

**INFORMATION ON SPS-RELATED RECENT AND FORTHCOMING
ASSISTANCE AND OTHER ACTIVITIES
(PERIOD COVERED: APRIL-JUNE 2011)**

Statement by the International Trade Center (ITC) at the Meeting of 30 June-1 July 2011

The following communication, received on 27 June 2011, is being circulated at the request of ITC.

A. PROJECTS

Central Asia (Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan)

1. The projects in Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan, funded by Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO), are in their third phase. The overall objective of this project is to contribute to the sustainable expansion and diversification of small and medium enterprises' (SMEs) exports in Tajikistan through increasing the competitiveness of the textile and clothing industry and improving the quality management infrastructure of the country.

2. The specific objective in the areas of TBT and SPS, is to improve the capacity of SQAM¹, TBT and SPS bodies and the regulatory infrastructure.

Tajikistan

3. Information has been provided to WTO on the contact details for the National Enquiry Points for TBT and SPS.

4. A study tour to two laboratories was organized, inter alia, for staff from the two accredited laboratories of Tajikstandart for testing food and agricultural products in Hungary in March.

5. Work has been completed on filling the matrix for the current activities of the ministries/agencies in food safety control and initial validation of the matrix was carried out.

Kyrgyzstan

6. Work was ongoing in preparation for the pre-peer evaluation of the Kyrgyz Accreditation Centre by the International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation in July.

¹ SQAM: Standards, Quality Assurance, Metrology and Accreditation.

7. Work has been completed on filling the matrix for the current activities of the ministries/agencies in food safety control and initial validation of the matrix was carried out.

STDF/PG/172: "Expanding Nigeria's export of sesame seeds and sheanut/butter through improved SPS capacity building for private and public sector"

8. The Nigerian Export Promotion Council (NEPC) is the implementing agency of the project with ITC as supervisory agency. The project started in October 2010 and it is due to end in October 2012. The six-month progress report (October 2010 – March 2011) has been submitted and cleared by WTO/STDF. A request to WTO to release the second tranche of funds has been submitted officially by NEPC.

9. The International Consultant on Quality Control has been recruited. During his first one-week mission in May 2011, a meeting with all the stakeholders was conducted to review the status of progress of the project components. A technical sub-committee has been set up to look at the issues pertaining to fabrication of machines (such as for sheanut/butter: digester, roaster, milling machine, oven, cracker/shell separator, bed drier, fermentation/parboiling tank; for sesame seed: mobile thresher, rotary drier, storage container). An investigation for appropriate equipment in countries such as Benin and Ghana has been initiated.

Empowering the African Private Sector Network to strengthen the international competitiveness of SMEs – Component 2

10. This programme, funded by the European Commission and implemented by ITC (May-September 2012), is designed to reinforce the capacities of intermediary organizations in Africa in their ability to increase their contribution to, and impact of the Aid for Trade agenda, by means of creating strong networks of enterprise level experts available and used by the intermediary organizations (IOs) in Africa for building capacity of African exporting SMEs. Component 2 of the project aims at "*Maximizing export performance through implementation of food safety and quality management in the agro-business sector*" with the following objectives:

- To build the capacities of 15 experts, able to train and advise exporting SMEs in the field of food safety;
- To build the capacity of 15 SMEs in food safety in order to increase their compliance with food hygiene and safety requirements, their productivity, and improve their competitiveness in export markets;
- To create and mobilize the network of Trainers-cum-counsellors (TcCs) to activate the delivery and reach of the ITC Food Safety programme.

11. The component is being implemented from May to September 2011 in Ghana, Kenya and Uganda. The counterpart institutions are the three National Standards Bodies.

12. The component delivers capacity building of TcCs on food safety pre-requisites, HACCP, and coaching on quality audit techniques for enterprises from the agro-processed sector through trainings and coaching at the enterprise level.

B. OTHER ITC PROJECTS OF INTEREST

Non-Tariff Measures project

13. ITC continues the successful implementation of the non-tariff measures (NTM) survey in several developing and least developed countries (LDCs) this year. During the period March-

June 2011, the NTM survey was launched in two countries, namely Madagascar and Egypt. Reports of surveys which were completed last year (e.g. Sri Lanka and Burkina Faso) will be shortly released to the public. Following some of the recommendations of the NTM survey, a mission was conducted in Burkina Faso in May 2011 to obtain information about some of the priority actions identified by stakeholders in November 2010 to enable proposals to be submitted for follow-up. Meanwhile the surveys are drawing to an end in other countries such as Rwanda, Malawi and Kenya. In parallel to the NTM surveys, ITC continues also the collection of official NTM data in several countries, including some of those where the surveys are taking place.

For more information about NTM project, please contact:

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Trade for Sustainable Development (T4SD)

14. ITC's new market analysis tool, Standards Map, allows users to compare private standards with regards to, for example, their governance structure, social, environmental and economic criteria, and requirements for implementation. Compliance to these standards is not legally required by governments or regulations, but it could lead to more sustainable environmental practices or potentially open up new markets.

15. As of June 2011, the Standards Map covers 41 private standards developed by non-governmental organizations and private entities. Additional standards will be continually added to the website, with approximately 62 standards available by October 2011.

16. A capacity building programme for producers and exporters in developing countries has been launched, with initial training being carried out in Costa Rica, Peru, Viet Nam, and South Africa. Participants benefit from a better understanding of standards and the opportunities and challenges they entail.

17. The Standards Map is also available in Spanish and French. Should you be interested in a live demonstration of the website or in a webinar, please contact Joseph Wozniak, Programme Manager (wozniak@intracen.org).

ACCESS! Programme

18. The ACCESS! Programme, initiated under the Canadian-funded Programme for building African Capacities for Trade (PACT), is a gender-focused, regional trade support programme aimed at improving the trade support services offered to African businesswomen in international trade, with a view to promoting their economic empowerment.

19. The ACCESS! programme's Business Counselling component was started in partnership with UWEAL² and CAWEE³, the ACCESS! Focal Point (AFP) institutions in Uganda and Ethiopia, to provide post-training assistance, coaching and business counselling services to participating women entrepreneurs, and will run over the course of the year 2011.

20. Nineteen (19) AFPs (including UWEAL and CAWEE) are starting their ACCESS! Export national pilot training in June and July 2011.

² Uganda Women Entrepreneurs Association Limited (<http://www.wougnet.org/Profiles/uweal.html>).

³ Center for African Women Economic Empowerment.

ITC website

21. On 11 April 2011, ITC launched its new website (<http://www.intracen.org>) with audience focused information architecture. The website usability for ITC clients (e.g. exporters, trade support institutions and policy makers) has improved.

Joint ITC-ISO Workshop on "Linking Trade Promotion Organizations and National Standards Bodies for Export Success"

22. ITC and ISO organized in partnership a regional three-day workshop on "Linking TPOs and NSBs for Export Success", hosted by the Tanzania Bureau of Standards (TBS) and co-hosted by the Tanzania Trade Development Authority (TanTrade) in Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania from 21 to 23 June 2011.

23. Some 50 senior officials from national standards bodies (NSBs) and trade promotion organizations (TPOs) representing 22 Anglophone countries in Africa explored how linkages between TPOs and NSBs could be strengthened to improve the international competitiveness of enterprises, and developed joint action plans.

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