



**Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures**

**UPDATE ON THE STANDARDS AND TRADE DEVELOPMENT FACILITY**

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

**1 INTRODUCTION**

1.1. The Standards and Trade Development Facility (STDF) 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 partnership for dialogue and learning on SPS capacity development.

1.2. The STDF identifies good practice in thematic areas that cut across food safety, animal and plant health, and trade, drawing on the input of STDF partners, donor organizations and beneficiaries. Outputs include practical and user-friendly knowledge products (briefing notes, publications, events, videos, etc.), available in English, French and Spanish. The STDF is housed and managed by the WTO.

1.3. STDF partners, relevant organizations and beneficiaries from across agriculture, health, trade and development come together in the [STDF Working Group](#) to share information on ongoing and planned SPS initiatives and programmes, and review applications for new project and project preparation grants. The next meeting will be held on 21-22 November 2023 and chaired by Dr Gillian Mylrea (WOAH). In 2024, the STDF meetings will be chaired by Sarah Brunel (IPPC).

1.4. 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's work, download briefing notes and other publications, and subscribe to STDF's mailing list.

**2 GOOD REGULATORY PRACTICE**

2.1. The STDF promotes the use of [Good Regulatory Practices](#) (GRPs), i.e., processes and tools to help improve the quality and effectiveness of SPS measures so that they achieve the expected policy outcome(s). Using GRPs improves compliance with the SPS Agreement, including greater alignment with international standards. STDF's [GRP Guide](#) provides a practical handbook for SPS regulators from developing countries in using GRPs when designing, developing, and reviewing SPS measures.

2.2. On 21-22 September 2023, the STDF, in collaboration with the African Union Commission, the Secretariat of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), organized a two-day [learning event](#) in Accra, Ghana, to promote the use of GRPs in Africa. The event enhanced participants' knowledge and skills on GRPs and facilitated a dialogue across the public and private sector on actions to improve the development and implementation of SPS measures.

**3 PRORITIZING SPS INVESTMENTS**

3.1. To inform and improve SPS planning and decision making, the STDF developed an evidence-based framework that developing countries can use to prioritize SPS investments for market access ([P-IMA](#)). The approach is being applied in STDF and other SPS projects, resulting in additional SPS investments and market access for targeted agri-food products. The latest [P-IMA Guide](#) provides an

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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.

introduction to the P-IMA framework, 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.

3.2. The STDF is currently carrying out an external evaluation of the P-IMA framework to: (i) assess how and to what effect this STDF work has delivered results and impacts; (ii) identify key findings, conclusions, and recommendations to inform and improve any ongoing/future work on P-IMA; and (iii) draw lessons to strengthen future STDF knowledge work in other areas. The report will be presented at the next STDF Working Group meeting on 21-22 November 2023.

#### 4 GENDER MAINSTREAMING

4.1. At a [side event](#) on 13 July 2023 during the SPS Committee week, the STDF launched a [Gender Action Plan](#) to ensure a more systematic and coherent approach to gender mainstreaming in STDF's work. The plan aims to: (i) advance and support women's capacity to meet trade related SPS requirements; and (ii) promote increased attention to gender mainstreaming in SPS capacity development work led by members of STDF's partnership and other organizations. The plan is accompanied by a set of guidelines to provide practical support to mainstream gender in STDF project cycles for improved results and sustainability.

4.2. In partnership with UNCTAD's Trade and Gender Development Unit, the STDF will organize an event during [UNCTAD's eWeek 2023](#) on 6 December 2023 titled "Trade Regulations in the Digital Environment: Is there a gender component?".<sup>2</sup>

#### 5 E-CERTIFICATION

5.1. Together with the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), the STDF organized a [regional event](#) from 25-27 July 2023 in San José, Costa Rica. The event brought together experts from all 34 IICA Member States and provided a platform for participants to exchange lessons on electronic SPS certificates and discuss ways to pilot test a regional approach for the exchange of electronic veterinary/sanitary certificates.

5.2. During [WTO's Public Forum 2023](#) on 14 September 2023, the STDF and the Global Alliance for Trade Facilitation (GATF) organized a [learning event](#) titled "Accelerating e-cert Adoption". On 5 December 2023, the STDF will join a [session](#) on "Enhancing Trade and Traceability in Agri-Food supply Chain through SPS Electronic Certification", organized by the OECD, again during [UNCTAD's eWeek 2023](#).

#### 6 CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENT

6.1. In November 2023, the STDF will issue a new briefing note titled "Strengthening SPS systems to mitigate and adapt to climate change", which builds on the webinars organized during STDF's [climate change](#) week in 2022. In addition, during [COP28](#) in Dubai, the STDF plans to organize an event in the Trade House Pavilion on 10 December 2023 (Food, Agriculture and Water day) titled "Climate change, sustainable agri-food systems and markets: Why we need more robust SPS systems".<sup>3</sup>

6.2. The STDF will soon start an external evaluation to assess and learn how (and to what effect) the environment, biodiversity and climate change have been integrated across work carried out by the STDF, as well as SPS capacity development work led by STDF partners and other members. The report will draw key findings, conclusions, and recommendations to improve mainstreaming of the environment, biodiversity, and climate change into SPS capacity development work in the future.

#### 7 PROMOTING REGIONAL TRADE IN AFRICA

7.1. On 17 October 2023, the Food Trade Coalition for Africa, housed at AGRA, and the STDF organized a joint [webinar](#) on good practices needed to boost intra-regional trade and facilitate access

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<sup>2</sup> More information on this STDF event will soon be available on [STDF's website](#).

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to safe food in Africa. The webinar disseminated the conclusions, findings and recommendations of a joint [Policy Brief](#), developed by the Food Trade Coalition for Africa and the STDF.

## 8 EXTERNAL EVALUATION

8.1. The STDF programme is evaluated every five years by an independent evaluator. The latest evaluation started in September 2023 and will be completed in the first quarter of 2024. The purpose of the evaluation is to objectively assess the results and impact achieved by the STDF, based on the OECD DAC criteria, and capture key lessons learned. The Secretariat will continue to update the Committee on this evaluation. All previous evaluations of the STDF programme are available [here](#).

## 9 STDF FUNDING

9.1. 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). Of all STDF projects, 49% have benefited Africa, 25% the Asia-Pacific region and 17% the Latin America-Caribbean region, while 9% are classified as global, benefiting all developing countries. An overview of all on-going project and project preparation grants (PPGs) is provided in [Annex 1](#).

### 9.1 Project development

9.2. [PPGs](#), normally up to US\$50,000, are available to help beneficiaries 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.

### 9.2 Project implementation

9.3. The STDF funds [projects](#) that promote compliance with international standards and requirements. Preference is given to projects that: (i) identify, develop and disseminate good practice in SPS technical cooperation, including 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).

### 9.3 How to apply for funding?

9.4. 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 **1 March 2024** (for consideration in June 2024). Further information 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](mailto:STDFSecretariat@wto.org)
5. Fill out an application form and submit it electronically before the deadline to: [stdf.funding@wto.org](mailto:stdf.funding@wto.org)

## ANNEX 1

## ONGOING STDF PROJECT AND PROJECT PREPARATION GRANTS (PPGS)

## 1 COUNTRY PROJECTS AND PPGS

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

## 2 REGIONAL PROJECTS AND PPGS

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

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