

# EXTERNAL EVALUATION – SHORT REPORT

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Enhancement of Quality Infrastructure Services for Innovation in the  
Agriculture and Food Sector in Ethiopia and Ghana

Country | Region: Ethiopia and Ghana

Project No.: 2015.0139.4  
Period: Jan 2016 – Dec 2019

Executing Agency: Ethiopia: Ministry of Agriculture, MoA  
Ghana: Ministry of Food and Agriculture, MoFA

Implementing Partner: Ethiopia: Ethiopian Standards Agency (ESA) and other institutions  
Ghana: Ghana Standards Authority (GSA) and other institutions

PTB | Working Group: 9.35 Sub-Sahara Africa  
PTB | Project Coordinator: Ms Darinka Blies  
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This is an independent evaluation. The contents represent the view of the evaluator and cannot be taken to reflect the views of PTB.

**List of abbreviations**

|              |   |
|--------------|---|
| <b>BMZ</b>   | <i>Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung</i><br>German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development |
| <b>GIC</b>   | Green Innovation Centre   |
| <b>GIZ</b>   | <i>Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH</i>   |
| <b>IEC</b>   | International Electrotechnical Commission   |
| <b>ISO</b>   | International Standards Organisation  |
| <b>PA</b>    | Project Assistant   |
| <b>PC</b>    | Project Coordinator   |
| <b>PT</b>    | Proficiency testing   |
| <b>PTB</b>   | <i>Physikalisch-Technische Bundesanstalt</i> / National Metrology Institute of Germany  |
| <b>SMART</b> | Specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and time-bound   |

## 1. Project Description

The project is part of BMZ's special initiative "ONE WORLD – No Hunger", and has been planned to complement and interact closely with the global programme "Green Innovation Centres for the Agricultural and Food Sectors" coordinated by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH which aims at improving food security and securing employment and income of smallholder farmers. The PTB project covers a wide area with different aspects of quality infrastructure (QI) services which lead to many implementing partners involved. Considering its complex nature, its limited time and budget (four years, 2 million EUR for two countries) the project is quite ambitious.

The project is implemented by local QI organizations, in each country coordinated by a local Project Coordinator (PC) and a Germany-based PTB PC supported by a Project Assistant (PA). One intermittent Short-term Expert supports project coordination in both countries. There are no overarching project activities for both countries, but in a few occasions, project partners from one country attended workshops or trainings in the other country.

Ethiopia and Ghana have different political, natural, socio-economic, cultural, and sector-related framework conditions. Ethiopia has a larger area, more inhabitants, and is, in general, less developed than Ghana. In Ethiopia, employment in agriculture is about 71% (Ghana: 42%) and the primary sector contributes 31% to the GDP (Ghana: 20%). In 2015, in Ethiopia 62% of the population were living under 3.20 USD a day, while in Ghana this rate was 31%. QI services which are expected to improve productivity and quality along the value chain are insufficiently available in both countries.

## 2. Assessment of the project

The evaluation of the PTB project "Enhancement of Quality Infrastructure Services for Innovations in the Agriculture and Food Sector in Ethiopia and Ghana" was conducted in Ghana from June 24 to 28, 2019, and in Ethiopia from June 30 to July 5, 2019. Objectives of the evaluation were quality assurance for PTB, accountability towards BMZ and cooperation partners, internal learning and quality improvement, as well as providing recommendations for the project's next phase (Ethiopia only) and for further projects. Time available for the evaluation in Ethiopia and Ghana on-site was, per country, 3.5 days for data collection, 0.5 day for data analysis and 0.5 day for the debriefing workshop. Detailed minutes of meeting of the debriefing workshops were prepared which comprised evaluation finding (supportive factors/achievements and challenges) of framework conditions, the project outputs and of project management (strategy, cooperation, steering structure, processes, learning and innovation). The evaluation team concluded on relevance, effectiveness, impact, efficiency and sustainability of the project and provided detailed country-specific recommendations.

### 2.1 Status of the change process

#### Relevance

The project is geared to solving the core problem of the target groups only indirectly. Its objective with respect to development policy is to a very high degree in agreement with the partner countries' strategies and also with BMZ's objectives and guidelines. The project's fundamental

orientation and concept with respect to development policy is well in line with today's expectations, state-of-the-art and framework conditions of Ethiopia and Ghana. Thus, the project is still very relevant.

Mark: 1.75 (1: very good, 6: very bad)

### **Effectiveness**

The project's originally defined results matrix (outcome, outputs, and indicators) had certain shortcomings. Some of the indicators were not suitable for the results-based monitoring and the evaluation as they were not sufficiently specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and time-bound (SMART). For example, for Outcome Indicator No. 2 and No. 4, data are not available for the selected regions and value chains, while other indicators are too ambitious, such as Output Indicator 2.1 (per country, five additional local testing and calibration laboratories working according to ISO/IEC 17025). The project's objectives including the outcome indicators were attained to a higher degree in Ethiopia than in Ghana; however, both projects moved into the right direction. For Outcome Indicator No. 1 (use of standards), it is unknown if it will be achieved, No. 2 (use of national testing and calibration services) has been achieved in Ethiopia, but not in Ghana, No. 3 (use of PT programs) unknown if it will be achieved, and No. 4 (number of verified measuring instruments) achieved in Ethiopia but not in Ghana.

Mark: 3.0

### **Impact**

The different project activities led to various impacts, especially to institutional impacts but also to economic impacts. The evaluation team did not notice any negative impact of project activities. The project's exemplarity has not yet been sufficiently used. The project has neither contributed much to creating structures nor has it had a broad impact in Ethiopia and Ghana.

Mark: 2.5

### **Efficiency**

The use of resources by the project deemed very reasonable with regard to the performance and impacts reached (output and outcome). The possibility of coordinating actions with other donors and/or projects has been examined to some degree but possible cooperation was insufficiently implemented. Not all project contributions have been performed in due time and, accordingly, the impacts could not be reached within a reasonable period of time.

Mark: 2.15

## **Sustainability**

The positive changes and impacts of the project with regard to the objectives in terms of development policy can be deemed long-term to a good degree, especially in Ghana. Risks identified at the start of the project were counteracted as far as possible; however, some of the risks were outside the influence of the project and could not be neutralized, such as the frequent change of staff of some partner institutions in Ethiopia.

Mark: 1.5

## **2.2 Success factors for the observed results and change processes**

### **Strategy**

As the project strategy was closely related with that of the GIZ Green Innovation Centres, the institutions involved in the implementation of the PTB-supported project could not get much involved in analysing the situation, developing intervention options and making decisions with respect to the project strategy. However, the project strategy is coherent and logical. Relevant existing strategies, potentials and challenges have been taken into account in the project strategy. The partners know about the project strategy to a high extent. The project strategy has been implemented to a medium extent (slow implementation of important elements of the project strategy).

Level of achievement: 75%

### **Cooperation**

In general, the right stakeholders are involved in the implementation of the project. It is not clear to the evaluators if stakeholder mapping has been undertaken. However, project partners and the boundaries of the project are clearly defined. Among the project partners it is clear who will take on which role in the project except that there was insufficient distinction from the bilateral PTB project in Ghana. Possible lines of conflict in the context of the project have been taken into account by project management as far as possible.

Level of achievement: 80%

### **Steering structure**

PTB did not establish parallel structures but used existing institutions and practices to support the quality infrastructure in Ethiopia and Ghana which is positive. The complexity of the steering structure was not completely adapted to the needs of the project; however, for Ethiopia, there were attempts to reduce the negative effects of the complexity by developing terms of references for project committee meetings and conducting two meetings per year. Because of the non-existence of milestones, indicators not being sufficiently SMART and lacking an operational plan for the whole project period in Ghana, it is assessed that the project team did not use operational planning and results-based monitoring sufficiently to attain the project goals. Steering structure has provided appropriate impulses to support the achievement of the project objectives.

Level of achievement: 82%

### **Processes**

Even though no process map has been drawn and on-going processes in the context of the project were not systematically analysed, PTB dealt with and used existing processes to an appropriate extent. Project processes related to performance, cooperation, support, and steering have been established to an appropriate extent; however, learning processes were insufficiently considered.

Level of achievement: 80%

### **Learning and innovation**

Learning objectives have not been defined in the project. The ability of the project partners to steer and implement the project has not been improved strongly or strategically. So far, it has been insufficiently ensured that lessons learnt from concrete project activities were processed, documented and used in a structural manner.

Level of achievement: 50%

### **3. Learning processes and learning experience**

Even though the project initiated different learning processes (e.g. using the local PTB-supported laboratory networks for joint trainings or for sharing of knowledge gained in trainings abroad), in general, there was insufficient systematic analysis of project experiences and from learnings that took place within the scope of the project. So far, there was no concerted effort to analyse the lessons which could be learnt from the project and make them available for others. Thus, knowledge and insight gained from experiences were insufficiently used for own improvement or made available for other PTB projects for learning. The learnings of the present evaluation are yet to be put into practice. Some of the learning processes initiated were initiated late or led to late results, such as the production of pictorial standards and interpretation handbooks as well as the development of training modules for the target group which was planned to have been integrated into the trainings of the Green Innovation Centres.

### **4. Recommendations**

The evaluation team formulated detailed recommendations for project partners, the PTB project team, the International Department of PTB, and the team from the PTB department in charge of evaluations, with priority, timeline and justification. Main recommendations are:

*Recommendations to partners and PTB project team*

1. Improve QI awareness raising at different levels
2. Promote knowledge on ISO/IEC 17025:2017

3. Improve cooperation, analysis and documentation of best practices and learnings for internal and external use

*Recommendations to partners*

4. Overcome the problem of the frequent transfers of PTB-trained staff of partner organisations (Ethiopia)
5. Ensure sustainability of the laboratory networks in Ethiopia and Ghana

*Recommendations to the project team*

6. Improve practical cooperation with the Green Innovation Centres (GIC), finalize the QI training modules and integrate them into the GIC training of farmers and other stakeholders
7. Plan the next phase of the project (Ethiopia only) considering the learnings of the present phase

*Recommendations to International Department of PTB*

8. Project planning: ensure that project indicators are SMART, draw plan of operation for the whole project period with milestones for project steering, consciously prepare partners for the time after the project has ended
9. Project implementation: share operational plan with partners, install official project structure as early as possible
10. Ensure that projects systematically analyse their experiences for own improvement and make them available to other PTB projects for learning
11. Make more systematically and strategically use of the potential available when working in two different countries; if possible, assign one PC for a project covering different countries
12. Try to keep the number of PC changes as low as possible
13. Systematically follow-up Calidena workshops, e.g. consider creating networks of value chain stakeholders
14. Documentation of project activities: ensure keeping better-structured overview records of training activities, equipment provided, assignments of short-term experts, travel of PTB staff, project products and publications, key project events per output
15. Project evaluations: make sure that evaluators get all recent files before starting the field phase, provide overview of project funds used, ensure that evaluations include a properly drawn sample of target group representatives

*Recommendations to the team from the PTB department in charge of evaluations*

16. Consider revising structure and template of PTB evaluation reports (review existing report format in order to better capture project efforts and evaluation results, e.g. also considering outputs; make sure that report template and annotated report version do match and that formats applied are consistent throughout the report)