



Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures

UPDATE ON THE STANDARDS AND TRADE DEVELOPMENT FACILITY

NOTE BY THE SECRETARIAT¹

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1. The Standards and Trade Development Facility (STDF) is a global partnership that promotes improved food safety, animal and plant health capacity in developing countries and helps imports and exports to meet SPS requirements for trade, based on international standards. It operates as a funding mechanism and global platform for dialogue, learning and good practice on SPS capacity development, acting as a catalyst and aiming to influence SPS capacity development more broadly.

1.2. The STDF works on thematic topics that cut across the areas of food safety, animal and plant health, and trade, drawing on the input of all STDF partners, donor members and beneficiaries. Outputs include user-friendly knowledge products (briefing notes, publications, short videos, etc.), global and regional client-facing events, and the creation of practitioner groups on selected topics. The STDF is housed and managed by the WTO.

1.3. This document provides a brief update on STDF's activities and projects. Delegates are encouraged to visit the [STDF website](#) to view and become familiar with STDF activities and projects, download STDF briefing notes and other publications, and subscribe to STDF's mailing list to receive regular updates on its work.

2 UPCOMING AND RECENT STDF EVENTS

2.1. The STDF will organize a side event on **13 July 2023** on [gender mainstreaming](#) in the margins of the SPS Committee meeting. It will facilitate a discussion around the importance of gender equality for SPS compliance, the relevance of gender-responsive standards for the development and implementation of SPS capacity development, and the role of the STDF in mainstreaming gender to improve the results of SPS capacity development. The event is targeted at WTO Members with an interest in inclusive trade to ensure that trade benefits more people and supports the SDGs, including members of the SPS Committee. Delegates can register for this event on the STDF website [here](#).

2.2. In collaboration with the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), the STDF will organize a regional event on [electronic SPS certification](#) from **25-27 July 2023** in San José, Costa Rica. This two and a half-day event will bring together experts from all 34 IICA Member States to provide a platform to exchange lessons learned on electronic SPS certificates and discuss ways to pilot test a regional approach for the exchange of electronic veterinary/sanitary certificates.²

2.3. In collaboration with the African Union Commission (AUC), the AfCFTA Secretariat and other partners, the STDF will organize a two-day learning event to promote the use of [Good Regulatory Practices \(GRPs\)](#) to facilitate safe trade in Africa from **21-22 September 2023** in Accra, Ghana. The event will increase knowledge and skills on GRPs and promote dialogue among the public and private sector and civil society on immediate actions to improve the development and implementation of GRPs, in support of an accelerated implementation of the AfCFTA.³

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 More information about this event will soon be available at: <https://standardsfacility.org/events>.

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2.4. On **21 March 2023**, the STDF organized a workshop for SPS delegates to inform and support the work of Group 5 in implementing the [MC12 SPS Declaration](#), in close collaboration with the co-stewards (Australia and Ecuador) and other members of this group. Participants reflected on the role of the STDF partnership in building SPS capacity development to facilitate safe trade, heard about the results and impact of selected STDF projects, and took part in a discussion on broader lessons and experiences to strengthen national SPS systems. More information about this event, including the recording, is available [here](#).

2.5. On **13 June 2023**, the STDF hosted a [webinar](#) with [SSAFE](#), a global non-profit membership organization aimed at strengthening the safe supply and trade of food around the world through PPPs. More generally, the STDF promotes [PPP approaches](#) in building SPS capacity to leverage expertise and resources and support longer-term impact and sustainability. The STDF website includes several case [stories](#) of PPPs to strengthen SPS capacity, including STDF projects.

2.6. On **14-15 June 2023**, the [STDF Working Group](#) met in person in Geneva, chaired by Dr Gillian Mylrea from the World Organization for Animal Health (WOAH). STDF partners, donor organizations and beneficiaries from across agriculture, health, trade and development shared information on a wide range of ongoing and planned SPS initiatives and programmes and approved three new STDF projects and three project preparation grants (PPGs). The next meeting of the Working Group is scheduled on 21-23 November 2023.

3 STDF ANNUAL REPORT

3.1. STDF's 2022 Annual Report titled, "Adapting and Learning to Promote Safe" reflects on progress made in the implementation of STDF's five-year [Strategy](#) and illustrates how the STDF is intensifying learning on SPS capacity development in ways that produce stronger results with more impact. The report provides updates on various aspects of STDF's work, including gender, climate change, project results, knowledge work, communications, monitoring, evaluation and learning, as well as the financial situation of the STDF Trust Fund. The report will be issued by the end of June 2023 and available on the [STDF website](#).

4 GENDER MAINSTREAMING

4.1. The STDF recently adopted a Gender Action Plan to ensure a more systematic and coherent approach to gender mainstreaming in STDF's work, following an [external assessment](#) in 2022 of how gender equality is addressed in STDF's work. The Action Plan has two main objectives: (i) to advance and support women's capacity to meet trade related SPS requirements; and (ii) to promote increased attention to gender mainstreaming in SPS capacity development work led by members of STDF's partnership and other organizations. The Action Plan will be accompanied by a set of guidelines to provide practical support to mainstream gender in STDF project cycles for improved results and sustainability.⁴

5 PRIORITIZING SPS INVESTMENTS FOR MARKET ACCES

5.1. The STDF promotes an evidence-based approach to prioritize SPS investments for market access ([P-IMA](#)) and to inform and improve SPS planning and decision making. This approach is being applied in STDF and other projects, resulting in additional SPS investments and market access for targeted agri-food products. In 2023, the STDF published an updated [P-IMA Guide](#), which provides an introduction to the P-IMA framework and guidance on how to use it, including practical examples, experiences and lessons from developing countries. A [P-IMA Facilitators Handbook](#) is also available, providing detailed, step-by-step guidance on how to apply P-IMA, including in virtual environments. Both documents are also available in [French](#) and [Spanish](#).

6 MONITORING, EVALUATION AND LEARNING

6.1. The STDF uses a [Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning \(MEL\) Framework](#) to track progress in terms of achieving results, providing feedback on the management of the Facility and to distil, learn from and communicate key experiences and lessons across STDF's work programme. This framework

⁴ The Gender Action Plan and accompanying guidelines will soon be available on the STDF website: <https://standardsfacility.org/>.

is accompanied by a new [Guidance Document](#) for project implementing partners, which includes information about LogAlto, STDF's web-based monitoring and evaluation tool to facilitate results-based management.

6.2. Selected STDF projects are subject to independent ex-post impact evaluations. Two evaluations were completed in 2023.

- a. The [evaluation](#) of the "ePhyto" project ([STDF/PG/504](#)) determined that the ePhyto Solution was successfully implemented and resulted in a number of SPS capacity, trade facilitation, and environmental benefits.
- b. The [evaluation](#) of a regional project benefiting the member countries of the Southern Cone Plant Health Committee (COSAVE) found increased capacity to implement phytosanitary measures that in turn facilitated trade ([STDF/PG/502](#)).

6.3. The STDF partnership and programme is evaluated every five years by an independent evaluator. The next evaluation is scheduled to start in September 2023. The STDF Secretariat will provide an update on the status of this process to the Committee in due course. All previous evaluations of the STDF programme are available [here](#).

7 STDF FUNDING

7.1. The STDF provides funding for the development and implementation of collaborative and innovative SPS projects. Since its inception, the STDF has devoted 64% of its project resources to Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Other Low-Income Countries (OLICs), going beyond its target to devote at least 40% of its resources to these countries. Of all STDF projects, 49% has benefited Africa, 25% to Asia-Pacific and 17% to Latin America-Caribbean. 9% of all STDF projects are classified as global, benefiting all developing countries. An overview of all on-going project and project preparation grants is provided in [Annex 1](#).

7.1 New project and PPG application forms

7.2. With a view to enhance the overall quality of project and PPG applications, and to clarify and simplify the application process, the STDF revised its application forms in May 2023. The new templates (for [PPGs](#) and for [Project Grants](#)) are available on STDF's website.

7.2 Project development

7.3. The STDF provides advice and support 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 STDF or other donors. Since its inception, the STDF has approved a total of 127 PPG applications.

7.3 Project implementation

7.4. The STDF also finances [projects](#) that promote compliance with international SPS standards and requirements. Preference is given to projects that: (i) identify, develop and disseminate good practices in SPS-related technical cooperation, including the development and application of innovative and replicable approaches; (ii) apply regional and cross-cutting approaches to address SPS constraints; and (iii) implement collaborative approaches across food safety, animal and plant health, and trade. Beneficiaries must contribute to STDF projects 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. Since its inception, the STDF has approved 117 project applications.

7.4 How to apply for funding?

7.5. 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. The next deadline for the submission of applications is on **11 August 2023** (for consideration in November 2023). Further information on the system, eligibility criteria, etc. is available on the [STDF website](#).

RECOMMENDED STEPS TO APPLY FOR FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES WITH THE STDF

- 1. Browse the [funding webpage](#) for information (aims, eligibility criteria, etc.) on PPGs and PGs.**
- 2. View examples of previous projects:**
 - PPGs: <http://www.standardsfacility.org/projectpreparationgrants>
 - PGs: <http://www.standardsfacility.org/projectgrants>
- 3. Consult relevant stakeholders in the country/region**
- 4. Send a brief concept note of your potential project for comments to: STDFSecretariat@wto.org**
- 5. Fill out an application form and submit it electronically before the deadline to: stdf.funding@wto.org**

ANNEX 1

ONGOING STDF PROJECTS AND PROJECT PREPARATION GRANTS (PPGS)

1 COUNTRY PROJECTS AND PPGS

Country	STDF reference and hyperlink	Project / PPG name
Bangladesh	STDF/PPG/831	Prioritizing SPS Investment in Bangladesh
Bhutan	STDF/PPG/734	Strengthening Bhutan's border inspection and control capacities
Burkina Faso	STDF/PPG/859	strengthening Burkina Faso's sesame and cashew export capacity
Burundi	STDF/PPG/773	Assessing SPS needs in the Burundian horticultural sector
Cabo Verde	STDF/PPG/869	Strengthening food safety control capacities in Cabo Verde
Ecuador	STDF/PPG/709	prioritizing SPS investments in Ecuador using the P-IMA tool
Egypt	STDF/PPG/720	Establishing an avian influenza-free compartment in Egypt
Grenada	STDF/PG/880	enhancing SPS capacity and market access for Grenadian soursop exports
Guinea	STDF/PG/498	strengthening Guinea's phytosanitary system
India	STDF/PG/517	Strengthening the spice value chain in India to improve market access
Indonesia	STDF/PPG/860	Reducing histamines in pole and line caught tuna in Indonesia
Jamaica	STDF/PG/759	Enhancing food safety capacity of the pepper value chain in Jamaica to increase market access
Kyrgyz Republic	STDF/PG/569	Enhancing food safety of fruits and vegetables in Kyrgyzstan
Mali	STDF/PG/611	Improving the safety of smoked fish in Mali
Nigeria	STDF/PPG/817	Phytosanitary Capacity Evaluation (PCE) to improve the plant health system in Nigeria
Papua New Guinea	STDF/PG/553	Enhancing trade for cocoa farmers in Papua New Guinea
Senegal	STDF/PG/672	Improving shellfish safety in Senegal to boost market access
Sri Lanka	STDF/PPG/721	Strengthening food safety and quality compliance in select Sri Lankan spices
Uganda	STDF/PPG/847	Sustainably managing aflatoxins in maize using systems approach in Uganda
Uganda	STDF/PPG/846	Comparing post-harvest technologies for Uganda's fresh fruits and vegetables to reduce pests
Zambia	STDF/PPG/789	Building phytosanitary capacity of cross-border traders in Zambia
Ghana	STDF/PPG/909	Improving food safety and market access in Ghana's spice value chain
The Gambia	STDF/PPG/921	Scaling up the P-IMA tool in The Gambia
Nigeria	STDF/PG/845	Improving SPS compliance to boost Nigeria's export capacity

2 REGIONAL PROJECTS AND PPGS

Region/countries	STDF reference and hyperlink	Project / PPG name
<i>Africa</i>		
Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda	STDF/PG/807	Managing scale insects in fresh fruits in East Africa
Botswana, Kenya, Mozambique, South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe	STDF/PG/694	Harmonizing regulations and mitigating pesticide residues in the SADC region
Burundi, Ethiopia, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Rwanda, South Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe	STDF/PG/809	Managing invasive potato pests in Eastern and Southern Africa
Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Niger, Mali, Senegal, Togo	STDF/PPG/770	Using digital tools to facilitate safe food trade in West Africa
Eswatini, Lesotho, Namibia, South Africa	STDF/PPG/765	Mobilizing food safety laboratories in Southern Africa
Mozambique, South Africa	STDF/PG/567	Establishing fruit fly-free areas in Southern Africa
Rwanda, Uganda	STDF/PG/842	Piloting a vTPA programme in East Africa to improve food safety in horticulture and fisheries
Cameroon, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Gabon, Equatorial Guinea, Chad	STDF/PG/768	Harmonizing the phytosanitary legislative framework in Central Africa
Benin, Burkina Faso, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Niger, Senegal, Togo, Guinea and Côte d'Ivoire	STDF/PG/770	Digitalizing accreditation and conformity assessment systems in West Africa
<i>Asia and Pacific</i>		
Bangladesh, India, Iran, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Pakistan, Philippines, Samoa, Thailand	STDF/PPG/858	Piloting One Health to manage aflatoxin in Asia
Bangladesh, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Nepal, Sri Lanka	STDF/PG/634	Mitigating pesticide residue through promotion of biopesticides in Asia
Bangladesh, Cambodia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Nepal, Philippines, Thailand, Viet Nam	STDF/PG/755	Strengthening phytosanitary compliance to boost seed trade in the Asia Pacific
Cambodia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Viet Nam	STDF/PG/619	Safer spices: boosting food safety and market access for the peppercorn value chain
Cambodia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Philippines, Viet Nam	STDF/PG/798	Improving biosecurity and control of African Swine Fever in four ASEAN countries
Niue, Cook Islands, Samoa, Fiji, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, Papua New Guinea and Tonga	STDF/PPG/935	Advancing apiculture for economic development in the Pacific Islands
<i>Latin America and Caribbean</i>		
Argentina, Bolivia, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Peru	STDF/PG/753	Mitigating chemical residues in Latin America through the promotion of biopesticides
Argentina, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Peru	STDF/PG/716	Improving food safety risk analysis capacity in Latin America
Belize, Honduras	STDF/PG/682	Piloting the use of vTPA in Central America
Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru	STDF/PG/838	Strengthening regional pest surveillance on banana farms in the ANDEAN community

Region/countries	STDF reference and hyperlink	Project / PPG name
CARICOM countries	STDF/PPG/733	Prioritizing SPS investments in the Caribbean using the P-IMA tool
Colombia, Ecuador, Peru (and Trinidad and Tobago)	STDF/PG/577	Coordinating management of cadmium levels in cocoa in Latin America and the Caribbean
Colombia, Ecuador	STDF/PG/681	Mitigating high levels of cadmium in cacao in Colombia and Ecuador
Dominican Republic, Haiti	STDF/PG/751	Strengthening the phytosanitary and food safety system in key value chains
<i>Global</i>		
All developing countries	STDF/PPG/782	Applying remote food safety inspection practices for improved trade