



The Albania/Hawaii Higher Education and Economic Development Project (AHEED)

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Albania-Hawaii Higher Education and Economic Development Project

Project

The University of Hawaii (UH/NREM) and the Agricultural University of Tirana/Faculty of Economy and Agribusinesses (AUT/FEA) partnered to **enhance Albania's higher education** to contribute to economic development and social prosperity by **empowering AUT's faculty and building its capacity to educate, consult and advise**

Specific objectives:

- Co-develop a MS curriculum in Agricultural Economics
- Strengthen applied research capacity and policy analysis
- Co-develop and teach data collection, data analysis and management skills to extension personnel and businesses



Major Challenge(s)

Overarching principles for the project:

Foundation building and maintaining Sustainability

Foundation building challenges:

Lack of Infrastructure – such as access to internet, databases, library, research funds for equipment

Sustainability challenges:

Lack of: networking opportunities, exposure to external peers and scholarly exchanges, incentives and rewards, low pay, mentor, experience, donor dependent and professional development programs



REAL UNDERLYING CHALLENGE

- Why do they want to work with us or listen to us?
- READINESS FOR CHANGE
 - Institutionally
 - Faculty
 - USAID/HED



Partnership Design to Address this Challenge

MODEL

- Co-develop, teach, **coach**, mentor model

ATTITUDE

- Goal similar - to be the 'best' agricultural university in Albania and/or region
- Stay focus on objectives and priorities
- Moving targets – start out low then higher standards
- Opportunistic - not be afraid to ask for assistance mutually
- Entrepreneurial - listen well and act on suggestions



REAL DESIGN

- Think the unthinkable
 - Have your own conference
 - Have paper among the best in international conference
 - Provide competitive grants
 - Publish a book
 - Policy Institute



Successes/Outcomes

Success breeds more successes

- Most junior FEA faculty members are now active in international conferences
- Scientific papers from the project have been published in international journals
- New research methods are being used by FEA faculty
- Research increasingly prioritized by FEA faculty
- Established annual agricultural conference
- Some integrated projects
- Students are better trained (poster competition)
- A new atmosphere and attitude



Successes

- Using library search for the basis of scientific research
- Depend more on primary data
- Know quantitative methods for market and policy analysis
- Know supply chain, consumer preferences, production efficiency analyses
- Understand why publish refereed articles



Challenges Faced

- Stronger collaborations needed among stakeholders
 - Understand groups interests and form common ground
- Expanding the extent of faculty participating How many/what percent participate now? What can be done to encourage more?
 - Less intimidating environment
 - Different/increased incentives for participating
 - Market successes of faculty currently participating
 - Survey their interests to tailor workshops to their interests
 - Measureable impact on economic development



Challenges For the Future

- Sustainability for the future—How to produce lasting change
What will produce lasting change? What can we do about this?
 - Minigrants, periodic workshops and travel grants
 - Promotion using international standards
 - Make sure the classes, workshops, etc. we teach are cutting edge and will be the best to serve them in the future—teaching them to fish rather than giving them fish
 - Market/highlight successes of faculty resulting from the project—success begets success
 - Make sure we leave them with all the infrastructure needed to succeed and the knowledge/resources to keep it current



Measuring Success

- Evaluation surveys and feedback
- Research published in new and/or higher impact journals
- Presentations at new and/or higher profile meetings
- Increased involvement of MOA extension
- Overall faculty attitude and motivation
- AUT sponsored conference attendance and student participation—increased independence



Take Home

EDUCATION MAKES A DIFFERENCE!

HOWEVER

- Long term process
- Institutional Transformation
- Integrate Competitiveness
- Maintain Infrastructure



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Thank you for your attention!

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