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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)
(MARCH – OCTOBER 2015)**

The following communication, received on 21 October 2015, 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 are:

- a. Development and enforcement of technical regulations: A sensitisation programme on standards and technical regulations relating to quality and food safety for the three products is being implemented by the Food Safety and Quality Authority;
- b. After the finalisation of the first ten national standards, ten new national standards, including those for cashew kernels, aflatoxin reduction in groundnuts, peanut butter and sesame seed oil have been drafted;
- c. The second phase of implementation of Farmer Field Schools for the second season is in progress with an additional five FFS. In the course of 2015, a new module on integrated pest management will be added to the existing ones on production and Quality & Food Safety. Training of extension officers of the Department of agriculture on the FFS concept, management, monitoring and evaluation was conducted in April 2015 to ensure better sustainability after the project;
- d. A workshop on the African Cashew Alliance Code of Conduct was held on 9 April 2015 where local operators of the sector were sensitised on that code and discussed their national code of conduct; and
- e. Implementing HACCP¹: Assistance to enhance food safety in seven SMEs of groundnuts, cashewnuts and sesame through implementation of HACCP – Codex based through classroom and hands-on training is ongoing. Three selected trainers-cum-Counsellors (TcCs) are advising and monitoring the implementation of the system at the SMEs.

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

1.2. Under the project, implemented by ITC in close collaboration with the Ceylon Chamber of Commerce and the Department of Agriculture, over the last year more than 350 officers have benefited from training in food safety and plant health for six types of fruits and vegetables, including 280 officers of the Plant Quarantine Office and Extension Division and 70 officers from the Ministry of Health and Exporters, Processors and other relevant stakeholders. Master trainers of the DOA have cascaded the training to other officers. Two additional two-day trainings on

¹ Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points.

EU requirements on plant health control and inspection techniques were conducted for 40 newly recruited Plant Quarantine Officers in January 2015. The training to the farmers on food safety and pest control started in March: 27 farmers and collectors of pineapple have benefited in the Gampaha district. A total of 500 farmers are going to be trained. The NPPO is being upgraded by the provision of pest risk analysis equipment. The <http://www.spssrilanka.lk> website is regularly being updated.

1.3. ITC implements complementarity activities to strengthen the impact of the STDF project:

- a. An assessment of the laboratory testing capacity of the agriculture sector as per the international requirements was conducted, in particular chemical tests on residual levels, mycotoxins, fresh fruits and vegetables, tea, cinnamon, and coconut products. A proposal for the development of a business model to strengthen the lab capacity is ongoing;
- b. A workshop aimed at strengthening the SPS-related institutional networking mechanism for the benefit of the F&V sector took place in Colombo on 26-27 November 2014. The workshop was attended by 24 representatives from 18 institutions. A working group was set up at the end of the event to take the initiatives further; and
- c. A mission of a plant health expert was conducted in January 2015 to provide recommendations to strengthen the plant health control system.

1.3 Finland: Promoting Intra-regional trade in Eastern Africa – Kenya, Tanzania, Zambia

1.4. ITC is implementing an inclusive and sustainable export-led growth project in Kenya, Tanzania and Zambia by improving the competitiveness of their producers, SMEs and Trade Support Institutions (TSIs). In the area of food safety and quality, the project has started to assist TSIs in putting into practice their advisory services related to food safety and quality, train their staff to deliver services and assist enterprise to implement food safety systems based on HACCP:

- a. Tanzania: 15 enterprises (honey, chilli, mango) and ten counsellors are being selected, trained and coached to implement HACCP - based on Codex; in February 2015 the first set of training and gap analysis at the enterprises were conducted. More than 50 public and private stakeholders benefited from a workshop on "Food Safety in international trade". Training material on quality and food safety is being translated in Kiswahili;
- b. Zambia: the training and coaching programme on HACCP - based on Codex for ten counsellors and ten enterprises (honey) is ongoing; and
- c. Kenya: an assessment of quality/food safety of dry chilli and compliance with international, regional, national technical requirements and laboratory analysis is ongoing.

1.4 Fiji: Improving key services to agriculture and livestock

1.5. 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 and livestock in order to improve and consolidate farming systems in Fiji with the ultimate goal of income generation through alternative livelihoods for poverty alleviation.

1.6. The project has build the capacity of seven local Trainers Counsellors (TcCs) to train and provide assistance to enterprises on hygiene and food safety systems (HACCP – based on Codex). Three enterprises obtained international HACCP certification in December 2014 and three more are to be audited by April 2015. The TcCs have initiated the process to establish a consulting association to provide training and advisory services on hygiene, and food safety requirements (Fiji Food Act, HACCP).

1.7. Assistance to farmers and enterprises in the livestock sector to implement GHP and HACCP-based on Codex is planned to start in May 2015.

1.5 EIF Lesotho

1.8. Under the project during the past year, officers of the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Industry and representatives of the private sector have benefitted from training on food safety and traceability. Inspectors of the ministries and operators have been trained on product quality and inspection of six types of fruits and vegetables using inspection equipment purchased. Following the training, a national GAP standard will be developed based on South Africa GAP and a selected number of farms will be assisted to implement the national GAP. A traceability system is being set up for the sector with the collaboration of GS1 South Africa. The plant protection laboratory is being upgraded by an extension of laboratory space and the provision of new modern testing equipment.

1.6 Trade and Private Sector Development Programme, Zimbabwe

1.9. This project is funded by the European Union 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. As a result of technical assistance provided under the project, the scope of accreditation of SAZ's certification services is expected to be extended to cover product certification and OHSAS during 2015. A training of trainers was conducted in March 2015 for 14 participants to enable them to sensitise enterprises on the importance of standards, technical WTO Agreements on TBT and SPS from the business perspective.

2 OTHER ITC PROJECTS, PUBLICATIONS OR INTERVENTIONS OF INTEREST

2.1 Masters of Advanced Studies on Integrated Crop Management (ICM)

2.1. ITC presented its technical cooperation activities to CAGI/University of Neuchatel students of Masters of Advanced Studies on Integrated Crop Management on 13 March 2015. Specific emphasis was provided to ITC's practical work in helping SMEs meet technical requirements and SPS. The objective was to familiarise the students with policy considerations related to ICM at international, regional and national levels, and to understand how they govern and/or support the implementation of ICM, introducing them considerations on food safety, trade, and relevant international trade agreements. The audience comprised of Plant protection & health officers, Agriculture and Extension officers, and Agriculture economists from ITC's beneficiary countries.

2.2 Non-Tariff Measures (NTM) programme

2.2. 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.

2.3. Preparations are underway for new ITC NTM survey launches in Jordan, Mali, Uganda and Kyrgyzstan. Approximately 1,800 companies are expected to be interviewed in total in the four countries. These surveys are implemented in close collaboration with national authorities.

2.4. Furthermore, ITC, in collaboration with the European Commission (EC), will also carry out a survey on NTMs experienced by exporters and importers in the European Union. In addition to identifying difficulties faced by EU exporters, the survey will also allow for better understanding of the EU companies' perspectives on sourcing from and exporting to developing countries. Overall, 7,000 companies will be interviewed by the end of 2015 across the 28 EU countries.

2.5. On 5 March 2015, ITC, together with its partners presented the results of a large scale survey of Colombian exporters and importers in Bogotá. The forum, "Challenges posed by non-tariff measures (NTMs) and trade barriers in Colombia", was organized with a view to promoting joint action among the public and private sectors, together with academia, to find solutions to the problems identified. Arancha González, ITC's Executive Director, attended the meeting together with officials from various ministries as well as representatives of trade support institutions and other stakeholders from the private and public sectors.

2.6. Guinea Company Perspectives is the latest addition to the ITC publication series on NTMs. This report together with approximately 20 other reports from the series can be accessed free of charge at <http://www.intracen.org/publications/ntm>.

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

2.3 ITC impact stories

2.8. ITC's recent publication "Connecting Markets, Improving Lives, ITC at Work" also features an SPS related success story about shea butter exports in Nigeria. See [http://www.intracen.org/uploadedFiles/intracen.org/Content/About_ITC/Corporate_Documents/Impact-Stories-web\(1\).pdf](http://www.intracen.org/uploadedFiles/intracen.org/Content/About_ITC/Corporate_Documents/Impact-Stories-web(1).pdf)

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