Support for the Transformation of Professional Training

THE INTERVENTION, AT A GLANCE

The Costa Rican labor market has been negatively impacted by COVID-19 and employment indicators have not yet recovered to their pre-pandemic levels. In this context, improving the skills of the labor force is key to employment recovery. This intervention supports the efforts of the National Learning Institute (INA), the country’s largest professional training institution, in improving the relevance and quality of its training offerings.

WHAT IS THE CONTEXT?

In order to face the effects of COVID-19 on the labor market, the Costa Rican government is developing measures aimed to generate opportunities for labor market insertion and reinsertion that contribute to the economic reactivation. Although INA plays a key role in this effort, it faces limitations in terms of the relevance and quality of its services: only 39% of its graduates with no previous work experience were able to obtain employment. These results are mainly due to a weak connection with the productive sector, failure in the development of competencies and curricula, lack of an updated profile of the competencies that its teachers have and require, deficient evaluation mechanisms, and limitations in its institutional management model and the Education Management and Information System (EMIS). To address these problems, in January 2021, its regulatory framework was modified to adopt a management model that is more adaptable to the 4.0 revolution and more efficient.

WHAT DOES THE INTERVENTION CONSIST OF?

• To support INA in the development of activities aimed at improving the relevance and quality of its training offering and efficiency of its management model.

• To support the design of a new model of interaction with the productive sector, based on value chains and their occupational routes. We will begin with a pilot implementation in three economic sectors (agroindustry, information technology and tourism), with the objective that this new model will become the input for a relevant curriculum update, and that it can later be replicated by the INA in other economic sectors.

• To improve teachers’ skills, as well as INA’s institutional model and EMIS.

AUTHORS OF THE SUMMARY

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INNOVATIVE ELEMENTS

• New professional training model based on interaction with the productive sector.

• New teacher training model based on project development methodology.

• Improvement of the institutional management model and the Education Management and Information System (EMIS).

PARTNERS

National Learning Institute (INA).
WHO DOES WHAT?

• Consulting firm, Upskills, supports INA in the design of the new interaction model with the productive sector and in the commencement of its pilot implementation.
• The HAMK Consortium of Universities assists in the training of 25 teachers using the project-based methodology.
• Several experts will contribute to measuring the results of the teacher training program and will provide technical advice to the INA team in charge of improving its EMIS and institutional management model.

WHAT ARE THE EXPECTED RESULTS?

• Sector-based governance functioning in three sectors (agribusiness, tourism and IT), sectoral occupational routes designed and validated, and occupations identified.
• Recommendations made for improving the institutional management model and EMIS. Additionally, three labor-training routes developed by INA.
• Three curricular offerings (one for each sector) developed.
• Report on the implementation of the teacher training project, proposals for expansion within INA and evaluation of the results of the INA teacher training project.
• Improved relevance and quality of INA learning packaging in place.
• EMIS, institutional management model designed.

WHY IS THIS INTERVENTION RELEVANT?

This intervention provides support to the most important professional training institution in Costa Rica, INA, which will play a vital role in the economic reactivation and recovery of employment after the pandemic. Although this type of institution is characterized in Latin America and the Caribbean by its broad coverage, the amount of resources it manages, and the wide variety of services it offers (training, entrepreneurship, certification and labor mediation), its training offerings are often limited in terms of quality and relevance. INA’s transformation will serve as an example for other similar institutions seeking to improve and strengthen professional trainings.

SCHEDULE

**November 2020**
Project approval.

**January 2022**
Sector-based governance functioning in three sectors (agribusiness, tourism and IT), sectoral occupational routes designed and validated, and occupations identified.

**July 2022**
Recommendations made for improving the institutional management model and EMIS. Additionally, three labor-training routes developed by INA.

**December 2022**
Three curricular offerings (one for each sector) developed.

**February 2023**
Report on the implementation of the teacher training project, proposals for expansion within INA and evaluation of the results of the INA teacher training project.

Improved relevance and quality of INA learning packaging in place.

EMIS, institutional management model designed.