WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION

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Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures Original: English

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Submission by Jordan

Within the context of Jordan's fulfilling its obligations to the WTO in relation to Jordan's commitments under the SPS Agreement, efficient implementation of the Agreement is essential. Consequently, sufficient and high standard quarantine measures and laboratory analysis need to be made available in order to ensure that both imported and exported animals, animal products and agricultural products are safe and healthy and of high quality.

Therefore, assistance would be required in the following areas under the operation of the Ministry of Agriculture:

- Improvement of veterinary quarantine capacities;
- Improvement of plants laboratories capacities.

I would very much appreciate it, if this request for technical assistance is circulated to Members of the Committee for their consideration with the detailed description of two project proposals for the above-mentioned areas, including the following:

- Background and justification;
- Project objective;
- Expected outputs;
- Description of main activities;
- Project implementation;
- Executing agencies;
- Local partner organization and target group;
- Costs and benefits;
- Risks and important assumption.

IMPROVEMENT OF PLANT LABORATORY CAPACITIES

Project Proposal

1. Background and justification

The country's only *Pesticide Analysis Laboratory* was established in 1983 and is commissioned to analyze the chemical composition of pesticides and to control quality standards. The *Pesticide Residues Analysis Laboratory* was founded in 1984. The laboratory serves as the sole pesticide residues analysis facility for agricultural products in Jordan. The *Plant Protection Laboratory* operates since 1990 and serves the different quarantine centers which are located at the border entry points. It is responsible to detect and diagnose plant pests on imported plants and agricultural products. All three laboratories were founded by the Ministry of Agriculture, are located in the city of Al – Baqa in the Al – Balqa governorate and are run under the direct responsibility of the Ministry of Agriculture's Plant Protection Department. To date there are no privately managed, government accredited laboratories in Jordan that complement the three state managed institutions.

The presently existing laboratories have a far too limited capacity and capability in analizing samples which does not comply with the requirements as formulated in the Jordanian rules and regulations as well as the upcoming additional needs due to Jordan's increasing integration into world trade (e.g. WTO, EU – Partnership, Arab Free Trade Zone). The reasons for insufficient and inadequate laboratory analyses are mainly:

- Insufficient equipment in terms of technical standard and quantity;
- Lack of qualified technical staff;
- Lack of facilities for sample collection and storage.

2. Project objective

Sufficient high standard laboratory analyses are carried out to ensure healthy, high quality agricultural products for both local and export markets.

3. Expected outputs

- Laboratories are enabled to work efficiently and according to international, professional standards;
- Jordan's capacity for carrying out laboratory analyses increased sufficiently to meet present and near future demands;
- Quality standards of locally produced and imported chemical pesticides are secured;
- Quality of agricultural products for human consumption is secured;
- Detection and diagnosis of plant pests on imported plants, seeds and agricultural products are secured;
- A supportive and appropriate legal and regulatory framework exists in Jordan concerning pesticide, pesticide residue and plant laboratory analyses.

4. Description of Main Activities

- Assist the Government of Jordan in the formulation of an action plan for laboratory analysis capacity improvement;
- Supply existing laboratories with sufficient equipment and transportation facilities;

- Establish one additional pesticide analysis laboratory in Aqaba and equip it sufficiently;
- Establish four additional pesticide residue analysis laboratories in each of the main agricultural production areas (Northern and Central Jordan Valley, Southern Jordan Valley, Al–Mafraq, Highlands) and equip them sufficiently;
- Establish four additional quarantine laboratories at the major quarantine centers in Aqaba, Ramtha, Amman and Rueished and equip them sufficiently;
- Train and qualify technical laboratory personnel and Plant Protection Department staff, including scholarships;
- Advise the laboratory management in financial, organizational, administrative, technical and personnel aspects;
- Support the establishment of private laboratories, advise and train them;
- Support the accreditation of private laboratories and the development or adjustment of the needed rules and regulations;
- Review and eventually adjust the legislation with respect to standard methods for laboratory analyses of pesticides, pesticide residues and quarantine products.

5. Project implementation

The project will intensively work with the presently employed laboratory management and staff in identifying the needed equipment and training. Also, international requirements and standards will be reviewed and integrated into the approach. In a first step, the already existing laboratories will be upgraded and operated in a test run and their personnel qualified, to gain experiences and serve as references for the establishment of the new laboratories. At the same time, advice and training are given to the Plant Protection Department to better accomplish its tasks. In the second phase, the new laboratories will be established and prepared for full operation. Finally, the possible privatization of the laboratories is considered and eventually supported in establishing and accrediting of private laboratories is given.

The project has a close relation with the *Improvement of Veterinary Laboratory Capacities Project* which is under responsibility of the MoA's Pharmacy and Drug Control Division. The total project duration is estimated as three years. The project location will be Amman with the different laboratory locations as field areas.

6. Executing agency

The executing agency is the Plant Protection Department, Ministry of Agriculture, Jordan.

The Plant Protection Department is under the authority of the Plant Administration in the Ministry of Agriculture. The Plant Protection Department is subdivided into the following divisions:

- Plant Quarantine Division;
- Plant Pest Control Division;
- Plant Protection Laboratory Division;
- Pesticide Registration Division.

The main areas of responsibilities of the Plant Protection Department are:

- Preparation and monitoring of regulations concerned with production, import, export and registration of pesticides;
- Preparation and monitoring of quarantine regulations for imported and exported agricultural products, plants and seeds;

- Carrying out of quarantine measures;
- Preparation, monitoring and implementation of the national plant pest and disease control programme;
- Registration of pesticides;
- Establishment and operation of department laboratories.

There are 36 staff employed in the Ministry's Plant Protection Department. Their educational background is agricultural engineering or chemistry with 6 MSc. and 30 BSc. graduates.

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7. Local partner organization and target group

The three existing laboratories are funded by the Ministry of Agriculture and gain additional, small income from fees for chemical analyses. Generally, their financial situation is weak which oftentimes hinders full operation, training of staff as well as depreciation, upgrading and supplementing of the laboratory equipment, buildings and vehicles. The management and technical staff comprises of 20 people with 5 MSc., 10 BSc. and 5 college graduates. Equipment is mostly outdated and was purchased in the 1980s. All laboratories are located on the same compound but operate independently and separately.

8. Costs and benefits

8.1 Contribution of Jordan

- Personnel costs for laboratory operation;
- Establishment of new buildings;
- Maintenance of already existing building facilities and equipment;
- Running costs.

Total costs for the Jordanian contribution are estimated at US$2.5 millioN.

8.2 Proposed Foreign Contribution

- Laboratory equipment and transportation facilities;
- Training and qualification of personnel;
- Running costs;
- Costs for advisory services (international and local experts).

Total costs for the foreign contribution are estimated at US$7.5 million.

8.3. Expected Benefits

It is expected that the project will considerably increase the country's plant analysis capacity by upgrading and restructuring the existing laboratories, establishing new laboratories and supporting private initiatives for additional laboratories. Analyses of pesticides, pesticide residues and

quarantine products are anticipated to be carried out more professionally in the future. Methods applied will be in accordance with international standards and the laboratories will meet the full demand of the private and public sector in terms of quantity and quality.

The impact on human health should be significant, as consumers increasingly complain about disturbances after the intake of fresh fruits and vegetables obviously treated with chemical pesticides. Furthermore, trade with other countries and competitiveness of Jordanian products will be facilitated by proper analyses which comply with bilateral and multilateral agreements. This will have a positive effect on farm incomes and foreign exchange earnings.

Laboratories and government institutions will be strengthened and enabled to better accomplish their tasks.

9. Risks and important assumptions

The main risk is the high financial need of the laboratories to adequately cover their running costs, depreciate equipment, buildings and vehicles, invest in additional equipment and train personnel. A realistic financial concept must be drawn up and implemented and sufficient subsidies must be made available by the government if the laboratory cannot be self-supporting.

IMPROVEMENT OF VETERINARY QUARANTINE CAPACITIES

Project Proposal

1. Background and justification

Jordan imports 0.5 million sheep, 14,000 cows and 82 million young chickens, serves as a transit country for 0.75 million sheep, almost 2,000 goats and 1,250 cows, and exports 2,000 small ruminants and 0.3 million chickens. All of these live animals should undergo proper quarantine.

At present, there are four quarantine stations in Jordan which are responsible for the inspection of live animals prior to import and export. Three of them are located at the Syrian border and one is situated at the seaport in Aqaba. They lack sufficient and modern equipment, do not dispose of even simple laboratories and small veterinary clinics and the personnel is generally insufficiently qualified. The capacity of the existing stations is by far too limited to cover the total need for animal quarantine. Therefore, oftentimes special permission is given to carry out quarantine measures on farms, which of course puts in question sincerity and reliability of quarantine results. A proper monitoring and control system to check on-farm quarantine measures is not in place and applied.

In addition, there are 11 quarantine offices located at all the remaining border crossing points with neighbouring countries, at the airport and at the customs office in Amman. They are not designed to keep livestock, but to examine animal products and animal feed. Imported animals that arrive at quarantine offices must therefore be transported to quarantine stations for disease control, which adds transportation costs and consumes time.

The quarantine stations and offices operate under the responsibility of the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Health Administration's Quarantine Division. The unsatisfactory situation with respect to their qualitative and quantitative capacity urgently needs to be addressed, especially before the background of Jordan's WTO membership, EU-Partnership and the Arab Free Trade Zone which calls for full, complete livestock quarantine in international trade. It is expected that Jordan's progressing integration into the world economy will considerably increase trade with live animals.

2. Project objective

Sufficient high standard quarantine measures are carried out to ensure healthy animals and high quality animal products for both local and export markets.

3. Expected outputs

- Quarantine stations and offices are enabled to work efficiently and according to international, professional standards;
- Jordan's capacity for carrying out quarantine measures has increased sufficiently to meet present and near future demands;
- Thorough disease control of imported and exported live animals is secured;
- Quality standards of locally produced and imported animal products and animal feed are secured;
- A supportive and appropriate legal and regulatory framework exists in Jordan concerning veterinary quarantine.

4. Description of main activities

- Assist the Government of Jordan in the formulation of an action plan for veterinary quarantine capacity improvement;
- Supply existing quarantine stations and offices with sufficient equipment, buildings and transportation facilities;
- Establish simple analysis laboratories and small animal clinics at some quarantine stations;
- Establish four new quarantine stations: at the Israeli border, at the Palestinian border, at the Iraqi border and at the Saudi Arabian border;
- Train and qualify veterinary and technical personnel and the MoA's Quarantine Division staff, including scholarships;
- Advise the quarantine stations' and offices' management in financial, organizational, administrative, technical and personnel aspects;
- Review and eventually adjust the legislation with respect to carrying out veterinary quarantine so that it matches international standards.

5. Project implementation

During the first phase, the project will intensively work with the presently employed quarantine stations' and offices' management and staff in identifying the needed equipment and training. Also, international requirements and standards will be reviewed and integrated into the approach. At the same time, advice and training are given to the Quarantine Division and the stations' and offices' personnel to better accomplish their tasks. The quarantine stations and offices will be upgraded with modern equipment, small laboratories and basic animal clinics and operated in a test run. The gained experiences will serve as reference for the establishment of new stations, which will commence in the second project phase.

The project has a close relation with the *Improvement of Veterinary Laboratory Capacities Project* which is under the responsibility of the MoA's Pharmacy and Drug Control Division. The total project duration is estimated as two years. The project location will be Amman.

6. Executing agency

The executing agency is the Quarantine Division, Ministry of Agriculture, Jordan.

The Quarantine Division is part of the Veterinary Department which again is under the authority of the Animal Health Administration in the Ministry of Agriculture. The Veterinary Department is subdivided into the following divisions:

- Pharmacy and Drug Control Division;
- Quarantine Division;
- Animal Health and Epidemic Division;
- Poultry Health Division;
- Central Veterinary Laboratory Division;
- Artificial Insemination Division;
- Finance and Administration Division.

The main areas of responsibilities of the Quarantine Division are:

- Operating quarantine stations and offices;
- Carrying out quarantine measures for import and export of live animals,

- Quality control of animal products and animal feed;
- Issuing of veterinary health certificates for the export and import of livestock;
- Granting permission for the import of live animals, animal products and feed;
- Monitoring the compliance with government rules and regulations concerning veterinary quarantine and animal health.

There are 20 staff employed in the Ministry's Quarantine Division. Their educational background is 5 BSc. and the remainder has a lower qualification level.

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7. Local partner organization and target group

The veterinary quarantine stations and offices are funded by the Ministry of Agriculture to cover their operating expenses. They gain additional, small fees for their services from importers and exporters. Generally, the stations' and offices' financial situation is weak which oftentimes hinders full operation, training of staff as well as depreciation, upgrading and supplementing of equipment, buildings and vehicles.

Local animal keeping farmers and livestock breeders are beneficiaries of the project. To date the health of imported livestock for breeding is not guaranteed and export markets are aware of the health insecurities with respect to live animals originating from Jordan.

8. Costs and benefits

8.1 Contribution of Jordan

- Personnel costs for quarantine stations and offices operation;
- Maintenance of already existing building facilities and equipment;
- Running costs.

Total costs for the Jordanian contribution are estimated at US$0.5 million.

8.2 Proposed foreign contribution

- Buildings for new stations, laboratories and clinics;
- Equipment and transportation facilities;
- Training and qualification of personnel;
- Running costs;
- Costs for advisory services (international and local experts).

Total costs for the foreign contribution are estimated at US$2.1 million.

8.3 Expected benefits

It is expected that the project will considerably increase the country's veterinary quarantine capacity by upgrading, completing and restructuring the existing stations and offices as well as supporting the establishment of four new quarantine stations. The detection of diseases of traded live animals and quality control of animal products and feed are expected to be carried out professionally and comprehensively in the future. Methods applied will be in accordance with international standards and the quarantine stations will meet the full demand of the private and public sector in terms of quantity and quality.

It can be expected that the import of thoroughly and professionally examined live animals will reduce the introduction and transfer of animal diseases and thus improve the overall health situation of Jordanian livestock. Exports to other countries and competitiveness of Jordanian animals and animal products on the world market will increase by conducting quarantine measures which comply with bilateral and multilateral agreements and international standards. Both effects will increase agricultural incomes and foreign exchange earnings. The impact on human health should be positive by providing safe food.

Quarantine stations and offices as well as government institutions will be strengthened and enabled to better accomplish their tasks.

9. Risk and important assumptions

The main risk is the high financial need of the quarantine stations and offices to adequately cover their running costs, depreciate equipment, buildings and vehicles, invest in additional equipment and train personnel. A realistic financial concept must be drawn up and implemented and sufficient subsidies must be made available by the government if the quarantine stations cannot be self-supporting.