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Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures

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**INFORMATION ON SPS-RELATED ACTIVITIES OF  
THE INTERNATIONAL TRADE CENTRE (ITC)  
(JULY - OCTOBER 2018)**

The following communication, received on 29 October 2018, 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 selected SPS-related activities of interest to the WTO Members is provided below.

**1 PROJECTS**

**1.1 Afghanistan: Trade-related support assistance (August 2016 – July 2019 / Donor European Union)**

1.1. This project aims to strengthen human and institutional capacities in trade policy, strategy formulation and implementation, including quality management and SPS measures. The Ministry of Industry and Commerce (MoIC) is the main counterpart; beneficiaries include Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL), Ministry of Health (MoPH), National Standards Body (ANSA) and relevant sector associations.

1.2. ITC is assisting Afghanistan organisations such as MAIL, ANSA, MoPH to implement priority actions of the 5-year Plans of Actions of the National Export Strategy (NES) document related to **quality/SPS management and saffron as pilot priority sector** (NES documents available: [http://www.intracen.org/AAT/Resources\\_and\\_documents/](http://www.intracen.org/AAT/Resources_and_documents/)).

1.3. Advisory services, awareness and capacity building activities relate to:

- **Sensitisation on standards and quality** with a guide on quality-related requirements (including SPS measures) for Afghan saffron for the European, Indian and Chinese market will be launched by end of 2018 and with the celebration of the World Standards Day on 23 October that gathered more than 200 participants;
- **Development of the national quality policy** with the draft working document currently under review with stakeholders and consultation meetings ongoing;
- **Setting up the management system certification**, with lead Auditor Courses on ISO 9001 conducted for 15 participants (potential auditors) in October 2018 in India and on LAC ISO 22000 to take place in November/December 2018;
- **Capacity Building in SPS food safety area** with a concept note on the establishment of food safety authority shared with MAIL, MoPH, MOIC and a two-week training attachment in India for eight Food Safety Officials under preparation with the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) (26 November – 7 December 2018);
- **Strengthening metrology service**, law on legal metrology drafted and under review; 2-week training attachment for head of ANSA metrology department conducted in Sri Lanka in October 2018;
- **Strengthening SPS and TBT NEPs and NNA**, follow up is ongoing with WTO SPS and TBT Secretariats to conduct joint training.

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## **1.2 Myanmar: Improving food safety and compliance with SPS measures to increase export revenues in the oilseeds value chain) (August 2015 – extended till February 2019 / STDF 486)**

1.4. Implemented by ITC in close collaboration with the Ministry of Commerce - MyanTrade and Department of Agriculture.

1.5. Technical assistance and capacity building is progressing on SPS compliance along the sesame, groundnuts and sunflower value chains from farmers to exporters. Follow up with more than 300 farmers on implementation of GAP practices, safe use of pesticides, postharvest techniques, testing of soil and nutrients is implemented regularly through trained officers of the Department of Agriculture and a core group of 4 extension officers under the guidance of the National Consultant on GAP. Farmers are applying for the national GAP certification. Contract farming and links with exporters are facilitated with farmers (i.e. contract signed between beneficiary collector and beneficiary farmers with commitment to pay 2-3% higher price than local price to the farmers who implemented GAP system).

1.6. A series of workshops were conducted to develop a manual on quality control for the collection centres; national authors are compiling the manual. Finalisation and related training is planned by December 2018.

1.7. Assistance and coaching of 11 enterprises and trainers-cum-counsellors (TcCs) on food safety is progressing. Two more companies obtained third-party HACCP based certification and three were audited. A sensitization workshop on food safety titled "Safer Food, Healthier Lives, a Prosperous Myanmar" was conducted on 9 August 2018 for 140 participants (75% female) at the Mandalay Technological University where also the trained TcCs and enterprises presented their experience on implementation of HACCP system. Exam in Mandalay was conducted for trained TcCs. An experience sharing event was conducted between trained TcCs of STDF oilseed project and other TcCs trained under ITC NTF IV project in Kayah State on 4 August 2018. One TcC also attended the recap training on Hygiene with Kayah TcCs on 5-6 August for discussion and follow up plan of activities between Kayah and Mandalay TcCs.

1.8. A study tour to Thailand (7-14 October) for 15 farmers, collectors, exporters, Ministries gave the opportunity to understand GAP, GHP and HACCP practices along the value chains and market requirements.

1.9. The project's social media page (<http://www.facebook.com/itcoilseedsmyanmar>) reached almost 1,300 followers.

## **1.3 Myanmar: Inclusive tourism development with focus on Kayah state (consolidation) and Tanintharyi (extension) (NTF IV) (1 December 2017 – 30 June 2021 / Donor Netherlands)**

1.10. The NTF IV Myanmar project is part of the Netherlands Trust Fund IV programme with the purpose of increasing the competitiveness of producers and exporters in selected sectors within priority developing countries. NTF IV Myanmar builds on the results of "NTF III Myanmar - Inclusive Tourism focusing on Kayah state" by expanding tourism product development to an additional state of Myanmar (Tanintharyi) and further consolidating the achieved results at national and Kayah state level. The Intermediate SPS-related outcome of this project is to enhance quality of services in hotels, restaurants and food handlers with particular focus on food safety in Kayah and Tanintharyi region in Myanmar. Five trainers-cum-counsellors previously trained under NTF III on hygiene are now coaching operators and sensitizing on food safety. An experience sharing was organised with TcC from the STDF oilseed project (see above), refreshment training on food safety and follow up with operators in August 2018. Videos are available on the project's facebook page (Myanmar inclusive tourism project with special focus on Kayah State (ITC)).

## **1.4 Sri Lanka: Feasibility study for value addition in the fruit and vegetable sector (1 October 2017 - extended to 31 March 2018 / STDF PPG 576)**

1.11. The development of the feasibility study for value addition of five selected export crops (pineapple, papaya, banana, mango and passionfruit) is progressing and is being linked to the

National Export Strategy for processed food recently approved. A second data collection mission of an ITC international expert to Sri Lanka was conducted in April 2018. A study tour to Italy (June 2018) exposed 14 participants (exporters, members of F&V association, Department of Commerce) to inspection, certification, processing, packaging, bio production, cooperative structure and links with markets. Following the study tour, Noberasco, lead company in the dehydrated sector and potential partner, conducted a second mission with an assessment of the bio value chains in SL in August 2018. A partnership agreement is under discussion. The development of the five-year strategic plan and a short-term operations plan for the Lanka Fruit and Vegetable Producers, Processors and Exporters Association (LFVPPEA) is ongoing with several roundtables and meetings being conducted with members. The industry forum to share draft feasibility study and strategy is planned for early November 2018.

### **1.5 Tajikistan: Enabling market access for agricultural products through improved food safety system (STDF) (March 2018 – 2021 - STDF PG/447)**

1.12. The project aims to improve the export competitiveness of Tajik Small and Medium-Sized enterprises and food safety through better use of agri-chemicals and veterinary medicines with focus on apricots and honey sector.

1.13. The project is in its inception phase. The UN-to-UN Agreement between ITC and FAO was developed and signed by ITC on 8 October 2018 (pending FAO's signature) for the implementation of activities in particular related to output 1 "Regulatory and control system for use of agri-chemicals and veterinary medicines established and operational". Activities related to baseline collection (1.1), laboratory needs assessment (1.7) and access to finance needs assessment (3.1) are on-going with two missions of International Experts being conducted (one in August 2018; and one 22 October – 2 November), and collection of data by National Consultant and enumerators. The 1st joint ITC-FAO mission to kick off the project and conduct the validation workshop of the baseline collection is planned 19-22 November 2018.

### **1.6 The Gambia: Youth Empowerment Project (YEP) (January 2017 – December 2020 / Donor European Union)**

1.14. To generate employment among youth, ITC is supporting improved compliance of Gambian products to international standards and market requirements, including in the food and agriculture sectors. Following training of 20 youth trainers on Food Safety and Good Hygienic Practices (GHP), further training on Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points has been conducted, with the participation of enterprises. Company visits have been organized to carry out on-site training and diagnostic assessments. Follow up assistance to a selected number of enterprises is in progress.

### **1.7 Sudan: WTO Accession (March 2018 - February 2019 / Donor Japan)**

1.15. In support of the accession of Sudan to the WTO, ITC is helping the operationalization of designated National Notification Authority and National Enquiry Point for SPS through development of operating procedures and guidance to apply the procedures. The policy makers, key institutions and the business have been sensitised on the WTO TBT and SPS Agreements. Draft stand operating procedures for the functioning of the TBT and SPS enquiry points and national notification authority have been prepared and the concerned officers have been trained to operationalize these services.

### **1.8 Burundi Market Access Upgrade Programme (MARKUP) (July 2018 – June 2022 / Donor European Union)**

1.16. ITC will be implementing a new project to enhance quality infrastructure services to support compliance with SPS measures and technical regulations in Burundi, with particular focus on coffee and tea sectors. The project will focus on strengthening the national quality infrastructure framework, inspection and certification services, and quality-related extension services; improving laboratory testing capacities for coffee/tea.

1.17. The project launch mission is scheduled for 30 October 2018 and will include assessment and stock-taking of current developments in the national quality infrastructure.

### **1.9 Oman - Stakeholders roundtable on NTMs and EQM workshops (September/October 2018)**

1.18. In close cooperation with the Public Authority for Investment Promotion and Export Development - ITHRAA, ITC organized on 30 September 2018 a stakeholders Round Table on Non-tariff Measures (NTM) to present the results of the NTM survey in Oman. Based on the discussion held and further research, the NTM report for Oman will be finalized.

1.19. Also at the request of ITHRAA, ITC conducted two Export Quality Management workshops for some 60 private sector participants in Muscat and Salalah. The business perspectives of the WTO TBT and SPS Agreements were highlighted during these events.

### **1.10 Support to the Facilitation of Trade between CEFTA Parties (January 2017 – December 2019 / Donor European Union)**

1.20. ITC supports the parties of the Central European Free Trade Area (CEFTA) to increase trade and competitiveness in the region. With the aim to reduce and eventually remove the most distortive non-tariff measures for priority products, of particular economic relevance for the region, ITC has carried out an in-depth diagnostic study of all CEFTA parties in order to understand quality-related barriers and challenges to trade in the region. In April/May 2018 ITC has identified and analysed standards, technical regulations and TBT/SPS measures applicable to various vegetable and iron and steel value chains in all CEFTA parties. A synthesis report on the diagnostic of TBT and SPS related issues in these sectors based on the country reports was prepared and presented at a regional validation workshop in Pristina in September 2018.

### **1.11 Coconut Industry Development for the Caribbean Project (2015-2018 / Donor European Union and ACP secretariat)**

1.21. ITC, in partnership with the Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI), is working with stakeholders at every step of the value chain to foster cooperative, mutually supportive responses to market needs. The project is part of a European Union-funded 'intra-ACP' programme that seeks to promote increased trade, value-addition and production across the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Group of States. ITC is implementing the 'Alliances for Action' methodology, a market system and producer-centred approach to improve sector governance and achieve impact at scale through the formation of market-led partnerships to de-risk investments in the sector, enhance value chain integration, technical support, policy alignment and local institutional capacity building.

1.22. Countries: 11 countries in the Caribbean: Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Jamaica, Guyana, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago.

1.23. SPS related activities: More than 1,700 farmers benefitted from over 500 trainings in good agricultural practices and Integrated Pest Management (IPM) for coconuts and associated crops; establishment of 23 demonstration plots for best agricultural practices in coconut production, crop diversification and IPM; development of surveillance protocols and emergency response plans for pests and diseases of coconuts in the Caribbean; conduct of Pest Risk Analysis to determine the risk of importation of quality coconut planting material into the Caribbean; revision of the CARICOM Regional Standard for packaged natural coconut water, in collaboration with the CARICOM Regional Organisation for Standards and Quality (CROSQ).

### **1.12 Georgia, Armenia, Eastern Partnership: Ready to Trade - an EU4Business initiative (2017 – 2020 / Donor European Union)**

1.24. The project helps small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) from Eastern Partnership countries integrate into global value chains and access new markets with a focus on the European Union (EU).

1.25. Two interactive workshops on Export Quality Management for enterprises are scheduled in Georgia (Tbilisi, 26-27 November 2018) and Armenia (Yerevan, 28-29 November). Topics will cover also SPS measures, requirements of the EU market, the WTO TBT and SPS Agreements.

The workshops will be followed by coaching, training and business advisory services to a pilot group of SMEs in the areas identified during the workshop.

**1.13 WTO Thematic SPS Workshop on Control, Inspection and Approval Procedures, Geneva, Switzerland, 9-10 July 2018**

1.26. ITC Trade Facilitation and Policy for Business section participated in the roundtable discussion, session 5 "*Opportunities to mobilize resources for SPS capacity building to support the implementation of Annex C*". ITC shared its integrated approach for technical assistance and capacity building to build safe and efficient trade. The unit brings the expertise of the ITC Trade Facilitation and the Quality for Trade teams.

NTM - Further information:

NTM-related publications, including country-specific survey reports, can be accessed free of charge at <http://www.intracen.org/publications/ntm>. Survey results are available in a more interactive format via [www.ntmsurvey.org](http://www.ntmsurvey.org). For more information about ITC's NTM programme, please contact [ntm@intracen.org](mailto:ntm@intracen.org)

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