

ICS Project for Appropriate and Sustainable Technologies (ICS-CAST)

ICS-UNIDO announces the new project named Centre for Appropriate and Sustainable Technologies (CAST). ICS-CAST is chartered to serve four main sectors to further the understanding, development, transfer, and implementation of appropriate and sustainable technologies for capacity building in the developing world. The four sectors are: industry, education, partners, and communities in developed and developing countries. The activities of CAST include research and development, education and training, and field implementation in all three programme areas of interest to ICS-UNIDO, namely: environment, chemistry, and high technology and new materials. The activities of ICS-CAST are organised in line with the overall mandate of ICS, which is to transfer technological and scientific knowledge to developing and transition-economy countries with the aim of promoting sustainable industrial growth.

CAST provides an environment where ICS-UNIDO fellows and representatives from developing countries are exposed to a wide range of sustainable development solutions and are trained to use various appropriate technologies to solve water, sanitation, waste, energy, shelter, information technology, and health issues at the community level. The following services are provided:

- *Capacity building:* CAST has launched the pilot core study, Green Village™ initiative to help local communities develop social, environmental and economic sustainable solutions. These solutions are designed to allow all community members to enjoy a quality of life where basic needs of water, sanitation, nutrition, health, safety, shelter, and meaningful work are fulfilled. The main goal of the Green Village initiative is to empower developing communities by enhancing local social, technical, managerial, and entrepreneurial skills through resources and knowledge. This initiative contributes to meeting the United Nations Millennium Development Goals at the grassroots level.
- *Database development and maintenance:* CAST serves as a clearinghouse for various technologies and organisations that already provide services to the developing world. It responds to a dire need to (i) coordinate existing services and expertise; (ii) document existing appropriate technology systems and their performance; (iii) provide a common platform to universities, technical and vocational schools, and individuals in host communities, engineering companies, humanitarian organisations, NGOs and interested individuals. One of the first tasks undertaken by CAST is to review existing databases and propose a more coherent system of cataloguing existing information on appropriate technologies accessible through the web and the upcoming ICS portal.
- *Testing and improvement of existing technology in order to provide quality control:* A wide range of appropriate technologies already exist on the international market. One of the tasks of CAST is to provide on-going testing of existing technologies, identify their range of applications, and propose necessary modifications. CAST provides recommendations for new technologies needed to meet the challenging and growing needs of the developing world.
- *Technology transfer:* CAST provides the means to transfer successful technologies from one part of the world to another, while providing entrepreneurial opportunities to host communities in the developing world.
- *Education and training:* CAST serves as a training ground for students, practising engineers, and entrepreneurs. It provides annual hands-on workshops and regional meetings on sustainable development and appropriate technology to participants from the developing world through its “Train the Trainers” programme. Training is conducted locally on a demand basis, at ICS-UNIDO, on-line (e-learning), or at other places selected by ICS-UNIDO.