



## UPDATE ON THE STANDARDS AND TRADE DEVELOPMENT FACILITY

### NOTE BY THE SECRETARIAT<sup>1</sup>

This document provides a brief update on the work of the Standards and Trade Development Facility (STDF) since the last meeting of the Committee in November 2019. Delegates are encouraged to visit the STDF website to view and learn from STDF activities and projects, download STDF briefing notes and other publications, and subscribe to STDF's mailing list to receive regular updates on STDF work (<http://www.standardsfacility.org>).

#### 1 NEW STRATEGY 2020-2024

1.1. On 30 January 2020, the STDF launched a new [five-year strategy](#) (2020 to 2024).<sup>2</sup> Drawing on the findings of the external evaluation of the STDF in 2019, the strategy aims to consolidate and build on STDF strengths and performance, and further develop the partnership and expand its reach and resources. Under the new strategy, the STDF will further consolidate its role as a global platform for dialogue and learning on SPS capacity development. It will continue to share available know-how, tools and good practices and build on what already exists. The STDF will also continue to finance the development and implementation of collaborative and innovative SPS projects, with the potential to influence and catalyse SPS improvements.

1.2. On 19 March 2019, the STDF Secretariat will organize a lunchtime session, on the margins of the Committee meeting, to further introduce the new STDF strategy and present practical examples of how the STDF influences SPS capacity building through its work. The side-event will also explain how developing countries can continue to access grants to develop and implement SPS projects. More information on the event, which will be preceded by a light lunch, will be circulated separately.

#### 2 PRIORITIZING SPS INVESTMENTS FOR MARKET ACCESS: P-IMA

2.1. The STDF continues to help developing countries in SPS planning and decision-making through application of the P-IMA framework. P-IMA is an evidence-based approach to inform and improve SPS planning and decision making, including mobilization of additional resources for SPS investments. Work is on-going in Madagascar ([STDF/PPG/575](#)) and the framework will also be applied in Ecuador shortly ([STDF/PPG/709](#)). An STDF project ([STDF/PG/606](#)) to assist selected COMESA member states in using the P-IMA framework to mainstream SPS investments into their agriculture, trade, and environment planning and financing frameworks, including the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP), is underway (co-funded by the Enhanced Integrated Framework).

2.2. In November 2019, TradeMark East Africa (TMEA) supported public and private sector players from South Sudan, Burundi, Tanzania, Kenya, Rwanda and Uganda to identify capacity building options by applying P-IMA. The objective of TMEA is to unlock regional trade in East Africa and improve intra-regional trade flows. The Secretariat will also present the P-IMA framework at a meeting and workshop of the African Continental SPS Committee in Kigali, Rwanda, from 9 to 11 March, organized by the African Union Commission.

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> See also the message from WTO's Director General: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L4c-LEmQfxQ>

### 3 VOLUNTARY THIRD-PARTY ASSURANCE PROGRAMMES

3.1. The Secretariat recently issued a survey on existing and/or planned regulatory frameworks and practices related to voluntary third-party assurance (vTPA) programmes (including quality management systems, assurance schemes or certification programmes) in food and feed safety, in cooperation with IICA and UNIDO. Depending on the responses received, the Secretariat may be able to share some initial feedback on the survey responses during the SPS thematic session on the margins of the SPS Committee on 17 March.

3.2. A link to the survey (available in English, French and Spanish on SurveyMonkey) was kindly distributed through the SPS and Codex Secretariat mailing lists. We encourage delegates to respond to the survey, which can also be accessed here:

- ✓ English: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/QSPGRV8>
- ✓ French: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/2ZK7GC8>
- ✓ Spanish: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/BP7MCTF>

### 4 PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

4.1. Building on previous [STDF work on PPPs](#), and also learning from OIE's more recent work in this area, the Secretariat has started to collect and compile new examples of PPPs in the area of SPS capacity and trade, more broadly (i.e. beyond collaboration or data sharing linked to vTPA programmes in the food safety area).

4.2. To help collect additional PPP examples, the Secretariat issued another targeted survey (also on SurveyMonkey), which will soon be accessible via the [PPP page](#) on the STDF website in English, French and Spanish. We encourage delegates to share PPP examples and further distribute this survey with their respective networks.

### 5 GOOD REGULATORY PRACTICE

5.1. The STDF is continuing its work on a guidance document and practical checklist on the use of [Good Regulatory Practice](#) (GRP). This work aims to provide guidance for developing countries to ensure that SPS measures are "fit for purpose" and that they avoid the creation of non-tariff barriers. It will seek to identify good practices and recommendations to enhance the development and implementation of SPS measures in order to: (i) strengthen the effectiveness of regulatory interventions; (ii) improve compliance with international standards and the SPS Agreement; and (iii) ensure health protection while facilitating trade. A peer review group of STDF partners and other members and relevant organizations (including OECD) is supporting this work. The Secretariat currently aims to present this work on the margins of a Committee meeting in 2021.

### 6 ELECTRONIC CERTIFICATION

6.1. Paperless SPS systems can improve traceability throughout SPS supply chains, lower food waste, cut trade times and costs, reduce fraudulent certificates, and build trust among trading partners. STDF's work in this area is focused on increasing the use of [electronic SPS certificates](#) (SPS e-cert) in developing countries. The STDF supports the e-Phyto ([STDF/PG/504](#)) and e-Vet ([STDF/PG/609](#)) projects. In October 2019, the STDF Working Group created an SPS eCert advisory committee under the umbrella of the STDF, which currently consists of 11 relevant international organizations. Its objective will be to exchange information on relevant eCert initiatives, facilitate linkages and synergies among these initiatives, and to maximize outputs and avoid duplication on efforts. Its first meeting is scheduled in March 2020.

### 7 STDF REGIONAL MRL PROJECTS

7.1. On 7 November 2019, the STDF organized an information session at the margins of the WTO SPS Committee to share the findings and recommendations of an independent evaluation of three STDF projects in ASEAN ([STDF/PG/337](#)), Africa ([STDF/PG/359](#)) and Latin America ([STDF/PG/436](#)). Under these projects, government authorities partnered with multinational pesticide

manufacturers, industry associations, farmers and international partners (including the Codex Secretariat, IR-4/Rutgers University and USDA) to carry out coordinated and complementary pesticide residue studies. This collaborative approach generated data to support new Codex MRLs for minor-use crops (like dragon fruit, mango, papaya and avocado) and the registration of new, improved, low-risk pesticides for farmers.

7.2. Participants highlighted the catalytic impact of the projects in propelling further regional and global collaboration to plug pesticide data gaps and increase developing country exports. The projects created dynamic public-private sector partnerships to support farmers in using new-generation pesticides and to scale up this approach. Moving forward, the legacy set up under STDF's projects continues to support developing countries in facilitating safe trade and meeting international standards for tropical crops. New pesticide data generation projects are underway or planned in the regions. Work is progressing to align pesticide registration systems and MRL adoption practices. The projects also facilitated the establishment of the Global Minor Use Foundation at Rutgers University to further assist developing countries in finding solutions.<sup>3</sup>

7.3. The results of the projects, and the findings and recommendations of the evaluation, will be also be disseminated at the upcoming 52<sup>nd</sup> Session of the Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues (CCPR).

## 8 NEW STDF FILM

8.1. The STDF released a new film "[Investing in Safe Trade](#)" featuring partners, donors and developing country experts speaking on the current global landscape and what more is needed to facilitate safe, inclusive trade. The film sets out how in order to meet the UN Sustainable Development Goals investing in SPS capacity in developing countries is vital for people to share in the benefits from trade. Ten experts from Belize, Canada, the European Union, the Global Food Safety Initiative, IPPC Secretariat, The Netherlands, Papua New Guinea, Senegal, the US and WTO share their views on how building SPS capacity helps producers, traders and consumers and also promotes food safety, animal and plant health. The film, interview series and other SPS related videos are available on the [STDF YouTube channel](#).

## 9 ADVANCED SPS COURSE

9.1. The STDF Secretariat provided a full-time coach for the duration of the 2019 Advanced SPS course (28 October to 15 November 2019) to share available know-how, tools and good practices from STDF's knowledge and project work. Several participants of the course worked on action plans to address SPS constraints which prevents their countries from accessing markets abroad. Four participants went on to submit concrete applications to the STDF for project preparation grants. These will be discussed by the STDF Working Group at its next meeting on 7-8 April 2020.

## 10 PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

10.1. 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.

10.2. A total of **101 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.

## 11 PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

11.1. 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

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<sup>3</sup> See STDF news item issued in November 2019: <https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?u=1dd65e410f4f874eaf3175abc&id=97014839a0>

approaches; (ii) apply regional approaches to address SPS constraints; and/or (iii) implement collaborative approaches across food safety, animal and plant health and trade. 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).

11.2. A total of **97 projects** have been approved for STDF funding since its inception. Information on on-going and completed projects is available on the STDF website.

11.3. Since its inception, the STDF has devoted 65% 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. 71% of the overall budget for PPGs).

11.4. 49% of the number of STDF projects and PPGs has gone to Africa, 24% to Asia-Pacific, 15% to Latin America-Caribbean, and 2% to other regions (Middle East and Europe). In addition, 10% of the STDF projects and PPGs are classified as global.

11.5. 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 to be considered at that meeting.

11.6. The next deadline for the submission of applications is **17 July 2020**. 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](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](mailto: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](http://standardsfacility.org/sites/default/files/PPGApplicationForm_English_FINAL_2015.doc)
- PGs:  
[http://standardsfacility.org/sites/default/files/PGApplicationForm\\_English\\_FINAL\\_2015.doc](http://standardsfacility.org/sites/default/files/PGApplicationForm_English_FINAL_2015.doc)