

Measures: STEP tailors training programmes for TVT and UAS students, graduates, job seekers, and informal workers in six key economic sectors, ensuring their skills align with current labour market demands.

Enhanced Private Sector Engagement:

STEP promotes private sector participation by supporting cooperative training and apprenticeship programmes within companies and training hospitals, bridging the gap between education and industry needs.

Digital TVT Transformation: STEP promotes the use of blended learning, emerging technologies, and digitalisation of core processes, in the Ethiopian TVT system.

To deliver on its multifaceted approaches, STEP has implemented a range of impactful activities and products. These include:

Cooperative Training: This initiative bridges the gap between theoretical learning and practical workplace experience. Trainees gain valuable on-the-job skills by working alongside experienced professionals in companies.

Short-term skills training for employment promotion: STEP offers short-term, competency-based training programmes

designed to equip individuals with the specific skills needed to secure employment in high-demand sectors.

Supporting National Strategies: The program actively supports national strategies that support the implementation of the TVT-Sector contributing to the ESHI-TVT Sustainable Development Program 'ESHI-TSDP'.

Industry Collaboration: STEP fosters cooperation with companies through various initiatives. This includes establishing sector skills committees and facilitating partnerships between companies and TVT institutions. One of the notable initiatives in this area is the industry-attachment programme where TVT instructors got the change for an industry exposure in their chosen trade to increase their competency and learn industry trends.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL): This programme allows experienced professionals to gain formal qualifications by demonstrating their existing skills and knowledge.

Digital TVT Transformation: STEP helps the digitalisation of core TVT processes, including the development an e-learning policy, and developing and implementing a Digital Learning Management System to improve access and efficiency.

TVT Masterclass: The program offers trainers with the latest pedagogical skills and industry knowledge with their in-company trainer counterparts who would also be involved in cooperative training programme delivery.

Women in Leadership: STEP promotes gender equality in leadership positions by offering training programmes to women from government, business, and civil society organisations. These programs aim to refine training delivery skills and unlock leadership potential.

Blended Learning: STEP works to empower trainees by utilizing blended learning methods. This approach seamlessly integrates traditional classroom instruction with innovative and engaging digital resources. This not only caters to diverse learning styles but also enhances accessibility, ensuring everyone has the opportunity to thrive.

Pre-service and in-service training for health professionals: The programme also provides pre-service and in-service training for healthcare professionals, and bio-med technicians ensuring they possess the necessary skills to deliver quality services.

Supporting Universities of Applied Sciences (UAS): STEP actively supports the establishment of UAS institutions and

works towards harmonizing curricula and frameworks across the system.

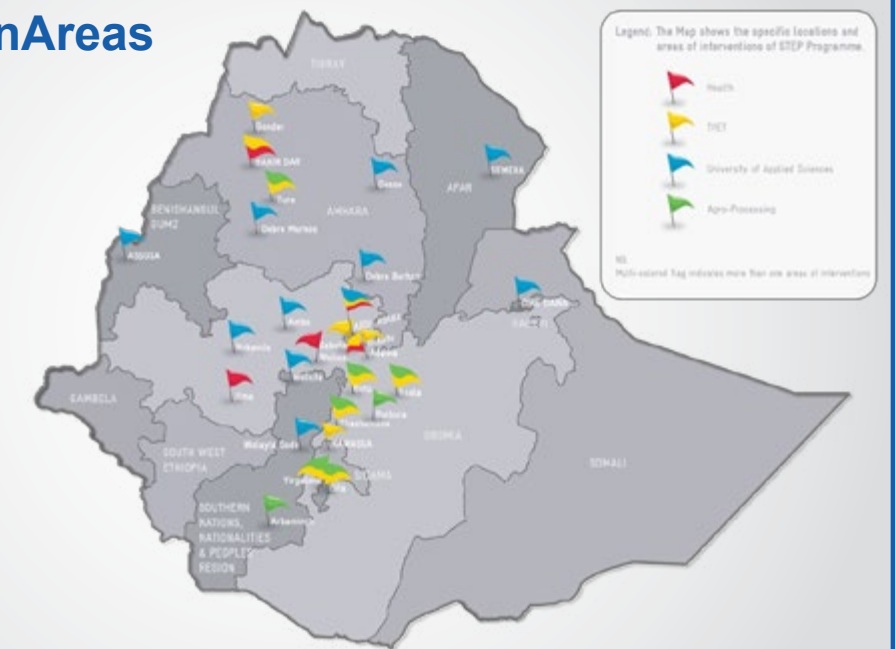
Green TVT: Recognizing the importance of environmental sustainability, the programme promotes the integration of green skills and practices into TVT curriculums.

Mentorship Programme: STEP facilitates a mentorship programme that connects experienced professionals, and enterprise leaders with unemployed graduates from TVT institutions or any academic, providing

valuable guidance and support beside basic skill training and exposure to the industry operations to help them transition into the workforce.

Decent Work: STEP promotes "Decent Work" in Ethiopian agro-processing sector by facilitating opportunities in agro-industry parks and local firms while developing capacity on improved working conditions.

InterventionAreas





Stories

from the programme
Participants

EXPANDING ACCESS AND EMPLOYABILITY

The STEP has implemented a multifaceted approach to enhance access to skills development and expand employability potential.

Key Achievements:

- ▶ **Short-term skills training for employment promotion:** As of February 2024, 4,700 young Ethiopians have completed technical training programs (both long-term and short-term) along with complementary soft skills, digital skills, and entrepreneurial skills development.
- ▶ **Enhanced Learning Experience:** Vocational Guidance and Counselling (VGC) centres have been established across various TVT institutions. These centres are furnished with the necessary resources and personnel to help equip graduates with industry-relevant skills and knowledge.
- ▶ **Mentorship Programme:** A pilot mentorship programme successfully facilitated employment for all 20 participating women graduates.
- ▶ **Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL):** In a landmark development, STEP spearheaded the implementation of the RPL system for the first time in Ethiopia. This initiative assesses and certifies the skills of informal workers in the construction sector, offering

formal recognition and in a bid to increase the employability potentials of those involved in the informal business. Plans are underway to expand RPL to additional sectors, further expanding the potential of the informal skilled workforce.

- ▶ **Effective Cooperative Training (CT):** STEP as part of its major deliverables helped institutions implement effective cooperative training scheme, by engaging important stakeholders, providing necessary capacity measures, and effective follow-up and monitoring works CT has been implemented in all the six sectors. Currently around 1,800 trainees actively engaged in CT programmes with STEP.



4,700

young Ethiopians completed long-term and short-term technical training programmes as well as trainings on soft skills, digital skills, and entrepreneurial skills.

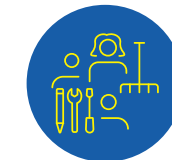
As at February 2024



2,862

TVET & UAS leaders, instructors, lecturers, and in-company trainers have been further trained in technical, didactical, leadership and digital skills as well as in data management.

As at February 2024



42%

of the programme beneficiaries found employment.

As at March 2021



50%

of the short-term training participants have been women.

As at December 2021

“ Now I dream of exporting my crafts ovrseas...”

Meron Tsegaye

Former Unemployed, Mentorship programme participant.

I was unemployed for quite a while after my graduation. Despite I have MBA and BA in accounting. One of the reasons I guess I was half hearted preferred to pursue my passion for design, than trailing in my professional journey. The missing piece was hands-on experience in crafting.

The STEP Mentorship Programme bridged a critical gap for me. Mentored by Bizuayehu, a young, enterprising woman, I was introduced to the world of leatherwork. The programme not only sharpen my technical skills but also opened my eyes to the business ability essential for success. From sourcing materials to negotiation, marketing, and closing a deal, I gained invaluable knowledge that traditional education often overlooks.

This newfound expertise in craft perfectly complements my existing qualifications, which I believe will pave the way for a promising future as an entrepreneur.

But STEP's contributions went even further. They saw my potentials and connected me with opportunities in other GIZ projects. After additional training, I was awarded a grant for women entrepreneurs! This grant provided the funding to purchase the machinery I needed, overcoming a major hurdle, and allowing me to finally launch my craft start-up.

My story is a common one amongst Ethiopian youth struggling with unemployment. Despite having qualifications, securing fulfilling work is a challenge. In my case, I relied on a modest family income, which placed a significant burden on them.

Thanks to the STEP programme, running my own craft business has become a reality. I can now contribute financially to the family, as a small token of thanks to my mother. I found the programme very interesting as it equipped me with the essential skills in an ideal setting to nurture my talent.

“ Now I dream of exporting my crafts overseas.”

Strengthening Skills Development in Ethiopia
with the Ethio-German Sustainable Training and Education Programme (STEP)



“

*... I dream of
exporting my
crafts overseas*

...”



“...the project opened doors for new opportunities...”

Rahel Mulugeta

Computer Science Graduate,
Short-term Skills Training participant

As a computer science graduate, I, like many others, struggled to find work after graduation. The competitive job market, societal expectations, and limited training at my college made entering the digital world challenging.

The Ethio-German STEP programme provided crucial support. I participated in a 3-month intensive training as a Digital Scout, gaining skills in e-learning content development. This equipped me to train TVT teachers and create engaging video content.

STEP's capacity building continued with website design and development training. With this knowledge, I collaborated with fellow scouts to build 17 websites for TVT institutions. The training not only enhanced our skills but also opened doors to new opportunities.

Thanks to STEP's recommendation, I secured a junior software developer role at CNET Technology after graduation. While the environment wasn't ideal, I freelanced with GIZ, designing e-learning content for Atingi. This led to an internship and eventually an Account Manager position at Africa 118.

STEP's collaboration with IT companies helped us understand industry trends and integrate seamlessly into the workforce. To further strengthen its impact, the programme could consider expanding job placement opportunities with its partners.



“...the project opened doors for new opportunities...”

“... the Cooperative Training was life-changing ...”

Thomas Mekonen

Graduate of Automotive Engineering, Nifas Silk Polytechnic College

The auto industry is rapidly changing due to new technologies, environmental concerns, and consumer preferences. Training institutions need to adapt to these changes.

My college curriculum used to lacked practical training, leaving trainees unprepared for real-world work with no or little exposure to the industry realities. The experience we had was not good at all because there was no proper coordination between our college and the company in running practical training.

GlZ's intervention through the Sustainable Training and Education Programme (STEP) was a game changer. Their Cooperative Training (CT) initiative partnered my college with SWINGtech (SUZUKI) for practical training.

During this period, I gained first-hand experience working on the latest SUZUKI models with automatic and semi-automatic transmissions. I also learned to service injectors, use computer-based diagnostics, and perform overall maintenance on collision-damaged SUZUKI models.

Mentors from SWINGtech (SUZUKI) guided me through the complexities of automotive technology. This significantly improved my practical skills and knowledge. The CT programme helped me to practically apply my college knowledge in a real-world setting. It provided valuable hands-on experience that I use every day now as a qualified Automotive Technician. That consolidated my technical skills and enthusiasm for the sector and helped me to land in the company where I sent for CT to work as an Automotive Technician at SWINGtech (SUZUKI) Service Company.

The CT initiative was life changing. It instilled the confidence and aspiration to look for even high-level roles in the automotive industry.



“... the Cooperative Training was life changing ...”

“ ... STEP brought in a shared success for all of us ...”

Jamboo Taddese

Junior Operator, at East African Bottling SC
(Coca Cola), Sebeta, Ethiopia

Entering the construction sector was not as easy as one can expect from outside. Although, I have great inclination to be proficient in the electric installation area. This ambition didn't seem fulfilling as I lacked the knowledge and skills expected from a graduate in the field. The training we had at the college focused primarily on theory with little practical application. This left me doubting what my abilities be after graduation.

GIZ through Ethio-German Sustainable Training and Education Programme (STEP) came at the right time and offered a Cooperative Training (CT) approach. In my final year, I was selected for CT, a model that bridges my initial frustrations.

This year-long golden opportunity involved placements at Sebeta East African Bottling SC (Coca-Cola) for practical attachment. Each day was an intensive practical experience. I learned industrial electrical installation procedures, mastered sensor machine operations, grasped the importance of teamwork, improved my time management skills, and adopted essential safety protocols. The comprehensive training and supportive company environment equipped me with skills beyond my expectations.

This wasn't just my personal transformation; it was a shared success. All seventeen trainees at the college passed the national assessment, preparing us for employment. Moreover, this innovative training brought us face-to-face with the real job market, replacing fear with confidence and enabling us to secure competitive salaries and pursue promising careers.

I am now working as a junior operator at my host company, a position I secured after six months of intensive training. My experience is a clear demonstration of how Cooperative Training effectively prepares students for the job market and helps them secure their dream job.



“ ... STEP brought in a shared success for all of us ...”

“... I can now re-imagine new possibilities ...”

Bisrat Debebe

Auto Technician at Lifan Motors

I remember my frustrations where all my expectations about training in automotive engineering was felt like a deflated tire. It was very much challenging to be enthusiastic in class as we were loaded with lots of concepts but barely able to relate in real world scenario. Even the practice part was dominated by outdated equipment and a lack of hands-on exposure to modern equipment was dream clearly most of my and my colleague's resentment. Discouraged with the situation, I even questioned my career choice.

The Cooperative Training (CT) programme was really a life saviour as it created a collaboration between our college Nifas Silk Polytechnic College and Lifan Motors. GIZ through STEP programme initiated this approach for this I am greatly grateful. Suddenly, I found myself working alongside experienced technicians at Lifan Motors, gaining practical skills in fuel pump, relay, and sensor maintenance.

The CT programme wasn't just about technical skills. It fostered essential soft skills like communication, teamwork, and problem-solving. The company exposure by itself can be matched with either classroom or workshop tracings we used to have.

The skills, I gained through my practical exposure in the company boosted my confidence and enabled me to easily integrate with the workforce. Today, I am a valued technician at Lifan Motors, no longer battling discouragement, but contributing meaningfully.

The CT programme changed my mind-set and revived my passion of working in automotive sector. I envision in the future, I will have a modern service centre equipped with the latest facilities, offering exceptional customer service for modern vehicles owners. I thank the STEP programme helping me reimagine the possibilities within the automotive industry.





Bridging The Skills Gap Through Industry Engagement and Short Term Measures

STEP tackles the skills gap of teaching and training providers in Ethiopian TVT and Education sector through fostering collaboration with industry players. This ensures training programmes are aligned with industry needs and equips trainers with the latest knowledge and skills required by the specific sector, ultimately preparing graduates to be competent and ready for the job market. Short term measures also organised to equip instructors acquire market-oriented expertise.

Key Achievements:

» Increased private sector involvement in training planning and delivery.

This collaboration has fostered the development of public-private partnership dialogues at all levels, including the establishment of sector skills committees that define industry-specific skills requirements.

» Enhanced Trainer Capacity:

To deliver effective training, STEP has provided technical, leadership, and digital skills training to 2,862 TVET and university personnel (as of February 2024).

» TVT Masterclasses:

STEP also equips trainers and in-company trainers based in the industries with the latest skills and industry knowledge by organising trainings using international experts in the areas of Automotive (Electric Vehicle safety and diagnosis), Electro-Technology and other areas to help facilitate knowledge exchange, upskilling TVT workforce and paves the way for effective cooperative training delivery.

» **Industry Attachment Programme:** TVT instructors gain valuable industry exposure through placements in their chosen fields. STEP facilitated this programme in Hospitality and Tourism, Automotive, and Agro-Processing sectors. This programme enhances their competency and keeps them abreast of industry trends, ensuring training reflects current practices.

» Building Information Modelling (BIM) and Short-term measures:

As part of labour market-oriented qualification measures BIM ToT has been delivered to UAS instructors, and the instructors in their part cascaded the training to their fellow students in their respective universities. Short-term measures also given for TVT and UAS instructors, and in-company trainers to improve their technical, didactical, leadership and digital skills as well as in data management.

“... I am now a role model inspiring positive change ...”

Sr. Selamawit Tamrat

principal tutor at St. Luke Catholic Hospital and
College of Nursing and Midwifery, Woliso Ethiopia.

In the past, I found my teaching methods weren't as engaging as I'd hoped. However, participating in STEP's training equipped me with valuable tools like compelling lesson plans, facilitation skills, and improved communication techniques.

This newfound knowledge allowed me to completely transform my classroom. I replaced traditional lectures with multimedia presentations, group activities, and project-based learning. This shift led to a significant increase in student engagement. Their smiles and insightful questions became a constant source of inspiration, and the classroom atmosphere flourished into a collaborative hub.

My focus on fostering soft skills within this new environment had a profound impact. The classroom became a nurturing space where students felt empowered to blossom into confident learners. It transformed into a haven for both academic and emotional growth.

My dedication to this approach didn't go unnoticed. My colleagues, parents, and even the school administration recognised the positive change. I became a role model, inspiring positive changes in teaching methods across the college. This ultimately benefited a vast number of students.

Today, I consider myself a true advocate for effective teaching. STEP empowered me to not only transform my own classroom but also create a ripple effect that has impacted countless lives. This is just the first step, and I'm passionate about inspiring others to join me on this journey.



“... I am now a role model
inspiring positive change ...”

“ ...STEP helped me to keep up with the advancements in the field ...”

Bereket Tesfaye

Instructor at Dilla Polytechnic College.

I had the opportunity to participate in STEP's TVT masterclass training programme. With a master's degree in industrial automation and control technologies, I have 27 years of combined experience as a trainer TVT Colleges.

My ambition to establishing strong links with the private sector to provide valuable opportunities for my students looks now taking shape. I have long wished for a possibility, including facilitating cooperative training and keeping up with technological advancements so that I will be the right mentor for my students

Participating in the Ethio-German Sustainable and Training Education Programme, the TVT Masterclass Training Programme for me was a transformative experience. It aimed to create a pool of motivated and qualified TVT practitioners in various sectors.

The programme focused on developing advanced technical and soft skills to enhance collaboration between the private and public sectors. Through the training, I acquired new skills and knowledge, particularly in change management, partnership formation, problem-solving, PLC programming, HMI, and AI.

I successfully implemented these skills in my teaching environment, including deploying a human-machine interface programme to control various activities in our college. I am committed to contributing to the effective implementation of Cooperative Training and integrating appropriate technology into our teaching methodologies.



“ I’m no longer limited to theoretical instruction ...”

Mahder Masresha

A Trainer at Hawassa Tegbared Polytechnic College

As a trainer, my goal has been to equip graduates with the knowledge and technical skills that they deserve. However, reliance on outdated equipment and textbook-based learning methods created a gap between theoretical knowledge and practical industry requirements, hindering effective delivery. Limited college budgets further constrained the acquisition of modern equipment.

Fortunately, STEP offered me a two-month industry attachment at MOHA Soft Drinks Factory. This attachment proved to be a very important. I transitioned from teaching theory based on illustrations to working alongside experienced professionals, troubleshooting, and repairing real machinery. This practical experience, coupled with expert guidance, significantly enhanced my technical skillset.

Upon returning to the college, I was no longer limited to theoretical instruction. I could now share tangible knowledge and practical skills, effectively replicating the factory environment within the classroom. This enhanced pedagogy, combined with knowledge-sharing among colleagues, has fostered a shift towards more industry-aligned curriculum delivery.



“ ...I’m no longer limited to theoretical instruction

“ My goal is to equip more trainees with industry exposure ...”

Yewubnesh Terefe

A Trainer at Misrak Polytechnic College in Addis Ababa

At our College, I used to rely solely on textbooks and online resources to train students on hotel operations – laundry, beverage service, the entire curriculum. However, this theoretical approach left me feeling unprepared to explain real-world complexities like high-pressure laundry procedures or crafting professional cocktails.

The turning point came with STEP's industry attachment program. For 35 days, I was immersed in a 5-star hotel environment, gaining first-hand experience in all aspects of daily operations. This programme significantly improved my technical skills in laundry service and beverage preparation. More importantly, it opened my eyes to the power of storytelling in teaching.

Today, I've moved beyond simply reciting textbook information. By incorporating real-life anecdotes into my lessons, I've become a more engaging instructor. This approach fosters a deeper understanding of the industry and motivates students to actively participate in their learning.

The impact goes beyond my own classroom. I actively share my experience with colleagues, collaborating to refine training methods for the benefit of all students. We've even established an industry network to facilitate ongoing knowledge exchange and collaboration. My goal is to equip more trainers with industry exposure, ultimately empowering a generation of confident and qualified young professionals ready to excel in the hospitality sector.



“ My goal is to empower a generation of confident professionals ...”

“... now I could see the enthusiasm in my students eyes ...”

Eyerusalem Kelemework

Engineering Lecturer, Debre Birhan University



I have long been fascinated by this system called 'Building Information Modelling (BIM)' which stemmed from its potential to revolutionise the construction sector, particularly in the fields of architecture, civil, electrical, and mechanical engineering. However, a lack of access to the software and training opportunities limited my ability to develop the necessary expertise and unlock its potential for my teaching practice.

GIZ through the STEP programme changed that nightmare as I could participate in a BIM ToT course in Addis Ababa alongside enthusiastic colleagues from other universities. It was an inspiring experience. The programme exceeded my expectations, focusing not just on BIM fundamentals, but also seeing practical applications.

One day during the training, a colleague jokingly remarked that we were all becoming BIM wizards! His playful comment captured the essence of the experience – the great potential of BIM for each of us. The training undoubtedly opened new doors for collaboration and professional development, both for my colleagues, myself, and our fellow students.

Equipped with newfound knowledge and software skills, I returned to Debre Birhan University, eager to ignite a BIM learning experience for my students through training and supporting them in research proposals. I could see the enthusiasm in my students' eyes witnessing their excitement as they encountered BIM first-hand was truly rewarding.

But the impact wasn't confined to the classroom. My newfound BIM expertise empowered me to launch and get credentials for Con-Tech Consulting, my very own startup! Now, I don't just teach the future, I help build it.



“... now I could see the enthusiasm in my students eyes ...”



Strengthening Capacities for the Implementation of Digital TVT

STEP has effectively implemented a strategy to enhance digitalisation within Ethiopia's TVT system. This initiative involves the introduction of digital teaching and learning opportunities in TVT institutes, employing a blended approach that integrates traditional teaching methods in combination with digital technologies. Moreover, digitalised core TVT processes, to streamline operations in TVT institutions has been implemented. This combined effort ensures a robust TVT system that fosters resilience and unlocks growth and employment opportunities by creating a digitally skilled workforce and addressing challenges of inequality in the TVT system.

the instructors then leveraged these skills to create digital content specifically for their institutions, supporting the implementation of blended learning schemes.

» **Other Tools include:** Public TVT Institutions Core Processes Management tool, National Learning Management System, Tracking Mechanism in NLMS

Key Achievements:

- » **Developing Blending Learning formats.** This combines both digital instructional design and in-person learning elements, for several training courses in selected priority economic sectors.
- » **Supported the digitalisation of TVT core processes:** The system contains Registration, Program Delivery, Assessment and Evaluation, Student Records Management, and Student Support Services features and currently hosted on the Federal TVTI server, ensuring seamless access for other TVT colleges.
- » **Digital Learning Management System:** STEP provided training of trainers to over 300 TVET instructors from diverse sectors like automotive, hospitality & tourism, building construction, health, and agro-processing. This training equipped them with the skills to develop Learning Management Systems (LMS) using industry-standard tools along with several digital contents. As part of the transfer project,

“ Eager to fully implement Blended Learning and make our work even engaging ...”

Ayele Mandefro

Trainer at Addis Ababa Tegbared Polytechnic College

I initially struggled to envision blended learning. Prior to COVID-19, our efforts were limited to sharing resources via email and messaging apps.

GIZ through the STEP programme changed our approach. The training opened our eyes to the potential of various blended learning tools and their practical applications. Following the training, I began guiding students on Action and Research projects focused on blended learning, highlighting its benefits.

Initially hesitant, some trainers are now embracing blended learning. For example, a fellow IT trainer now plans to incorporate it into his teaching.

Despite earlier awareness of the approach could have accelerated the change, everyone is now enthusiastic about using blended learning and encouraging others to do so.

The programme equipped us with skills in Articulate, Moodle, and H5P, allowing us to develop engaging materials more efficiently.

Blended learning, initially a new concept, has become a passion. This initiative will significantly impact TVT digital transformation in Ethiopia, and I am eager to fully implement blended learning and make our training more engaging and effective.



***“ Eager to fully implement
Blended Learning and make
our work even engaging ...”***

“ My goal is to equip more trainees with industry exposure ...”

Biruk Tibebu

Trainer at Addis Ababa Tegbared Polytechnic College

As a construction technology trainer, I see great potential in blended learning to enhance practical skills development in TVT. While familiar with the concept, I lacked hands-on experience.

The STEP blended learning ToT addressed this gap. Previously, along with colleagues at my workplace, we had some experience in developing blended courses for construction and hospitality sectors. Recognizing the need for deeper knowledge, we requested and participated in the blended Learning (ToT) programme organised by GIZ.

The ToT itself used a blended approach, which I found engaging. Even after completing the ToT, I participated as a co-trainer in cascading the programme. In doing so, I supported eight trainers to become well versed on the scheme.

The main challenge I see is the lack of infrastructure in the colleges to cater such services, including reliable network and suitable computers to develop contents as part of the blended learning scheme. The launch of the Digital Transformation Studio (DTS) which again GIZ through STEP programme helped in setting up, at the premises of the FDRE TVTI, will undoubtedly help us addresses this gap by facilitating easy capture of quality knowledge materials, storage and retrieval.



“ My goal is to equip more trainees with industry exposure ...”

“ We were like piloting in the dark ...”

Abenet Asmellash

IT instructor at Bishoftu Polytechnic College

Eager to explore blended learning potentials in our college, my colleagues and I made initial efforts with a Learning Management System (LMS) implementation during COVID-19 times. However, “we were piloting in the dark,” I remember, lacking the right expertise for success.

The Ethio-German Sustainable Training and Education Programme (STEP)’s intervention came at the perfect time. The comprehensive training equipped us with the skills and resources to implement a full-fledged blended learning programme at our college. Focusing on industry-standard LMS tools, the training ensured easy adaptation to our contexts.

Driven by our initial desire, four of us, who participated in STEP’s training developed a comprehensive action plan upon return. We proactively trained department heads on the LMS and presented our vision to the management. Their strong support evidenced by providing us a dedicated server for the LMS. This institutional buy-in has been key to our initial success in using the LMS for blended learning – both for programme delivery and assessments.

We are currently building a digital studio to empower trainers to create high-quality online courses across diverse programmes and occupations. The pilot success has us excited to expand college-wide to even become a leader in blended learning within the TVT system in Ethiopia.



Strengthening Ethiopia's Education and TVT System by Promoting Quality and Relevance for Improved Efficiency

STEP has made significant strides in strengthening Ethiopia's TVT and education systems. This includes supporting the transformation of universities into Universities of Applied Sciences (UAS) and implementing innovative frameworks for effective curriculum development.

The programme has also achieved key milestones, such as developing a TVET Management Information System (TMIS), facilitating the establishment and transformation of various institutions. Additionally, STEP has contributed to policy development and standardisation across various systems and operations within the Ethiopian training and education landscape.

Key Achievements:

- **Developed a TVT Management Information System (TMIS)** to improve data collection, analysis, and decision-making within the TVT system.
- **Policy Advice:** STEP is helping the Ethiopian government formulate important policy frameworks and priorities. In general STEP has coordinated and has been assisting the formulation of various policies including TVT policy, e-Learning policy...

- **Implemented Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)** frameworks, ensuring experienced workers can gain formal qualifications for their existing skills.
- **Several guidelines and manuals also developed:** This includes UAS Curriculum Development guide, Harmonised TVT Implementation guide, Green TVT Guideline, Further Training Implementation Guideline, e-Learning policy implementation guideline, RPL Implementation Guideline, RPL Assessment Guideline, Informal Sector Support and Transition Guideline, Vocational Guidance and Counselling (VGC) guideline,...
- **Assisting facility Establishment or Transformation:** STEP has supported the transformation of Institute of Welding Training and Technology Centre (WTTC) (formerly Centre of Engineering Excellence CEE) to an Authorized Training Body (ATB) status, Establishment of Digital Transformation Studio (DTS) in Federal TVT Institute, and notably the transformation of 15 Ethiopian Universities to Universities of Applied Sciences (UAS);

- **Working with local partners:** STEP understands the importance of empowering local partners. The programme has assisted these partners in strengthening their implementation capacity, ensuring they can effectively serve their constituencies. This is achieved through various instruments:

- ▶ **Financing Agreements:** These agreements, like the one with the Federal TVT Institute, provide resources for capacity building activities and programme implementation.
- ▶ **Grant Agreements:** Organizations like the Ethiopian Chamber of Commerce and Sectoral Associations (ECCSA) and the Academy of Science receive grant support for tailored initiatives that address the specific needs of their members.
- ▶ **Local Subsidies:** Partnerships with entities like the Addis Ababa Hotels Association (AHA) and The Associations of Talent Development (ATD) leverage STEP resources to enhance their service delivery to their membership base.



“... the partnership broaden my horizons ...”

Dr. Dhuguma Adugna

President of Arsi University

STEP's collaboration has been transformative in our study tour to Germany. It has opened our eyes to innovative approaches. Witnessing how they forge industry links inspired us to do the same, boosting our graduates' employability. The knowledge gained propelled positive changes within our institution.



Back home, we implemented these learnings by strengthening industry ties and securing relevant projects. This led to the creation of a Centre of Excellence, tackling community challenges and making a real impact.

The University of Applied Sciences (UAS) consortium's establishment was another major milestone. Building on prior COVID-era collaboration, I actively participated, seeing its great potential for our institution and the university's community.

Personally, as someone with a background in applied sciences, the collaboration has been incredible. I can directly apply the acquired knowledge to my work. This partnership has broadened my horizons and fostered immense learning.

Genuine collaboration matters. I see GIZ as an exemplary partner, encouraging others to embrace similar initiatives. These partnerships hold the power to create significant positive change. I look forward to continuing our journey with GIZ.

“... the partnership broaden my horizons ...”



“ This is the start of our transformational journey ...”

Dr. Bizunesh Mideksa

Vice President of Ambo University

For ten years, I've been a lecturer at Ambo University, recently becoming its first female vice president. An exciting challenge emerged when Ambo transitioned to a University of Applied Sciences (UAS).

Leading this significant transformation – how to lead the university through this significant curriculum, facility, and relationship-building overhaul. We had no prior experience with UAS models, making benchmarking extremely difficult.

The Ethio-German Sustainable Training and Education Programme (STEP) proved pivotal. Their training in leadership, stakeholder management, and university-industry relations equipped me with essential skills.

A transformative study tour of six German UAS institutions further deepened my understanding of the model. This knowledge pinpointed a key area for improvement at Ambo: stakeholder management.

Upon return, I established a dedicated working group to focus on this area. Building strong relationships with industry, government, and the local community is crucial for Ambo's successful UAS transformation.

My experience highlights the power of continuous learning and leadership development. Through GIZ support under STEP and our university's dedication, Ambo is well-positioned to become a leading UAS, shaping Ethiopia's future workforce.



“ From a model into a journey of growth ...”

Wondimu Zeyede

Head of Biomedical Technician Department,
Tegbared Polytechnic College

Our initial implementation of the Cooperative Training (CT) model proved unsuccessful. The Ethio-German Sustainable Training and Education Programme (STEP) intervened, recognizing our struggle to align curriculum with industry demands.

The STEP programme went beyond funding, becoming a true partner. Workshops, expert guidance, and industry collaboration opportunities bridged the gap. They fostered connections between in-company trainers and instructors, leading to smoother CT implementation.

Panel discussions and job fairs facilitated by the programme connected biomedical technicians with potential employers, including hospitals, training centres, and private suppliers. These events, focusing on experience sharing and featuring female entrepreneurs, promoted diversity and inclusion.

STEP's continuous evaluation, feedback mechanisms, and practical initiatives transformed CT from a model into a journey of personal and professional growth. We, as instructors, became active learners alongside trainees.

The impact was significant. The CT programme equipped me and graduates with practical skills and industry exposure. This, along with strong industry relationships, propelled me to become department leader.

The benefits extended beyond me. Classrooms became dynamic spaces for practical application, not just memorization. Graduate employability in the biomedical field improved significantly. STEP also addressed

the need for a diverse workforce by specifically promoting female participation.

The CT programme's success wasn't just about institutional metrics; it was a turning point in my career, equipping me with the skills and confidence to reach my full potential.



“ From a model into a journey of
growth ...”

Promoting Gender Equality and Decent Work in Training and Education System

The Sustainable Training and Education Programme (STEP) actively promotes gender equality and decent work practices within the Technical and Vocational Training (TVT) system.

STEP has implemented targeted capacity development activities to address gender roles, awareness, and rights in the TVT context. These activities include training on gender concepts, women's leadership, entrepreneurship, and gender-sensitive teaching methods.

By integrating and cascading these initiatives into the TVT system, STEP supports the government's goal of ensuring effective and efficient education and training that improves quality, relevance, equity, and access at all levels.

Key Achievements:

» **Gender awareness workshops:** STEP conducted gender awareness workshops for project stakeholders, including representatives from government agencies, TVET institutes, and companies.

» **Institutionalising Gender Issues:** A comprehensive gender strategy was developed and rolled out to inform partners and stakeholders within the TVT landscape. This strategy encourages a systemic approach to gender issues and assigns dedicated focal points within each institution to ensure proper implementation.

» **Combatting SGBV through Gamification:** STEP implemented a gamified "Mela Session" at Hawassa PTC, Yirgalem PTC, and other institutions. This innovative approach raised awareness and fostered discussions around preventing and addressing Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) in learning institutions.

» **Promoting Decent Work Practices:** STEP organised awareness workshops on decent work practices for partner organisations, including TVT institutions, Integrated Agro-Industrial Parks (IAIPs), companies, for both managers and workers. The programme also provided resources to help partners address challenges in creating decent work environments.

» **Radio Outreach on Decent Work:** STEP partnered with radio stations in the Sidama and Amhara regions developed and broadcasted radio show episodes focusing on various aspects of decent work.

“ The programme transformed my leadership style ...”

Alemtsehay Dersolign

Head, Innovation Development Desk,
Ministry of Labor and Skills

As a woman leader, I greatly benefited from the **Women in Innovative leadership Training** programme. The programme was truly transformative. It boosted my confidence in communication, teamwork, and leading meetings – areas I previously found daunting.

The programme also connected me with a powerful network of women leaders across diverse sectors. We stay in touch, sharing project experiences and supporting each other. This network extends beyond the programme, fostering discussions on internal challenges, leadership styles, and company practices. It's driven individual and company growth.

It undoubtedly changed my leadership style, positively impacting my team. I'm incredibly grateful to GIZ for this opportunity. Women leaders can be incredibly impactful, and I believe wider access to such programmes is crucial for promoting gender equality in leadership.

Financial and time constraints limit our ability to replicate this training independently. I urge other organisations to offer similar programmes, supporting government efforts towards gender equality.

GIZ's continued commitment through STEP, particularly their expansion of training capacity, is commendable. The post-training refreshment time is a fantastic opportunity for further networking and knowledge sharing.

Empowered by the programme, I, along with my fellow participants, am confident in transferring our learnings to women leaders across different organisations. I'm currently implementing my transfer project within the Ministry to equip young, talented women with the skills to become successful leaders – creating a ripple effect of positive change for future generations.



“ The programme transformed
my leadership style ...”

“ The discipline and skills I saw is something I determined to emulate ...”

Kalkidan Kebede

Lecturer at Entoto Polytechnic College



Traditionally, societal expectations can hinder women’s professional success. Limited exposure and skills due to these norms, coupled with a lack of targeted training, create significant barriers.

The GIZ-offered Women only Training of Trainers (ToT) programme through STEP was instrumental. The all-women environment fostered open interaction, allowing us to learn without hesitation. The Blended Learning and Learning Management System (LMS) content was particularly relevant and practical.

With my background in Information Technology and Artificial Intelligence (BSc & MSc), I see myself well-positioned to develop engaging content and support colleagues. I plan to leverage the learnings to transform traditional training at my college.

The STEP programme also offered exposure to South Africa’s Blended Learning approaches and brief training on AI and Robotics. Beyond the technical skills, I was particularly impressed by the stewardship and work based behaviours exhibited by the trainers – time management, dedication, problem-solving. Their approach to tackling challenges with limited resources resonated deeply to our circumstances but their way of problem solving is something I am determined to emulate.



“ The discipline and skills I saw
is something I determined to
emulate ...”

“ The project equips me to contribute positively ...”

Gadissie Terefe

Project and Plan Expert, Oromia Women’s Federation

The GIZ-delivered Women in Leadership and Innovation Training, through the STEP programme, was a transformative experience. The two modules, focusing on leadership skills and project transfer, used interactive methods like role-playing instead of traditional lectures.

The training was highly relevant, addressing topics like communication, emotional intelligence, and negotiation. It considered our specific contexts and encouraged our input, making it truly impactful.

The second phase involved applying these skills. We learned design thinking, gender mainstreaming, and other concepts to develop solutions for our challenges. We then implemented these solutions in our workplaces.

In my role, I collaborated with the colleagues to implement a project for recent female graduates from Selam TVET College in hotel and tourism. Their prior business exposure made the intervention smooth and impactful. This experience, along with my individual project plan (currently under discussion), allows me to experiment with the leadership skills gained from the programme.

This training has not only helped me excel at work but also empowered me to contribute positively to my community.



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