



UNITED NATIONS
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION

“The Safe+ Programme supported Colombia’s objective to be recognized as a regional leader in the production and export of cosmetics made from natural ingredients. It also served as a precedent for the UNIDO-SECO GQSP.”

Juan Pablo Diaz Castillo, Industrial Development Officer, UNIDO

COLOMBIA: Strengthening the National Quality Subsystem through the cosmetics sector

The Quality Programme for the Cosmetic Sector ‘Safe+’ successfully boosted the competitiveness and quality of the sector by closing technical gaps in order to increase the commercial capacity of national cosmetic products. It also became a referral for international cooperation, thanks to the impacts generated and the joint work that the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), the State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO) and the Government of Colombia through Colombia Productiva of the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Tourism, successfully implemented.

UNIDO’S APPROACH

UNIDO supported Colombia’s efforts to integrate into the regional and multilateral trading system by enhancing its trade capacities and performance. This was carried out through a quality programme aimed at the cosmetics sector’s productive chain, which has strengthened the National Quality Subsystem (NQS), enhanced the technical capacities and improved compliance with international quality, private and sustainability standards. The project has developed local expertise with the adequate technical knowledge to provide quality-related advisory services to the sector during and after the project. Furthermore, it has contributed to improve the quality of production and the competitiveness of exported natural ingredients-based cosmetics.

IMPACT

The technical capacities of Colombia’s NQI key institutions have been strengthened to serve the cosmetic sector: the National Metrology Institute (INM) is maintaining national measurement standards capable of providing a reliable and accurate measurement service, and maintaining internationally traceable calibration services; the National Accreditation Board (ONAC) is Strengthening the National Quality Subsystem through the cosmetics sector facilitating independent attestation

of the technical capabilities of the conformity assessment service providers to the satisfaction of the local and international markets and authorities; and the National Institute of Food and Drug Monitoring (INVIMA) is in the process of enhancing its capacity to perform inspection, surveillance and control. Additionally, key functions providing conformity assessment are being strengthened to provide internationally recognized services (i.e. testing services that have the technical competence to test export products according to best international practices). These services support the cosmetic sector by demonstrating the quality of products independently from the manufacturer or the supplier. As a result of the systemic approach, the programme benefited more than 1,000 companies and laboratories through its training programs throughout the country, improving the technical competence of more than 3,400 people who were trained; strengthened 5 public national institutions, 16 testing laboratories, 24 companies and 2

associations of small producers that received deep technical assistance. This project has contributed to increase the direct employment in 2.2%, to reduce the sanitary risks by 17%, to increment the national production of the sector in 11.7% and to augment the exports in 2.4% from 2015 to 2017.

WAY FORWARD

Today, with the contribution of Safe+, national cosmetic products reach more countries and the world can enjoy the benefits of Colombian biodiversity; small and medium producers can meet external quality requirements and also demonstrate it through a strengthened quality infrastructure that today offers more and better services in the country. This has had an impact not only on the well-being of local and international consumers, but also on the generation of development opportunities for our communities and our SMEs and on the generation of a quality culture that transcends the cosmetic sector and extends its reach to the entire national productive apparatus.

AT A GLANCE

Project title	Cosmetics Sector Quality Programme Colombia
Thematic area	Advancing Economic Competitiveness
Donor	SECO
Project counterpart	MINCIT & Colombia Productiva
Budget	USD 2,700,700
Duration	4 years