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Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures

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**INFORMATION ON SPS-RELATED RECENT AND FORTHCOMING ASSISTANCE AND
OTHER ACTIVITIES FROM THE INTERNATIONAL TRADE CENTRE (ITC)
(APRIL – OCTOBER 2014)**

The following communication, received on 14 October 2014, is being circulated at the request of the ITC.

The International Trade Centre is continuing its efforts to assist enterprises to meet technical requirements. An update of the projects of interest to the SPS Committee is provided herewith.

1 PROJECTS

1.1 EIF - Sector Competitiveness and Export Diversification in The Gambia (2012-2015)

1.1. In this project, technical barriers hindering market access of Gambian exports of groundnuts, cashew nuts, and sesame are being addressed. The latest activities conducted so far and ongoing are:

- a. Implementing Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP): Assistance to enhancing food safety of groundnuts, cashewnuts and sesame through implementation of HACCP was launched in January 2014 and will continue till mid-2015 to coach five selected Trainers-cum-Counsellors (TcCs) and seven enterprises through classroom and hands-on training. In May 2014, the project conducted a one-day workshop on "Training and advisory skills and methodology" for the TcCs; and a two-day workshop on "Implementing HACCP: Understanding Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point Determination" for 25 participants (participating enterprises, TcCs and representatives of the Food Authority).
- b. Aflatoxin testing capacity: A mission of an international lab technician was conducted in April 2014 to ensure the functionality of a versatile modern High Performance Liquid Chromatograph (HPLC) machine for aflatoxin analysis. A second mission is planned before the end of 2014 to conduct the analytical tests and conduct training of lab technicians.
- c. Development and enforcement of technical regulations: A sensitisation programme on standards and technical regulations relating to quality and food safety for the three products has been prepared and will be implemented by the Food Safety and Quality Authority.
- d. After the finalisation of the first ten national standards, ITC is assisting in the development of other national standards, including those for cashew kernels, aflatoxin reduction in groundnuts, peanut butter and sesame seed oil.
- e. The second phase of implementation of Farmer Field Schools (FFS) for the second season has started with the training course of new core trainers and with the establishment of new FFS.

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

1.2. The project, implemented by the Nigerian Export Promotion Council (NEPC) with ITC as supervisory agency, reached its end by July 2014. A final project workshop was conducted (21-22 May 2014) with more than 70 stakeholders and participation of the NEPC Executive Director at the opening and ITC representatives. The stakeholders confirmed the important achievements made by the project in improving the capacity of the sectors to comply with SPS measures, in particular in building private public partnership and establishment of the new processing sites. The workshop held the ceremony of signature of the MoU between NEPC, cooperatives and investors to operate two newly established processing sites for sheabutter and sesame. The communiqué indicating the workshop resolutions was published by NEPC. A final project report is due by end of October 2014. NEPC is leading follow up activity to ensure sustainability of the project and build on the positive results of the STDF project.

1.3 STDF/PG/354: "Improving Safety and Quality of Sri Lankan Fruits and Vegetables"

1.3. The project has the objective to analyze SPS constraints along the value chains, enhance public and private sector stakeholders' capacity to meet international SPS requirements and improve public-private cooperation. The project is implemented by ITC in close coordination at national level with the Ceylon Chambers of Commerce (March 2013-February 2015). The key activities conducted since its start:

- a. In total 240 officers have been trained in the SPS area, including 170 officers of the Department of Agriculture Plant Quarantine Office and Extension Division and 70 officers including 40 officers from the Ministry of Health (Food and Drug Inspectors), and exporters, processors and other relevant stakeholders. Four batches out of six of the roll out of the capacity building of Field Level Extension Officers are being delivered to 60 officers in Sinhala language by the Trained Master Trainers (21-25 July 2014, 15-19 September 2014, 29 September-3 October 2014, 13-17 October 2014).
- b. Training material translated into Sinhala language.
- c. Ongoing updating of the regulated pest list ongoing.
- d. Four Project Steering Committee meetings were held.
- e. Establishing a platform for private and public partnership: a series of meetings conducted with exporters and the Department of Agriculture to share SPS issues hampering export (i.e. lack of hot water treatment facility) and find ways to address them.
- f. Ongoing update of the <http://www.spsrilanka.lk> website.
- g. Ongoing mapping and selection of farmers and exporters to enable backwards linkages.

1.4. ITC implements complementarity activity to strengthen the impact of the STDF project:

- a. Assessment of the laboratory testing capacity of the agriculture sector as per the international requirements and development of business model (in particular chemical tests on residual levels, mycotoxins fresh fruits and vegetables, tea, cinnamon, and coconut products).
- b. Strengthening the SPS-related institutional networking mechanism for the fruit and vegetable sector in Sri Lanka: a two-three day workshop is planned on 12-13 November to develop a coordinated approach for the institutional network aimed at supporting the fruit and vegetables exporters.

1.4 STDF PG 242: Development of an SPS Strategy, Comoros

1.5. ITC was contracted by UNDP, who is the implementing agency of this STDF project, to prepare and animate from 26 to 29 May 2014 a four-day thematic workshop and a roundtable on the main SPS issues that need to be addressed to reinforce trade support institutions for producers' associations, consumers associations, NGOs and other trade support institutions. The objective of the project is to put in place an SPS system in Comoros that is able to support the national agricultural export development strategy. The mission report is with UNDP.

1.5 Fiji: "Improving key services to agriculture"

1.6. An EU programme, funded from the Multi-Annual Indicative Programme on Accompanying Measures for Sugar (AAP2011), implemented by ITC and the Secretariat of the Pacific Communities (SPC), aims at improvement of key services to non-sugar agriculture in order to improve and consolidate farming systems in Fiji with the ultimate goal of income generation through alternative livelihoods for poverty alleviation.

1.7. The food safety component is currently focusing on i) building the capacity of enterprises and local TcCs to comply with and advise on food safety requirements (Fiji Food Act, HACCP, GAP); ii) setting up a system of registration for trainers, advisory and training services in the area of food safety under the national registration system; iii) improving hygiene at the markets; iv) strengthening the inspection capacity of the Food Unit. The fifth mission of the International Consultant on food safety took place from 15 June to 30 August 2014 and included:

- Follow-up on preparation of certification of six participating enterprises (HACCP) internal audit and documentation clinic conducted (22-23 August). Further coaching of the nine Trainers-Counsellors on food safety delivered and follow-up on additional three enterprises to implement HACCP.
- Three months mentoring programme for one Trainer-cum-Counsellor who assisted the International Consultant on food safety during her mission.
- Training of Trainers on hygiene and HACCP conducted for 25 inspectors, Food Unit in Nadi (30 June-4 July).
- Two roll-out training sessions on hygiene and HACCP conducted by trained inspectors for 40 inspectors under guidance of the International Consultant, 11-12 August in Lautoka and on 14-15 August in Suva.
- Two Lead Auditor Courses on ISO 22000 Food Safety Management Systems certified by the International Register of Certificated Auditors (IRCA) of the UK Chartered Quality Institute for 20 officers of the Ministry of Health (health office and food unit) and for 20 participants among enterprises, TcCs, biosecurity authority (7-11 July and 14-18 July). In total 32 received certificate of successful completion and eight of attendance.
- Hygiene Awareness Workshop for Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Markets well received in Nadi for more than 50 market vendors, Council Workers and Inspectors on 13 August 2014.
- Water laboratories analysis conducted by Fiji Water Authority for ten enterprises.
- Final exam of six food safety counsellors conducted on 24 August 2014.
- Launch of the draft "Fiji Standards Map" tool (<http://www.standardsmap.org/fclc>) and workshop on "Making sense of mandatory, voluntary and private standards for SMEs" conducted on 8 August for 50 stakeholders.

1.6 Fiji: "Improvement of key services to livestock and livestock products"

1.8. This second EU programme, funded from the Multi-Annual Indicative Programme on Accompanying Measures for Sugar Protocol (AMSP), started in 2014 and ending in December 2016, is designed to alleviate poverty in Fiji's sugar cane belt by supporting income generating opportunities in non-sugar agriculture in the livestock sector. The project aims at strengthening farmers associations, development of private sector partnerships and market-led crop and livestock value chains through better agricultural research, support services and extension service delivery.

1.9. The project will enable sector and community service providers to offer information and advice on food safety and quality technical requirements relevant to Fiji. An enterprise profiling of 26 enterprises in Viti Levu and ten in Vanua Levu (dairy, honey, pork, beef, poultry/duck, lamb, goat) was conducted in July and August as inputs to the strategy development of the sector. Awareness on food safety and animal health requirements has been built at the stakeholders platform meeting on 28 August in Viti Levu.

1.7 EIF - Lesotho

1.10. Under the project, officers of the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Industry have benefitted from study tours in Kenya and South Africa to better understand the plant protection and quality assurance systems for fresh fruits and vegetables. Two national awareness seminars

have been conducted in connection with quality and food safety of fresh fruits and vegetables. Six kits of inspection equipment have been provided to the Quality Assurance Department to enable the quality control of fresh fruits and vegetables. The soil testing laboratory is also being upgraded by the provision of new modern testing equipment.

1.8 Trade and Private Sector Development Programme, Zimbabwe

1.11. This project is funded by the EU and implemented by ITC. It includes a component related to the capacity building of the conformity assessment services of the Standards Association of Zimbabwe (SAZ) for pesticide residue testing as well as other testing scope for food products. Two missions of an international expert have been conducted to build the capacity of the management systems' certification services of SAZ and extend the accreditation scope. Further, ITC has conducted an assessment of the testing laboratory in connection with aflatoxin, pesticide residues and vitamins. Advice on the refurbishment of the testing laboratory has been provided. Additional equipment will be provided under the project after the completion of the refurbishment.

2 OTHER ITC PROJECTS, PUBLICATIONS OR INTERVENTIONS OF INTEREST

2.1 High-Level Regional Round Table on NTMs - 28-29 April 2014, Tunis

2.1. A round table was held to review and discuss Non-Tariff Measures (NTMs) hindering trade within the Arab region. The event was organised by ITC with support from the US Agency for International Development (USAID), and the Islamic Trade Finance Corporation (ITFC) under the patronage of the Ministry of Economy and Finance and the Ministry of Trade of Tunisia. The event gathered 70 delegates from 10 Arab countries¹, three regional organizations² and representatives from donors and development partners.³ Three delegates were selected from each participating country to represent the Ministry of Trade, the Customs Administration, and the Standards and Quality Management Institution. The discussions focused on identifying key challenges and proposing concrete actions to be undertaken at national and regional levels to eliminate selected obstacles, particularly with regard to policy and regulatory framework, quality/SPS requirements, and customs procedures, with the objective to support development of intra-regional trade within the Arab region and foster regional integration.

2.2 WTO Advanced course on the application of the SPS Agreement, 9 October 2014

2.2. ITC made a presentation on ITC technical assistance in the field of SPS.

2.3 Trade for Sustainable Development (T4SD) project

2.3. Voluntary sustainability standards addressing issues related to environmental quality, social equity and trade practices have grown exponentially over the past decade. Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) face challenges in keeping track of standards and meeting buyers' sustainability requirements. To address this challenge, a new version of Standards Map was launched in February 2014. Standards Map 2.0 (<http://www.standardsmap.org>) allows users to compare voluntary standards side-by-side and to produce personalized reports that their companies can use to make better-informed decisions about certification and involvement in sustainable production and trade.

2.4. Trade support institutions, small and medium-sized enterprises, exporters, policymakers, producers and researchers can use Standards Map 2.0 to extract up-to-date information on more than 150 standards covering 80 sectors in 180 countries, as well as their requirements and scope of operations.

¹ Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Mauritania, Morocco, Oman, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Tunisia and Yemen.

² Agadir Technical Unit (ATU), Arab Maghreb Union (AMU) and the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM).

³ ITFC, USAID, DFID, the African Development Bank (AfDB), the World Trade Organisation (WTO) - STDF, the Physikalisch-Technische Bundesanstalt (PTB), the Centre for the Promotion of Imports from developing countries (CBI) Netherlands, the delegation of the EU in Tunisia, FAO office in Tunisia, the Embassy of Canada in Tunisia, the Embassy of Switzerland in Tunisia.

2.5. The user can then find summary reviews for each of the standards, as well as information about costs, scope, assurance, steps required to join an initiative and other information. Also available are charts and graphs that show the connection between a standard and different "hotspots": environment, social, economic, quality and ethics. At the end of a user's analysis, there is the option to generate a customized sustainability diagnostic report, which serves as a company's roadmap towards sustainable production and trade.

2.6. On 1-2 October 2014, ITC held its first Trade for Sustainable Development Forum in conjunction with the WTO's public forum. More information on the Trade for Sustainable Development Forum discussions can be found here: <http://www.intracen.org/itc/events/t4sd-forum/>.

2.7. In addition, ITC, with the support of HIVOS, IDH, SECO, 4C Association and UTZ Certified, recently launched the SustainabilityXchange (<http://www.sustainabilityexchange.info>), the first community-owned, interactive platform on sustainable supply chain development. SustainabilityXchange offers five services combined in one website:

- Yellow Pages: Access to expertise;
- Library: Relevant training material on sustainable supply chains;
- Community of Practice: Sharing of experiences, asking questions and participation in discussions;
- Events Calendar: Promotion of training events and workshops; and
- Newsroom: Latest news on sustainable supply chains.

2.8. Should you be interested in more information please contact Joseph Wozniak, Program Manager (wozniak@intracen.org).

2.4 Non-Tariff Measures (NTM) programme

2.9. The programme aims to increase transparency and understanding of NTMs – in order to facilitate trade in the long-run. It helps countries to understand the non-tariff obstacles to trade faced by their business sector, and assists in defining strategies and solutions that meet their exporters' needs to speed up and ease cross-border trade. This project is implemented with the close collaboration of ministries, export promotion agencies, research institutes, business associations and local experts in each country.

2.10. ITC launched new NTM surveys in Bangladesh and Philippines in 2014. More NTM country specific reports have also been published, the latest ones being the reports for Senegal and Cambodia. For detailed information on countries surveyed and results, see: <http://www.intracen.org/ntm/>. The country reports are available in the ITC publications catalogue online. They are listed by the country name along with the title: Company Perspectives – An ITC Series on Non-Tariff Measures. See: <http://www.intracen.org/publications/ntm>.

2.11. The next national stakeholder NTM workshop is scheduled to be held in Thailand, October 2014 which aims to bring together more than 60 participants from the public and private sectors of the country. The results of ITC NTM survey will be discussed in this public-private dialogue. The main objectives of the stakeholder workshop is elaborate technical recommendations, policy options and practical solutions for problems reported by the private sector.

2.12. By raising awareness based on specific data, and following up with the survey, ITC is raising awareness and helping governments to implement more effective trade and industrial policy, remove trade barriers and improve the international competitiveness of their SMEs. For example in Côte d'Ivoire, ITC has created an online trade obstacles alert mechanism in collaboration with the local authorities. A similar activity is being undertaken for Mauritius.

2.13. For more information about NTM project, please contact ntm@intracen.org.

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