



Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures

**UPDATE ON THE OPERATION OF THE STANDARDS AND
TRADE DEVELOPMENT FACILITY**

NOTE BY THE SECRETARIAT¹

This document provides a brief update on activities and projects of the Standards and Trade Development Facility (STDF) since the last update to the meeting of the SPS Committee in March 2018 (G/SPS/GEN/1607, 9 February 2018). Delegates who would like to know more about the STDF are encouraged to visit the STDF website to view the projects and download STDF briefing notes and publications.² Delegates are also encouraged to subscribe to the STDF mailing list (<http://www.standardsfacility.org>).

1 STDF 2017 ANNUAL REPORT

1.1. The STDF published its 2017 Annual Report in June 2018.³ The report sets out how the STDF partnership continued to build safe and inclusive trade opportunities in 2017, which was a high-performing year for the STDF, with record numbers of SPS stakeholders reached at events worldwide, and high levels of funding applications received. Highlights of the Annual Report include:

- STDF PPGs and projects approved in 2017 – totalling US\$4,186,399 – generated an estimated US\$1,067,696 in additional resources;
- STDF shared the latest information on e-certification at a high-level event during the Global Aid for Trade Review in July 2017, and via a new Briefing Note⁴;
- STDF's role in catalysing public-private sector collaboration on maximum residue levels in pesticides was recognized in a high-level statement at the WTO's 11th Ministerial Conference in December 2017;
- Over 7,700 SPS stakeholders were reached at over 75 events in Africa, Asia-Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean, and STDF's e-news went out to 4,413 subscribers, while visitors to the STDF website came from 200 countries;
- The 2017 Working Group Survey rated STDF highly on coordination, dissemination and project development;
- Least developed countries and other low income countries benefitted from 70% of resources for STDF projects and PPGs approved in 2017.

2 STDF RESULTS BOOK

2.1. The STDF Results Book "Driving safe trade solutions worldwide" was launched at the STDF Policy Committee meeting on 23 February 2018.⁵ The Book contains 25 results stories, showing how STDF projects are supporting small-scale farmers, processors, traders and governments to implement international standards and access global markets. It provides concrete examples of

¹ This document has been prepared under the Secretariat's own responsibility and is without prejudice to the positions of Members or to their rights and obligations under the WTO.

² See: <http://www.standardsfacility.org/>.

³ See: http://www.standardsfacility.org/sites/default/files/STDF_Annual_Report_2017.pdf.

⁴ See: <http://www.standardsfacility.org/briefings>.

⁵ See: <http://www.standardsfacility.org/stdf-publications>.

impact on local communities in developing countries, showcasing the contribution that STDF work had made to the achievement of various Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

3 BEYOND RESULTS: LEARNING THE LESSONS FROM STDF PROJECTS

3.1. In 2017, the STDF commissioned an independent meta-evaluation of 22 externally evaluated STDF projects by an external consultant. This evaluation provided an independent assessment of STDF project performance to date. The report was discussed in the STDF Working group in March 2018 and will be published shortly. Its findings, experiences, results and lessons are useful to further strengthen STDF's future activities and improve the quality and performance of SPS projects more generally.

4 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE TRADE FACILITATION AGREEMENT

4.1. An information session on good practice in the implementation of the Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA) was held during the Working Group meeting in March 2018. The session focused specifically on single windows and the role of SPS agencies and featured speakers from the World Bank Group and the WTO's Trade Facilitation Agreement Facility.⁶ More information on the session, including the presentations, is available on the STDF website.⁷

5 PRIORITIZING SPS INVESTMENTS FOR MARKET ACCESS: P-IMA

5.1. Work continues on STDF's P-IMA framework, which offers an evidence-based approach to inform and improve SPS planning and decision-making processes. Two P-IMA focused PPGs are ongoing in Tajikistan (STDF/PPG/561)⁸ and Madagascar (STDF/PPG/575).⁹ In addition, in October 2017 the STDF Working Group approved project STDF/PG/606, benefiting selected COMESA countries. The project will use the P-IMA framework to mainstream SPS investments into agriculture, trade and environment planning and financing frameworks, including the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Plan (CAADP). The project is set to begin in July 2018 and benefits from co-funding from the Enhanced Integrated Framework (EIF).

6 GOOD REGULATORY PRACTICES

6.1. The STDF continued work on Good Regulatory Practices (GRP) to analyse how GRP can improve the quality and effectiveness of SPS measures in developing countries, in order to ensure health protection and facilitate safe trade. This work stems from a survey carried out in 2017 to analyse whether and how SPS agencies in developing countries are applying GRPs to strengthen the development, implementation and review of SPS measures. In March 2018, the STDF Working Group discussed and agreed to pursue further work in this area. This may include the development of a practical checklist on the use of GRPs to improve the development and implementation of SPS measures, an STDF briefing note on the use of GRPs and/or an STDF seminar on this topic.¹⁰

7 PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

7.1. Also in March 2018, the Working Group considered an updated and revised STDF concept note on public-private partnerships¹¹, and agreed to explore the following activities to further work on the subject: (i) an informal survey/consultation with WTO Members on the use of voluntary assurance schemes; (ii) an STDF event; and/or (iii) identification of additional examples/case stories and updating the 2012 STDF/IDB publication on PPPs.

8 VIRTUAL LIBRARY

8.1. The STDF Virtual Library¹² is an online information repository providing quick and easy online access to a variety of information resources focused on SPS technical cooperation and capacity

⁶ See: <http://www.tfafacility.org/>.

⁷ See: <http://www.standardsfacility.org/working-group-documents>.

⁸ See: <http://www.standardsfacility.org/PPG-561>.

⁹ See: <http://www.standardsfacility.org/PPG-575>.

¹⁰ See: <http://www.standardsfacility.org/good-regulatory-practice>.

¹¹ See: <http://www.standardsfacility.org/public-private-partnerships>.

¹² See: <http://www.standardsfacility.org/library>.

building. Delegates are encouraged to submit relevant documents to the Secretariat (STDFSecretariat@wto.org) for inclusion in the Library, including: 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. The Library complements and includes links to other information systems and databases developed and maintained by STDF partners, donors and other organizations.

9 PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

9.1. The STDF provides advice and support to applicants on issues related to SPS project development and finances project preparation grants (PPGs). PPGs, normally up to US\$50,000, are available to help applicants articulate their SPS needs and develop technically sound and sustainable project proposals. PPGs can be requested to: (i) apply SPS capacity evaluation and prioritization tools, (ii) prepare feasibility studies before project development to assess the potential impact and economic viability of proposals in terms of costs and benefits, and (iii) develop project proposals for funding by donors and/or the STDF.

9.2. A total of **90 PPGs** have been approved and funded by the STDF since its inception. Information on on-going and completed PPGs is available on the STDF website.¹³

9.3. In March 2018, the Working Group approved two new PPGs.

- a. Support to the control of SPS risks in cashew and shea value chains in Mali (STDF/PPG/611);
- b. Strengthening the fish processing sector in Kiribati (STDF/PPG/657).

10 PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

10.1. Project grant (PG) financing for projects is also available from the STDF. Favourable consideration is given to projects that: (i) identify, develop and disseminate good practice in SPS-related technical cooperation, including the development and application of innovative and replicable approaches, (ii) apply regional approaches to address SPS constraints, and/or (iii) implement collaborative approaches across food safety, animal and plant health and trade.

10.2. 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 existing assets.

10.3. A total of **87 projects** have been approved for STDF funding since its inception. Information on on-going and completed projects is available on the STDF website.¹⁴

10.4. The STDF Working Group approved two new projects in March 2018:

- a. Upgrading the Sudanese sesame seed value chain (STDF/PG/435);
- b. A strategy to strengthen Togo's SPS system, with a focus on fruit and vegetable exports (STDF/PG/375).

10.5. Since its inception, the STDF has devoted 66% of its project and PPG resources to LDCs and other low income countries (OLICs). The STDF continues to meet its target to devote at least 40% of its project and PPG resources to LDCs and OLICs. In particular, the allocation of PPG resources to LDCs and OLICs remains high (i.e. 75% of the overall budget for PPGs).

10.6. Forty-nine per cent of the number of STDF projects and PPGs has gone to Africa, 24% to Asia-Pacific, 15% to Latin America and the Caribbean, and 2% to other regions (the Middle East and Europe). In addition, 10% of the STDF projects and PPGs are classified as global.

¹³ See: <http://www.standardsfacility.org/projectpreparationgrants>.

¹⁴ See: <http://www.standardsfacility.org/projectgrants>.

10.7. Applications for STDF funding can be made 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 **10 August 2018**. Further information on eligibility criteria, application forms, etc. is available on the STDF website.

RECOMMENDED STEPS TO FOLLOW WHEN SEEKING PG OR PPG FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES WITH THE STDF:

1. Browse the webpages for information (aims, eligibility criteria, etc.) on:

- PPGs: <http://www.standardsfacility.org/project-preparation-grants>
- PGs: <http://www.standardsfacility.org/project-grants>

2. View examples of previous projects:

- PPGs: <http://www.standardsfacility.org/projectpreparationgrants>
- PGs: <http://www.standardsfacility.org/projectgrants>

3. Carefully read the guidance note for applicants:

http://standardsfacility.org/sites/default/files/STDFGuidanceNote_English_FINAL_2015.pdf

4. Consult relevant stakeholders in the country/region.

5. Send a brief concept note of your potential project for feedback on eligibility and likelihood of funding (STDFSecretariat@wto.org).

6. Fill out an application form and submit it electronically before the deadline:

- PPGs:
http://standardsfacility.org/sites/default/files/PPGApplicationForm_English_FINAL_2015.doc
- PGs:
http://standardsfacility.org/sites/default/files/PGApplicationForm_English_FINAL_2015.doc
