



UNITED NATIONS
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION



Centers of Excellence

CONTEXT

Building sustainable, inclusive and resilient food and non-food systems requires strengthening the competitiveness and competency across the food and agribusiness sector. Some of the key challenges faced by countries that limit their productive and processing capacities include limited technological, infrastructural, vocational and research and development related expertise. Moreover, the potential for entering high end markets is challenging in absence of compliance with international best practices and food safety standards, limited opportunities for value addition across supply chains, lack of access to finance and business development services. Strengthening institutional capacities to create an enabling environment with comprehensive support services for food sector operators is essential to agribusiness and agro-industrial development.

APPROACH

UNIDO's Agribusiness Department has been working to bridge the gap between technical capacities of diverse public and private stakeholders and the potential of sustainable growth, productivity and competitiveness within the agri-food landscape. To that end, the department pioneers and supports the creation of Centers of Excellence (CoE) to enhance performance across value chains, provide support services and build local capacity to serve value chain operators.

UNIDO's approach for pioneering Centers of Excellence expands the organization's traditional role of providing technical assistance for developing agribusiness systems and taps into the organization's competitive advantage of engaging with diverse public and private stakeholders, thereby linking regulatory policy to industry. Based on a partnership driven approach, the CoE will adopt a context-responsive scope of services and governance structure to maximize local ownership and financial stability of these centers beyond the project cycle.

Envisioned as a hub for providing credible, sustainable, locally driven and high-quality services, the Centers of Excellence will:

- Provide technical, vocational and financial services based on the local, national and regional context and the relevant agricultural value chains.
- Respond to and bridge gaps between value chain operators and sustainable and inclusive value chain development.
- Facilitate knowledge sharing, technology transfer and market linkages to enhance value addition, productivity and standards compliance by food operators.
- Support and build institutional and technical capacity of food regulators to ensure the provision of high-quality, food safety standards compliant products.

WORKING TOWARDS



GEOGRAPHICAL SCOPE



12 CoEs on agri-food systems in 8 countries
14 CoEs on industrial skills development in 7 countries



PARTNERS

Government ministries, local regulatory authorities, associations, technical training and vocational institutes, financial actors



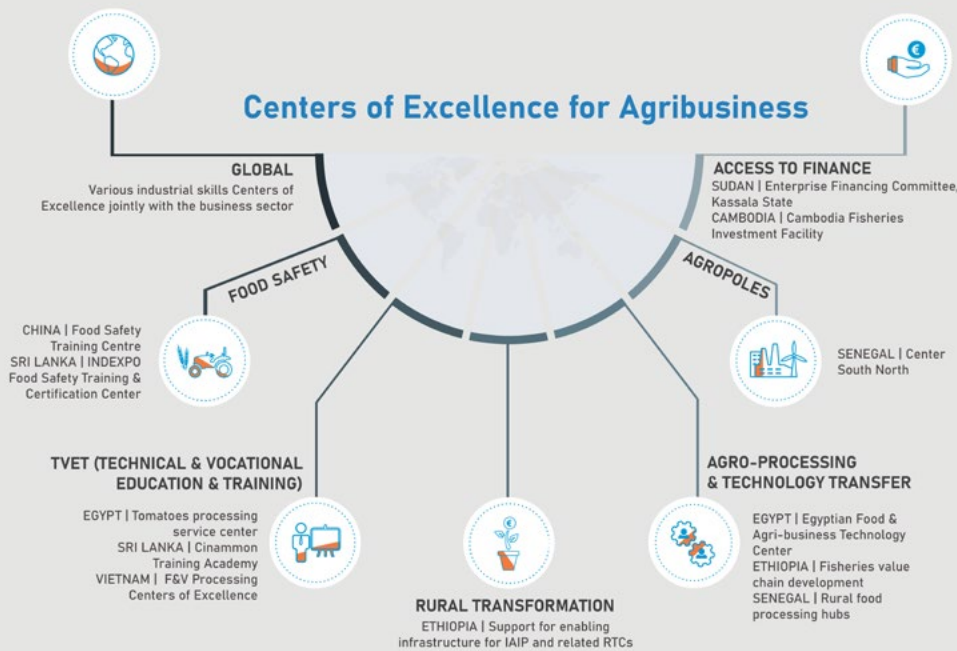
FOCUS AREAS

- Food safety
- Skills and training
- Rural transformation
- Agropoles
- Agro-processing and technology transfer
- Access to finance



CONTACT

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Covering a diverse scope of services, CoE are geared towards creating enabling environment for transforming local agribusiness and agro-industrial capacities. These services include technical support for value chain development, technical and vocational education and training, technology transfer and digital solutions, access to finance, developing business models for sustainable operations etc.

Based on UNIDO's experience in implementing this approach in different countries,

CASE STUDY | INDEXPO

IndExpo was established in 2007 in Sri Lanka as a public not-for-profit company by a partnership between the National Chamber of Exporters and the Ceylon National Chamber of Industries under a former UNIDO project. Aimed at facilitating international market access, IndExpo enables Sri Lankan exporters to comply with food safety and social

the following five elements are critical to ensure the success and sustainability of CoE in home countries:

- Adopting a public-private partnership driven approach.
- Ensuring national and local ownership.
- Developing a sound business model for financial sustainability.
- Strengthening local expertise and technical capacities for service provision.
- Acquiring international recognition for aligning CoE service provision and operations to international best practices.

standards required by importing countries and their buyers.

Providing technical support to acquire trainings for certification services, aim for international accreditation and building a viable business model, UNIDO's support enabled IndExpo to emerge as a fully financially sustainable company in 2013.

“Indexpo has earned a good recognition in Sri Lanka both the private and public sector, completing more than 300 certifications. We appreciate UNIDO's contribution and unstinted effort to sustain and develop a credible certification body in Sri Lanka”

Shantha Kurupmullage
Director, Ind-Expo Certification Limited



Website:
IND-EXPO

 **300+**
enterprises certified

14
Public Private Development Partnerships established on skills development

 **60**

Tea manufacturing plants certified

100+
Coir Fiber and Fiber pith substrate facilities certified



Crowns for Food Hygiene Scheme developed based on international best practices to grade the food and catering sector in Sri Lanka

10
Systems certifications available including GMP, OHSAS 18001, ISO 14001, ISO 9001, OHSAS 18001, ISO 22000, HACCP, ISO

Accredited by the Sri Lanka Accreditation Board for ISO 9001, ISO 22000, ISO 14001 and OHSAS 18001