

Cinnamon Training Academy (CTA) in Sri Lanka

Timeframe: 2012 to date

CASESTORY



LED BY

PRIVATE SECTOR

The Spice Council of Sri Lanka (industry association of spice growers and exporters)

With participation from the Ceylon Cinnamon Association

PUBLIC SECTOR

Ministry of Industry and Commerce

Ministry of Finance

Ministry of Minor Export Crops

Ministry of Vocational Training & Skills Development

National Planning Department

Tertiary and Vocational Educational Commission

National Apprentice and Industrial Training Authority



GOVERNANCE

The partnership began with a project-based governance mechanism, which promoted consultation and dialogue among the stakeholders.

The Board of the Spice Council and the Ceylon Cinnamon Association provided strategic oversight of the Academy, with a Government representative as a member of the CTA board of directors. Today, CTA is an independent, non-profit organization with exporters, producers and processors representatives composing the board.

FUNDING

This partnership was facilitated by an STDF project in cooperation with the public and private sector, implemented by UNIDO from 2012 to 2016. The Sri Lankan government financed the Academy's construction and infrastructure. Stakeholders in the cinnamon industry donated land for the Academy and invested additional funds. The STDF project funded the development of competency standards and a tailored curriculum based on international standards, and set up and piloted the training programme in collaboration.



PURPOSE

This partnership was created to improve knowledge and skills on food safety and hygiene in the cinnamon value chain, and address challenges facing exports. It established the Cinnamon Training Academy (CTA) as a not-for-profit educational organization to deliver hands-on training to small-scale operators and processors on Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP), Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP), ISO 22000, and occupational standard schemes for cinnamon processing. The vocational training programme set up was accredited by the Tertiary and Vocational Educational Commission.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

PRIVATE SECTOR

- Promote improved food safety and SPS practices among operators in the Ceylon cinnamon value chain.
- Participate in the CTA board
- Lead on day-to-day management of the CTA through the Chief Executive Officer and Program Coordinator
- Deliver training on GMPs, HACCP, ISO 22000, and occupational standard schemes to cinnamon field and factory operators.

PUBLIC SECTOR

- Participated as a member of the CTA board during its inception.
- Approved vocational training curricula on food safety and hygiene practices for processors and managers.

LESSONS

- A coordinated approach to planning and investments was crucial to achieving synergies and coherence, given the number of stakeholders involved in providing support to the cinnamon sector.

- Establishing the Academy as a non-profit entity and cost-sharing, i.e. through in-kind and financial contributions, between the public and private sector enhanced ownership that has been important for long-term success.
- More work is required to adapt the CTA's business model and develop new income-generating revenue streams for longer-term sustainability. Reliance on fee-based training is challenging, particularly when other institutions (e.g. Department of Export Agriculture) offer similar training free-of-charge.

UP-SCALING OPPORTUNITIES

- The CTA is exploring options to increase its focus to include other major spices produced in Sri Lanka.
- The vocational training model delivered under this partnership could be expanded to strengthen food safety capacity in other key strategic export-oriented value chains.
- The Academy plays a vital role in the ongoing registration process of Ceylon cinnamon Geographical Indication (GI) to add value to cinnamon exports to high-end markets.

RESULTS

THIS PARTNERSHIP ENABLED THE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTOR TO ADDRESS FOOD SAFETY AND HYGIENE CHALLENGES IN THE CEYLON CINNAMON VALUE CHAIN, WHICH TRIGGERED TRANSFORMATIONAL CHANGE IN THE SECTOR AND HELPED TO INCREASE EXPORTS TO HIGH-END MARKETS.

FIRST NATIONALLY ACCREDITED VOCATIONAL TRAINING PROGRAMME

It developed the first nationally accredited vocational training programme to promote internationally recognized food safety certification focused on a particular value chain.

6 centres upgraded

Six cinnamon processing centres were upgraded, allowing them to obtain GMP certification as an essential prerequisite to comply with international food safety standards and buyer requirements. More cinnamon peelers and processors (including women) have joined the sector thanks to certified vocational training and decent working conditions.



ADDITIONAL FUNDING

Based on the initial success, additional funding was leveraged from the European Union to review the national competency standards to enable the Academy to expand its training curriculum to processing services that add value to the cinnamon. This initiative also built and equipped the "Bought Tree Processing Factory" to support smallholders and CTA's financial sustainability during the harvest season when demand for training is lower.