



PRESS RELEASE

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

The Netherlands gives CHF 1.3 million to boost developing countries' access to food markets

The Netherlands is extending its partnership with the Standards and Trade Development Facility (STDF), committing CHF 1.3 million to help agricultural producers in developing and least developed countries (LDCs) seize new trade opportunities by complying with international food safety, animal and plant health standards. This contribution will be distributed over two years, starting in 2023.

WTO Director-General Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala said: "Complying with international health and safety standards is an ongoing challenge for farmers in developing countries. This limits their opportunities to benefit from trade. Climate change is making compliance even harder, as rising temperatures increase food safety risks and expand the spread of animal diseases and plant pests. This donation from the Netherlands will help developing countries improve their sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) capacity and facilitate safe trade."

The Netherlands' Deputy Permanent Representative to the WTO, Marcel Vernooij, said: "We are pleased to extend our partnership with the WTO. As an agricultural and a trading nation, the Netherlands is committed to strengthening food security and building sustainable food systems worldwide. The Standards and Trade Development Facility is increasingly recognized as providing unique and excellent support to strengthening the food safety systems of developing countries and to enhancing cross-border trade of agricultural and food products. Especially at this current time, strengthening regional food systems is essential."

The STDF will use the contribution from the Netherlands to pilot innovative SPS capacity development projects across Africa, Asia-Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean and to build SPS expertise that contributes to safeguarding local public health and facilitating safe trade.

The support will enable the STDF's global partnership to deliver results and achieve SPS improvements in the remaining two years of the current strategy. For instance, in 2023 the STDF will commission an external assessment to learn how the environment, biodiversity and climate change are addressed in SPS compliance projects with the aim of improving future work.

Overall, the Netherlands has contributed close to CHF 4.1 million to the STDF since 2018, including this latest contribution.

Developing and least developed countries are encouraged to apply to the STDF for SPS project and project preparation grants. The next deadline for submission of funding proposals is 24 February 2023. Information on how to apply is available [here](#).

To date, the STDF has funded more than 240 projects benefiting LDCs and other developing countries.

The STDF is a global multi-stakeholder partnership to facilitate safe and inclusive trade, established by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations, the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH), the World Bank Group, the World Health Organization (WHO) and the WTO, which houses and manages the partnership.

The STDF responds to evolving needs, drives inclusive trade and contributes to sustainable economic growth, food security and poverty reduction, in support of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals.

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