



**Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures**

**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 GEN document, circulated on 27 February 2020. 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 STDF'S COVID-19 RESPONSE**

1.1. Since COVID-19 was declared a global pandemic on 11 March 2020, the STDF has put in place a range of actions, in close cooperation with STDF partners and other members of the partnership, to mitigate and manage the risk across STDF's work. On 30 April, the Secretariat issued a [report](#) that outlines the types of risks faced and mitigation measures taken across STDF's global platform, knowledge work and project portfolio. The report also supports an exchange of experiences and learning on COVID-19 risk management across STDF project stakeholders.

1.2. On 26 May, the STDF organized a [webinar](#), in which experts from STDF partners shared updates on how to facilitate safe trade during COVID-19 across the areas of food safety, animal and plant health, and trade. In the 90-minute session, the FAO, OIE, WHO, World Bank Group, WTO, and the Codex and IPPC Secretariats shared the latest COVID-19 resources and tools available for stakeholders worldwide, while the United Kingdom provided a donor perspective. Over 250 people participated in the webinar. The Secretariat created a [COVID-19 webpage](#) where all COVID-19 information, links and STDF's report is available.

**2 STDF WORKING GROUP AND WORK PLAN**

2.1. The STDF Working Group was held virtually on 7 April, chaired by Julie Emond from Canada. Members elected Tom Heilandt from the Codex Secretariat as vice-chairperson of the Working Group in 2020 (and hence chairperson in 2021). Members also welcomed three new developing country experts, i.e. Lucy Namu (Kenya), Visoni Timote (Fiji) and Mirian Bueno (Honduras). Donors, including Canada and Ireland, announced new pledges to the STDF trust fund. Members approved STDF's [2020-2021 Work Plan](#), outlining planned activities, inputs and outputs across STDF's global platform, knowledge work and projects.<sup>2</sup> The plan is based on STDF's new [strategy](#) (2020-2024) and also includes information on Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning, Communications and the Secretariat's resources.

2.2. Members approved three projects, namely in Mali (promoting food safety in smoked fish, benefitting consumers and regional trade), and in West Africa and Central America (piloting third-party assurance programmes to improve food safety, health and trade). Members also approved three project preparation grants (PPGs), benefiting Bhutan (improving border inspection and controls to drive biosecurity and food safety), Egypt (study on setting up a disease-free area to promote trade in poultry products) and the Caribbean (rolling out STDF's P-IMA tool - see section 4 below - to prioritize SPS investments). Several participants provided updates on SPS-related activities and

<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-LFmQfXQ>.

initiatives related to COVID-19. A [report](#) of the Working Group meeting is available on the STDF website.

### 3 STDF 2019 ANNUAL REPORT

3.1. On 11 June, in the context of World Food Safety Day, the STDF published its [2019 Annual Report](#), titled "Facing the future: shaping safe trade outcomes". The report features how STDF's global platform, knowledge work and projects have delivered practical solutions for the public and private sector, using tools and technologies to transform agri-food productivity, meeting international standards, facilitating business at borders, accessing regional and global markets and trading safely. Highlighting emerging trade and development trends, STDF's results are linked to the Sustainable Development Goals - no poverty, zero hunger, good health and well-being, decent work and economic growth, and partnerships. The report illustrates how STDF's work has helped to generate jobs, raise incomes and secure more livelihoods, including for women and small businesses.

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

4.1. 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. Co-funded by the Enhanced Integrated Framework (EIF), an STDF project ([STDF/PG/606](#)) is underway to assist selected COMESA member states to use P-IMA to drive better SPS planning and decision-making and to mobilize more resources for SPS capacity building in agriculture, environment and trade policy frameworks. Work is also on-going to apply the framework in Ecuador ([STDF/PPG/709](#)). In addition to P-IMA applications supported by the STDF, other development partners, including TradeMark East Africa (TMEA) and the International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI), are also using the P-IMA framework.

4.2. Restrictions on international travel due to COVID-19 have served to highlight the need for materials that can be used to undertake remote training in the P-IMA framework. In line with its 2020-2021 Work Plan, the STDF initiated work to develop a new P-IMA Training Facilitators Manual and related online modules. This should provide practical, easy-to-follow guidance for facilitators involved in providing training and applying the P-IMA framework. The new manual, to be completed by the end of 2020, will provide step-by-step guidance to facilitators for each stage of the P-IMA process, clearly explaining the related requirements, as well as possible challenges that may arise and tips to address these.

### 5 VOLUNTARY THIRD-PARTY ASSURANCE PROGRAMMES

5.1. The Secretariat 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. Many countries demonstrated interest in the topic, as 42 responses were received by the end of May, including 26 from developing countries.

5.2. The survey is still open, and responses are welcome until **19 June 2020**. Links to the survey (available in English, French and Spanish on SurveyMonkey) were 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>

5.3. On 9 June 2020, UNIDO and the STDF organized a webinar on the role of accreditation to ensure food safety outcomes based on vTPA programmes. Further information on this meeting and the outcomes will be made available on STDF's [event webpage](#).

## 6 PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

6.1. Building on previous [STDF work on PPPs](#), and also learning from OIE's more recent work in this area, the Secretariat is currently collecting and compiling 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). To facilitate collecting PPP examples, the Secretariat issued a "Call for Case Stories" questionnaire (also available through 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.

## 7 ELECTRONIC CERTIFICATION

7.1. Facing the COVID-19 pandemic, several WTO Members have notified trade facilitating SPS measures to the WTO, focused amongst others on streamlining border and certification procedures. Increasingly, Members are accepting electronic SPS certification, in particular for plants and plant products. This follows the STDF-funded ePhyto project ([STDF/PG/504](#)), with the IPPC, while the STDF is also funding a similar eVet project ([STDF/PG/609](#)), with the OIE. Generally, 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.

7.2. On 18 March, the Secretariat also hosted the first meeting of the SPS eCert Advisory Committee (ECAC), which currently consists of 11 relevant international organizations. Its objective is to exchange information on eCert initiatives, facilitate linkages and synergies among these initiatives, and to maximize outputs and avoid efforts duplication. A summary report of the meeting will be made available shortly on STDF's [e-cert webpage](#). The next ECAC meeting will be held end of June 2020.

## 8 PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

8.1. 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.

8.2. A total of **104 PPGs** has been approved and funded by the STDF since its inception. Information on on-going and completed PPGs is available on the [STDF website](#).

## 9 PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

9.1. 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. 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).

9.2. A total of **100 projects** have been approved for STDF funding since its inception. Information on on-going and completed projects is available on the [STDF website](#).

9.3. 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. 69% of the overall budget for PPGs).

9.4. 43% of the number of STDF projects and PPGs has gone to Africa, 28% to Asia-Pacific, 19% to Latin America-Caribbean, and 0.9% to other regions (Middle East and Europe). In addition, 10% of the STDF projects and PPGs are classified as global.

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## 10 HOW TO APPLY FOR STDF FUNDING

10.1. The STDF is currently in the process of launching a new online application system which would replace the traditional form of receiving grant proposals via email. More information on this new system will be provided on the [STDF website](#) in the coming weeks.

10.2. 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.

10.3. 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)
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