

This requires expanding access to capital, including for vulnerable people, smallholder cooperatives and associations. It also requires rural transformation, renewable technologies, value addition in the natural resource sector and investments in quality infrastructure. In 2017-2018, Canada pursued a range of initiatives in line with these objectives, such as support for:

- entrepreneurship and skills training;
- access to new technologies and resources;
- access to markets and value chains; and
- infrastructure and equipment that can help unlock economic opportunities.

One such initiative was the Skills, Employability and Entrepreneurship Programme of the African Development Bank. It helped carry out the Rwandan government's policy to train young people and create jobs, promote economic growth and reduce poverty. The program focused on training and work placements for young women, recognizing that in Africa, women are twice as likely to start a business as they are elsewhere. The percentage of those enrolled in training who had not completed secondary school rose from 42% to 56% in 2017. The share of young women participants increased from 42% to 46%.

In Egypt, the Government of Canada partnered with the Aga Khan Foundation Canada on a \$10.9 million project to improve the livelihoods of women, men and youth. In 2017-2018, 1,169 students benefited from technical and soft skills training such as management, computer skills, and English language courses. High-potential enterprises that adopted a gender-sensitive mentoring program received business development services and coaching. As a result, a number of Egypt's women, men and youth have improved their employability and entrepreneurship skills and opportunities.

The Government of Canada continues to join forces with the Aga Khan Foundation Canada on the Aswan Skills Development Program. This \$10-million initiative aims to improve the employment and employability of young women and men in the Aswan Governorate, one of the three poorest regions in Egypt. With support from Canada's Seneca College and an international institution, Aga Khan University, the project was able to change mindsets. It developed market-driven courses to meet the demands of four key sectors: electrical, solar energy, nursing and agribusiness. Employment opportunities improved for 3,000 youth, thanks to this program.



INNOVATION

In Ukraine, Canada partnered with the Mennonite Economic Development Associates in 2017-2018 to help small and medium-sized farmers increase their revenues.

The association is an international economic development organization. The almost \$20-million project focused on improving product quality and facilitating access to larger markets. In 2017-2018,



BUILDING A HIGHWAY TO PROSPERITY IN UKRAINE, ONE CLOVE OF GARLIC AT A TIME

"In the beginning, all we had was a dream of creating a successful agricultural business: we didn't have any financial support, knowledge or experience. But we were ambitious. We had a desire to succeed and we believed in this business. This helped us in turning the loss-making company into a sustainable and profitable farm! With the support of the Canada-funded agricultural development project, we were able to purchase equipment for the cultivation of high-quality garlic, and build a mini garlic processing plant and a 1,000-ton storage warehouse. Micro-producers, including those with kitchen gardens, are able to use our facilities and sell their garlic in bulk to large-scale buyers at competitive prices. Our business is also able to produce high-quality garlic and reach international markets. Today, we are exporting to Canada and Belarus, and are in discussions with a Canadian pharmaceutical company interested in buying our dried garlic. Thanks to the project, the future has never been so bright!"

—Yan Mishkevych and Nataliia Sudarkina, garlic producers

Canada also partnered with SOCODEVI on a roughly \$20-million project to combat pervasive rural poverty, particularly among rural women. The project tried to achieve this by strengthening small-scale dairy family farms. It also availed of cooperative management to improve access to