

**JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME
CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION
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COMMUNICATION FROM STDF

STDF OVERVIEW FOR THE 37TH SESSION OF THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION¹

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1. The Standards and Trade Development Facility (STDF) supports developing countries in building their capacity to implement international SPS standards, guidelines and recommendations as a means to improve their human, animal and plant health status and ability to gain and maintain market access. More specifically, the STDF increases awareness, mobilizes additional resources, strengthens collaboration and identifies and disseminates good practice to enhance the effectiveness of SPS assistance. The STDF also provides support and funding for the development and implementation of projects that promote compliance with international SPS requirements.

1.2. The STDF is a global partnership and trust fund established by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE), the World Bank, the World Health Organization (WHO) and the World Trade Organization (WTO). Other organizations involved in SPS-related technical cooperation, donors contributing funds to the STDF and developing country experts also participate actively in the Facility's work. The STDF is managed and housed by the WTO.²

1.3. This document provides an overview of relevant STDF activities since the 36th session of CAC in July 2013, as well as information on planned activities. Information on ongoing STDF projects and project preparation grants (PPGs) in the food safety area – several of which benefit from the involvement and guidance of FAO and WHO – is provided in Annex 1.

1.4. Codex delegates who would like to receive more information on SPS-related technical cooperation are encouraged to subscribe to the STDF electronic mailing list (<http://www.standardsfacility.org/en/ContactUs.htm>). The STDF regularly issues an e-newsletter, which contains an overview of major developments in the area of SPS capacity building, including activities of the STDF and its partners.

2 ONGOING AND PLANNED STDF ACTIVITIES

2.1 Implementing SPS measures to facilitate safe trade

2.1. In 2012, the STDF initiated work to analyse the implementation of SPS measures in the context of trade facilitation (defined as the simplification, harmonisation, standardisation and modernisation of trade procedures). This work, which encompasses regional research in selected countries and sub-regions in Africa and Asia,³ aims to identify, analyse and foster dialogue on experiences, lessons and good practices to improve the implementation of SPS controls in a way that facilitates safe trade, while minimizing SPS transaction costs. Moreover, the work may provide timely inputs towards the inclusion of SPS-related components in broader trade facilitation programmes.

¹ This document has been prepared by and under the responsibility of STDF.

² More detailed information on the STDF and its activities, including projects and project preparation grants, is available on the STDF website (<http://www.standardsfacility.org>).

³ The work also benefited from a study by the Inter-American Development Bank on the quarantine control situation in Latin America.

2.2. The preliminary results of this work were presented and discussed at a thematic session entitled "Implementing SPS Measures to Facilitate Safe Trade" on 26 March 2014. Some 200 participants, including SPS and trade facilitation delegates, observer organizations and STDF Working Group members attended this session. Discussions pointed to widespread interest in this topic among WTO Members, particularly in view of the adoption of the new WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement in December 2013, which may generate additional Aid for Trade resources to strengthen SPS border management capacity. The STDF website includes a background note on this event and copies of the presentations delivered.⁴ The STDF Working Group will discuss possible future STDF work in this area at its next meeting in October 2014.

2.2 International Trade and Invasive Alien Species

2.3. On the margins of the June 2013 SPS Committee meeting, the STDF, in conjunction with the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) Secretariat and the OIE, presented the STDF publication on International Trade and Invasive Alien Species.⁵ The study reviews and analyses key concepts and principles relevant to IAS and international trade in the context of the SPS Agreement and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), and in relation to two relevant standard-setting bodies (IPPC and OIE) under the SPS Agreement. The study also considers various initiatives to enhance capacities for managing the entry and spread of IAS (including plant pests and animal diseases), reviews common challenges and good practices, and makes a number of targeted recommendations.

2.3 Public Private Partnerships (PPPs) in a value chain context

2.4. At the Fourth Global Review of Aid for Trade, held at the WTO from 8-10 July 2013, the STDF, in collaboration with Canada and the Netherlands, held a side-event on "Public Private Partnerships (PPPs) in a Value Chain Context". Work undertaken by the North-South Institute (NSI) of Canada and by the STDF on trade- and SPS-related PPPs was presented and fostered a dialogue among public and private sector experts on key lessons learned in this area. Participants considered the importance of building trust among partners in order to ensure that high levels of SPS requirements do not become hidden trade barriers. Ensuring ongoing dialogue among partners and measuring and communicating the results and achievements regularly are also important elements.

2.4 Prioritizing SPS investment options for market access

2.5. In June 2013, the STDF organized a workshop in Geneva to discuss its ongoing work related to the development of a decision-support tool (based on multi-criteria decision analysis) to help developing countries prioritize SPS investment options for market access. The workshop enabled STDF partners, donors, developing country experts, observer organizations and beneficiaries who had applied the tool to review and take stock of the experiences and lessons learned, and to consider options to further improve the methodology and its application. Based on the recommendations of the workshop, and following discussions in the Working Group in October 2013, the STDF is revising and finalizing the current guide into a more practical and user-friendly document. More information on this work, including related STDF publications, events and in-country activities, is available on the STDF website.⁶

2.5 Joint EIF/STDF study on SPS issues in DTIS studies

2.6. In the second half of 2014, the STDF will carry out a joint study with the Enhanced Integrated Framework (EIF) on the coverage of SPS issues within Diagnostic Trade Integration Studies (DTIS).⁷ The study will identify good practice and make recommendations for future studies and their implementation. It will focus on least developed countries where agriculture and fisheries have been identified as having major export potential. The purpose will be to ensure that SPS issues are adequately prioritized in future DTIS and to mobilize additional resources for SPS capacity building.

2.6 New STDF film

2.7. Building on the success of the STDF film "Trading Safely: Protecting Health, Promoting Development" (developed in 2009), the STDF plans to develop additional audio-visual case stories that demonstrate the

⁴ See: <http://www.standardsfacility.org/en/TATradeFacilitation.htm>

⁵ This publication is available in English, French and Spanish on the STDF website. See: http://www.standardsfacility.org/Files/IAS/STDF_IAS_EN.pdf.

⁶ See: <http://www.standardsfacility.org/en/TAEcoAnalysis.htm>

⁷ The EIF supports Least Developed Countries in trade capacity building. In this context, countries carry out Diagnostic Trade Integration Studies (DTIS) to identify constraints to competitiveness, supply chain weaknesses and sectors of greatest growth and/or export potential. For more information, see: <http://www.enhancedif.org/en/about/how-does-it-work>

usefulness of specific approaches in building SPS capacity. These stories may be linked to previous STDF thematic work, for instance the use of SPS capacity evaluation tools, public-private partnerships to build SPS capacity, international trade and invasive alien species, links between SPS and trade facilitation, etc.

2.8. The existing film (available in Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish) continues to be widely distributed and shown at workshops, training courses and other events. The film can be viewed and downloaded on STDF's website.⁸ The Secretariat can also provide copies of the DVD to CAC delegates upon request.

2.7 New STDF website and virtual library

2.9. The STDF Secretariat will launch a completely new and improved website in July 2014. The new website will include access to an upgraded version of the STDF Virtual Library, an electronic information management system to provide quick and easy access to information resources focused on SPS technical cooperation and capacity building. It will also complement and include links to other online information systems and databases developed and maintained by STDF partners (including FAO and WHO), donors and other organizations.

2.10. Codex members and observers are encouraged to share the following documents with the STDF Secretariat (STDFSecretariat@wto.org) for inclusion in the Virtual Library: project documents and final reports, training materials, project evaluations/reviews, SPS capacity needs assessments, cost-benefit analyses, case studies, relevant research papers and other articles on SPS capacity building.

3 PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

3.1. The STDF provides advice and support to beneficiaries on issues related to SPS project development and finances project preparation grants (PPGs) to assist beneficiaries in the articulation of their SPS needs and the development of technically sound and sustainable project proposals. Seed funding up to US\$50,000 is available for PPGs, which can be used for any of the following purposes (or a combination thereof): (i) application of SPS-related capacity evaluation and prioritization tools; (ii) preparation of feasibility studies that precede project development to assess the potential impact and economic viability of proposals (expected costs and benefits); and/or (iii) preparation of project proposals that can be funded by the STDF or other donors. A total of 63 PPGs have been approved and funded by the STDF since its inception. Examples of ongoing PPGs in the food safety area are presented in Annex 1.

3.2. As a result of collaboration between the STDF and the EIF, a practical guide on trade-related project development was produced by the Centre for International Development and Training (CIDT) at the University of Wolverhampton, UK. This handbook entitled "Capacity Building in Project Identification, Formulation and Design" is available in English on the STDF website (<http://www.standardsfacility.org/en/TAIntegratedFramework.htm>).

4 PROJECT FUNDING

4.1. Project grant financing up to a maximum of US\$1,000,000 is available from the STDF. Favourable consideration is given to projects that focus on one or more of the following: (i) the identification, development and dissemination of good practice in SPS-related technical cooperation, including the development and application of innovative and replicable approaches; (ii) STDF work on cross-cutting topics of common interest; (iii) the use of regional approaches to address SPS constraints; and/or (iv) collaborative and interdisciplinary approaches focused on the interface/linkages between human, animal and plant health and trade, and benefiting from the involvement of two or more STDF partners or other relevant organizations.

4.2. No minimum limit applies on the size of projects funded, but projects should preferably be in the range of US\$250,000 to US\$1 million. Beneficiaries must contribute to the project from their own resources, either in the form of financial or in-kind contributions such as staff time, use of premises, vehicles or other already existing assets. The beneficiaries' own contribution to the project depends on the beneficiary country or countries' classification in the most recent OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) list of ODA recipients.

⁸ See: <http://www.standardsfacility.org/en/IRVideos.htm>

4.3. A total of 68 projects have been approved for STDF funding since its inception. Figures 1 and 2 below illustrate that 37% of STDF projects and PPGs focus on food safety, corresponding to 40% of the total STDF resources dedicated to project and PPG funding. In practice, some projects categorized as "general SPS" also address food safety issues so the amount of STDF funding allocated to food safety projects is likely to be higher.

Figure 1

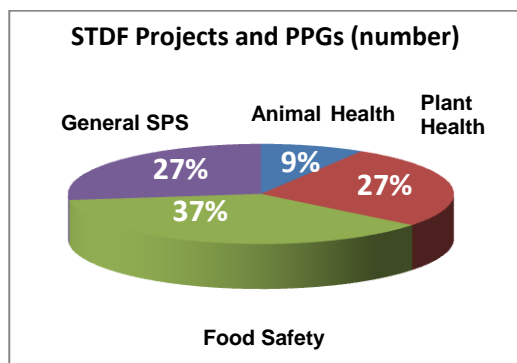
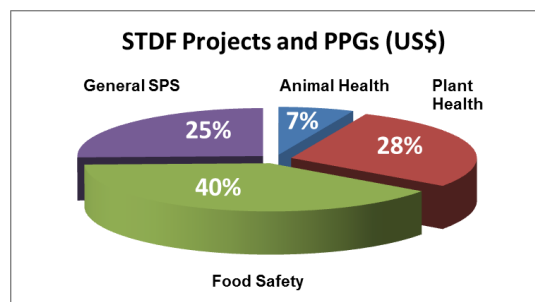


Figure 2



4.4. Applications for PPGs and requests for project funding from government authorities responsible for food safety are encouraged. Proposals can be submitted at any point in the year but should be received at least 60 working days in advance of each Working Group meeting in order to be considered at that meeting. The next deadline for the submission of applications is **18 July 2014**.

Recommended steps to follow when seeking PG or PPG funding opportunities with the STDF:

1. Browse our PPG <http://www.standardsfacility.org/en/PGPpgStat.htm> and PG <http://www.standardsfacility.org/en/PGProStat.htm> webpages for examples of previous projects.
2. Carefully read our guidance note for applicants: http://www.standardsfacility.org/Files/Forms/STDFGuidanceNote_en.pdf.
3. Consult relevant stakeholders in the country/region.
4. Send us a brief concept note of your potential project for feedback on eligibility and likelihood of funding (STDFSecretariat@wto.org).
5. Fill out an application form (<http://www.standardsfacility.org/en/FDAppForms.htm>) and submit it electronically before the deadline.

4.5. Examples of ongoing STDF projects related to food safety are provided in Annex 1. Further information on the STDF, its activities, application forms, eligibility criteria and information on projects can be found on the STDF website.⁹

5 STDF MID-TERM REVIEW

5.1. An independent mid-term review of the STDF was completed in January 2014.¹⁰ The review was carried out by Saana Consulting and covers the period 2009-2013. It examines the STDF's performance against the OECD evaluation criteria (relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact). The report noted that "the results are impressive and a testament to the effective operation of the STDF". It also concluded that the STDF has successfully established itself as a coordination forum. This role was cited as significant "value added" by the evaluators and relevant to the goals of partners, donors and developing countries.

5.2. Projects were considered as "highly relevant to the needs of the beneficiaries and to the policies of partners and donors". Regional approaches were deemed particularly successful and an area that STDF should develop further. STDF support to project preparation was considered "a good investment". Over 50 percent of total grant funding went to projects originating in least developed countries (LDCs) and other low

⁹ See: <http://www.standardsfacility.org/>

¹⁰ Previous evaluations were completed in December 2005 and November 2008.

income countries. Donors noted that the grant funding programme "allowed them to extend the range of their technical assistance programs on SPS issues at a fraction of the cost than if they were to do it themselves". The performance of the Secretariat was rated as "efficient and cost effective". The evaluators found that the Secretariat's participative and consultative approach enhanced the effective implementation of projects and activities.

5.3. The positive evaluation of the STDF reflects well on STDF's founding partner organizations, including the FAO and WHO. Recommendations on how to further strengthen the operation of the Facility have been discussed by partners, donors and developing country experts in the STDF Policy Committee and Working Group in January and March 2014 respectively, and specific follow-up actions are planned and/or underway.¹¹

Annex 1: Overview of ongoing¹² STDF projects and PPGs related to food safety

Project Title	Objective and Status	STDF support (US\$)
Strategy to strengthen the SPS system in Comoros (STDF/PG/242)	Build SPS capacity in the country in a comprehensive and systematic manner in order to increase its market access for potential agricultural products and fisheries. Ongoing since September 2012. Implementation by UNDP.	1,106,030
Support to the cabbage sector in the Niayes Region of Senegal (STDF/PG/302)	Increase the production of cabbage and foment exports from the Niayes region by controlling the spread and impact of specific pests and assisting producers in meeting the Maximum Residue Limits established by Codex. Ongoing since February 2012. Implementation by Association des Unions Maraichères des Niayes (AUMN), Senegal.	577,142
Regional Total Diet Study for Sub-Saharan Africa (STDF/PG/303)	Contribute to strengthen capacity of risk managers to implement international standards based on a good knowledge of hazards, risks and exposure levels to harmful substances in commonly produced and consumed food. Ongoing since April 2014. Implemented by FAO.	1,191,353
Building trade capacity of small-scale shrimp and prawn farmers in Bangladesh (STDF/PG/321)	Organize small-scale farmers in manageable clusters and assist them in developing and adopting Better Management Practices (BMPs) to address the contamination problem at grass-roots level. Ongoing since April 2012. Implemented by FAO.	637,000
Enhancing SPS capacity of ginger exports through a Public-Private Partnership in Nepal (STDF/PG/329)	Increase incomes of Nepalese stakeholders in the ginger value chain by adding value to the product exported to India and increase capacity to access new markets. Ongoing since June 2012. Implemented by FAO.	462,144
ASEAN Pesticide Residue Data Generation Project (STDF/PG/337)	Establish a regional process to generate reliable data for Maximum Residue Limits (MRLs) for selected "minor-use" crops, as a means to promote harmonization with international standards and	607,000

¹¹ A news story on the STDF mid-term review can be viewed and downloaded from the STDF website. http://www.wto.org/english/news_e/news13_e/sps_29nov13_e.htm. The full report (in English only) is available here: http://www.standardsfacility.org/Files/KeyDocs/STDF_MTR_Jan-14.pdf

¹² This table also includes some projects and PPGs, which were approved by the STDF Working Group in March 2014 and are awaiting contracting.

	enhance market access. Ongoing since December 2012. Implemented by Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).	
Competency development scheme for the cinnamon sector in Sri Lanka (STDF/PG/343)	Object Enhance the competitiveness of the cinnamon industry and the capacity of the cinnamon value added segment by improving processing and handling practices. Ongoing since July 2012. Implemented by UNIDO.	705,600
Establishment of a Regional Virtual Food Inspection School in Central America and Dominican Republic (STDF/PG/344)	Harmonize modern inspection procedures conducted by a properly trained cadre of food inspectors and food safety auditors in the region to contribute to facilitating trade and improving public health. Ongoing since July 2012. Implemented by Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA).	977,643
Feed and Food Security Programme for Latin America and the Caribbean (STDF/PG/345)	Contribute to the harmonization of the regulatory framework for the production and commercialization of animal feed, ensuring its safety and access to markets, based on the standards and recommendations of Codex and the OIE. Ongoing since February 2014. Implementation by FEEDLATINA (Asociación de las Industrias de Alimentación Animal de América Latina y Caribe).	1,050,566
Breaking barriers, facilitating trade in COMESA member states (STDF/PG/346)	Increase intra-COMESA trade in agri-food products by reducing trading costs associated with SPS measures for selected commodities on selected trade routes. Project approved in March 2014 for implementation by the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA). Contract under development.	902,690
African Pesticide Residue Data Generation Project (STDF/PG/359)	Enhance regional capacity in pesticide residues data generation and monitoring for establishing, implementing, and complying with international pesticide residue standards. Ongoing since May 2013. Implementation by the African Union Inter-African Bureau for Animal Resources (AU-IBAR).	446,150
CocoaSafe: SPS capacity building and knowledge sharing for the cocoa sector in South East Asia (STDF/PG/381)	Maintain and increase market access of cocoa exports by improving practices along the supply chain to meet international food safety standards. Ongoing since November 2013. Implemented by International Cocoa Organization (ICCO).	652,851
Strengthening regional capacity in Latin America to meet pesticides export requirements (STDF/PG/436)	Strengthen the capacity of Latin American countries in pesticide residues data generation and monitoring, to support the establishment and implementation of international standards. Ongoing since October 2013. Implemented by Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA).	374,166

PPG Title	Objective and Status	STDF Support (US\$)
Prevention and Control Capacity Building on Aflatoxin Contamination of China Peanut (STDF/PPG/355)	Carry out an analysis of the main constraints and opportunities concerning aflatoxin contamination in the Jilin and Shandong provinces and develop a project proposal. PPG submitted by the China National Standardization Administration Institute (CNIS) and approved in March 2014. Contract under development.	50,000
Integrating SPS in Sierra Leone: A whole chain approach to developing the national food safety management system (STDF/PPG/392)	Assess the national food safety management system and develop plans for institutional capacity building and determine priorities in order to achieve compliance with SPS requirements. Ongoing since November 2013. Implemented by FAO.	43,680
Aflatoxin management in chillies in Pakistan (STDF/PPG/431)	Establish quality systems to address mycotoxin contamination of agri-food commodities and resulting international trade barriers. The project will be implemented by FAO and the contract is under development.	34,000
Strengthening SPS compliance of sesame production in Sudan for enhanced access to international markets (STDF/PPG/435)	Carry out an assessment of compliance challenges of sesame production for exports and elaborate a project proposal aiming to strengthen SPS compliance to enhance access to international markets. The PPG will be implemented by UNIDO and the contract is under development.	50,000
Building capacity and facilitating enabling mechanisms for harmonizing Aquaculture Certification (STDF/PPG/453)	Pilot test the conformity evaluation framework being developed by FAO and develop a project proposal to support the development and implementation of public aquaculture certification systems to contribute to intra-regional free trade. The PPG has been contracted to begin in June 2014. It will be implemented by the Network of Aquaculture Centres in Asia Pacific (NACA).	48,000
Operationalization of the Scientific Affairs and Food Control Directorates of the newly established Food Safety and Quality authority of the Gambia (STDF/PPG/462)	Support a five-year Development Plan in relation to the efficient and effective functioning of the Scientific Affairs Directorate and Food Control Directorate. The PPG has been contracted to begin in June 2014. It will be implemented by FAO.	56,000