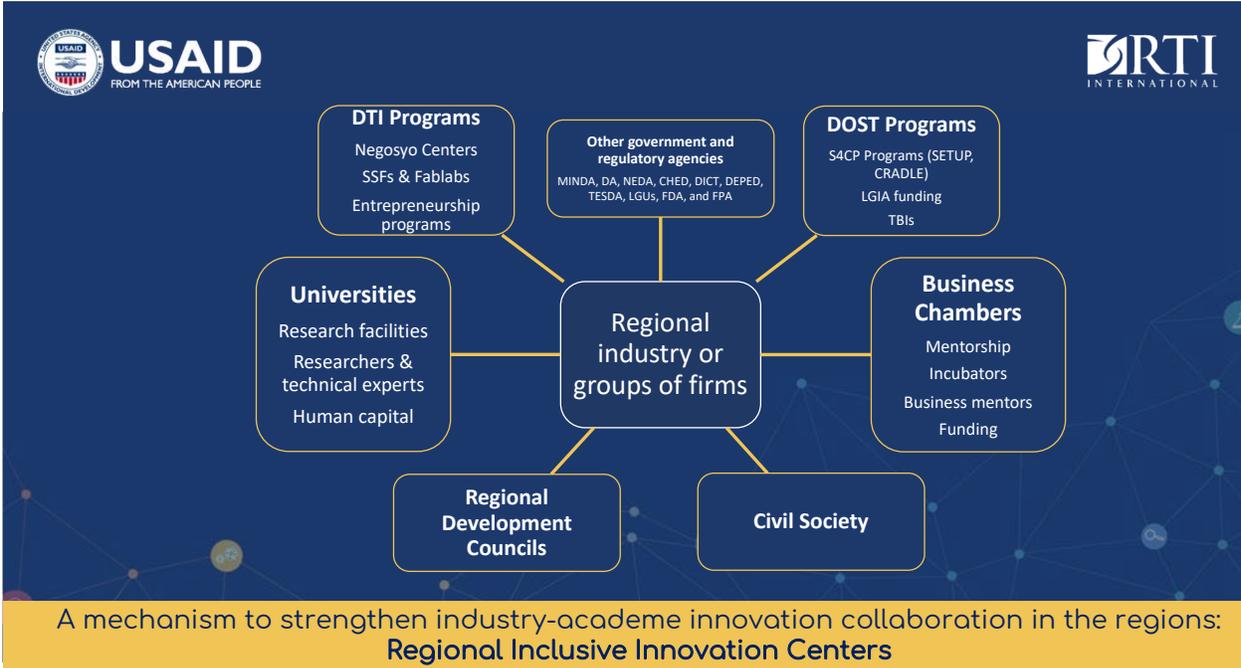


Brief Overview of Regional Inclusive Innovation Centers (RIICs) - a DTI and DOST initiative with USAID STRIDE support

One of the cornerstones of the DTI - DOST Inclusive Filipinovation and Entrepreneurship Roadmap is the establishment of Regional Inclusive Innovation Centers (or RIICs), which will serve as a key driver for the Philippines’ economic transformation. The Philippine Government envisions these RIICs to be virtual and physical assemblies of different programs (i.e. university extension services, industry-academe collaboration), facilities (i.e. R&D laboratories, co-working spaces, fabrication laboratories), and entities (i.e. investors, LGUs, start-ups, SMEs) in the innovation space. Currently, the cities of Cagayan de Oro, Cebu, Davao, and Legazpi are the four (4) pilot sites while Regions II, III, 4A, and 9 are the expansion sites.

Figure 1. A visualization of the Regional Inclusive Innovation Center (RIICs) model



As networks of innovation agents, the RIICs will give rise to collaboration towards the commercialization of market-oriented research and the development outputs that leads to increased regional competitiveness. As a government initiative, in cooperation with industry and the academe, the RIICs set out to generate better employment and entrepreneurship opportunities towards economic prosperity. In the long term, the RIICs will enable the emergence of connected and creative regional communities.

Most RIICs begin with the identification (by local stakeholders) of a priority local industry which would serve as the anchor around which the complementarity of existing services and different innovation actors may be promoted. In the pilot sites, the following sectors were identified: food processing in Cagayan de Oro, electronics manufacturing and IT in Cebu, functional foods and processed fruits in Davao, and pili-related products in Legazpi. Meanwhile, the expansion sites have identified the following sectors: citrus in Region 2, food processing in Region 3, and *barako* coffee in Region 4A.

An ecosystem-wide strategy coupled with a set of activities are employed to bridge the gaps in the local innovation and entrepreneurship ecosystem. Efforts may be grouped into three categories: 1) the **mapping** of key innovation actors, initiatives, and efforts, 2) the **linking** of innovation players in government, academe, and industry through strategic dialogue, 3) and the **aligning** of key programs and services towards industry needs. These are manifested in comprehensive innovation programs co-developed and implemented by local partners, with a strong dependence on industry associations to keep industries engaged as the main beneficiary of RIIC efforts.

Figure 2. A visualization of the various activities implemented at the RIICs



Simultaneous to this, local partners seek the support of the Regional Development Council or formal agreements to sustain the RIIC initiative in each region. Stakeholders also form Core Groups (often composed of government agency regional directors, heads of industry, and university officials) that define the direction of their RIICs and project management teams that oversee the RIIC's activities.

Through these efforts, STRIDE works with RIICs to realize both short- and long-term wins. Short-term targets are focused on the promotion and development of high-impact R&D partnerships that avail of existing government programs. Long-term, RIICs seek to strengthen and institutionalize the necessary soft infrastructure (i.e. coordination mechanisms, engagement platforms, activities, dedicated personnel) to sustain a dynamic and productive innovation ecosystem in the regions.

Figure 3. Stylized outcomes from RIIC activities in select RIIC sites

