

CONCEPT NOTE

**FOR THE CREATION OF A
CENTRE OF TAX EXCELLENCE
(CoTE)**

MARCH 2022

INSTITUTE OF CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS OF UGANDA

CONCEPT NOTE: CENTRE OF TAX EXCELLENCE

1. Rationale

Considering the need to contribute to the development of tax policy and the enhancement of tax administration in Uganda, ICPAU is to establish a “Centre of Tax Excellence (CoTE)”. The establishment of the Centre of Tax Excellence will amplify the commitment of the Institute to institutionalize the process of including practical research and academic input for the mobilization of resources through tax & non-tax revenues, and for the formulation of better fiscal policy.

It can be argued that there is no better professional body than ICPAU to lead in this regard and be a center of excellence in the country. The ICPAU Centre of Tax Excellence is for accountants and other tax practitioners who wish to specialize in the field of taxation.

The ICPAU Centre of Tax Excellence will comprise tax professionals across the country. The CoTE will work closely with dedicated teams of tax professionals in the country, to provide professional thought leadership processes and services to the economy.

2. Role and purpose

The role of the CoTE is to provide members with the opportunity to help shape and contribute to the development of tax policy.

The role of the CoTE is to ensure members, and their expertise, are at the forefront of policy considerations and to create a leading voice on issues impacting the tax space. The work covers policy at international, national, regional and domestic levels with the purpose of influencing the development and application of tax laws in the public interest.

3. Objective

ICPAU’s CoTE will provide members with an opportunity to advise on key Ugandan taxation policy issues of interest to members and the wider community. The objective of the CoTE is to provide evidence-based and empirically sound policy inputs to the Government on matters of taxation and fiscal governance.

The CoTE would provide quantitative & qualitative fiscal reports & suggestions to decision-makers, prepare policy inputs for the formulation of the Annual Budget of Government indicating the policy intervention required in the areas of tax & non-tax revenue and allocative efficiency in public expenditure, prepare the research papers & newsletters and provide a forum for interaction between tax policy department officials and the tax professionals.

The CoTE will be the first of its kind in the Country and will function as a resource Centre on matters of taxation by networking and collaborating with outstanding academic and policy-oriented institutions within and abroad. The Centre will also conduct discussions at regular intervals on various aspects of tax policy as well as contemporary issues pertaining to fiscal policy.

The CoTE is envisaged to serve the larger purpose of researching on the overall fiscal policies of the Government, providing assistance to the Tax Policy and Tax Administration Department of the Ministry of Finance for budgetary activities, and providing analysis on fiscal policy & taxation issues. The CoTE will be engaged in research and provide inputs with a strong academic base and core competence in taxation to the Government.

The CoTE will be positioning itself as the first point of reference for tax policy research in tune with the Sound Principles of Taxation and matching principles of Fiscal responsibility within the economy.

4. Benefits

The ICPAU CoTE membership benefits will include:

- Professional designations, and recognition within the industry
- Assurance to clients that members are recognized as credible tax practitioners in the industry
- Professional and business advancement for tax practitioners
- Continuous support and development through powerful networking, growth opportunities and abundant resources
- Telephone and email support by the ICPAU CoTE service centre for technical queries and questions
- Access to a fully resourced online tax library to search for information, solutions, guidance, and answers to tax issues
- Tax-dedicated Continuous Professional Development (CPD) events provided at extremely competitive rates
- Receive alerts and notifications for breaking news on any tax legislation changes
- Access to member forums countrywide.

5. Expected Outcomes/Impact

The CoTE role acts in an advisory capacity as part of ICPAU to:

- provide guidance on policy and issues relating to Ugandan taxation
- provide advice on relevant legislation requiring response/comment
- provide input and feedback on appropriate policy responses

- identify current and emerging issues relevant to the profession in a timely and effective way, provide thought leadership - write Position papers to enable discussion on emerging topics
- publish articles and essays by leading Tax practitioners in the Institute's magazine and with time maybe in a separate Tax journal
- bring to public access decided Ugandan Tax Cases and from any other jurisdictions of relevancy in form of a report.
- provide operational research based practical solutions to taxation challenges in managing Uganda's economy.
- conduct periodical Local and Global Tax Surveys that provide an authoritative overview of tax systems throughout the world in comparison with the local provisions.
- address issues which impact the profession, focusing on changes in the wider economic environment including globalization and e-business
- provide input on possible ICPAU products and assist development of professional resources.

6. Research and Dissemination

- a. The Center of Tax Excellence will have research facilities with access to academic and non-academic knowledge networks.
- b. It will attract "World Class Thought Leaders" perhaps through research grants, to conduct tax-policy-related research.
- c. In keeping with global trends, the center of excellence will operate a state-of-the-art Web Site which will be the primary method of dissemination of information regarding the activities of the Center.
- d. A key feature of the website will be a list of recognized tax practitioners.

7. Membership: Tax Specialist

- Performs all the services required of a Tax Specialist.
- Represents taxpayers in Court.
- Mediates tax disputes.
- Writes tax opinions and offers tax advice.

8. Implementation/Next Steps

- a. Identify and appoint the main Project Team and the Project Leader.
- b. Establish and staff a functional Center of Excellence Office.
- c. Map the institutional context of ICPAU, URA, and all the other stakeholders to establish their continued relevance and future role.
- d. Establish Mission and Vision congruence.

- e. Develop detail plans/terms of reference for the Center of Excellence through a participatory consultative process.
- f. Establish the first Center of Excellence within the region.

9. Timetable

The Time plan to strategize and plan on the Model and set up the first Center of Excellence in Taxation in Uganda is 10 months.

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