



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. Guided by a five-year [Strategy \(2020-2024\)](#), it operates as a funding mechanism and global platform for dialogue, learning and good practice on SPS capacity development. In 2023, the STDF Working Group, which convenes all STDF partners, donor organizations and beneficiaries from across agriculture, health, trade and development, is chaired by Ms Gillian Mylrea from the World Organization for Animal Health (WOAH).

1.2. 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.

1.3. On **21 March 2023** (from 3 to 6pm, CET) the STDF will organize a workshop for SPS delegates, as part of the work of Group 5 working on implementation of the MC12 SPS Declaration, in close collaboration with the co-stewards (Australia and Ecuador) and other members of this group. This event will put a spotlight on selected STDF projects and facilitate a discussion on broader lessons and experiences. Moving forward, what would Members like to see happen to improve SPS capacity at the national and regional level? To join virtually, delegates are encouraged to register [here](#).

2 GOOD PRACTICE

2.1. The STDF identifies and promotes good practices to improve SPS capacity development outcomes focusing on thematic topics that cut across the areas of food safety, animal and plant health, and trade. This work draws on the input of all STDF partners, donor members and beneficiaries and aims to influence SPS capacity development work more broadly. 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.

2.1 Prioritization of SPS Investments for Market Access (P-IMA)

2.2. The STDF promotes an evidence-based approach to inform and improve SPS planning and decision making. It has developed a [framework](#), which is being applied in STDF and other projects, leading to additional SPS investments and generating market access for specific agri-food products. The STDF is currently conducting an external review of this framework to assess how (and to what effect) it has delivered results and wider impacts.

2.2 Good Regulatory Practices (GRPs)

2.3. The STDF promotes [GRPs](#), i.e., processes and tools to help improve the quality and effectiveness of SPS measures to protect human, animal, or plant life or health, without creating

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unnecessary barriers to trade. Using GRPs, such as internal coordination of regulation, stakeholder engagement or regulatory impact assessments, improves compliance with the SPS Agreement, including greater alignment with international standards. STDF's [GRP Guide](#) (also available in [French](#) and [Spanish](#)) provides a handbook for using GRPs when designing, developing, and reviewing SPS measures, to ensure that they are "fit for purpose".

2.3 Reducing trade costs

2.4. The increasing attention on [trade facilitation](#), as a means to stimulate economic growth and competitiveness, is generating a renewed focus on SPS measures, how they are applied to imports, exports and transit goods, and the extent to which SPS measures unnecessarily increase the costs of doing business. Implementation of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA), which applies to all border agencies, is key in this regard.

2.5. As part of this agenda, the STDF promotes and supports the transition to paperless SPS systems in developing countries, including the use of [electronic SPS certificates](#) (SPS e-cert), to improve traceability in SPS supply chains, cut trade times and costs, reduce fraudulent certificates, and build trust among trading partners. In 2022, [Madagascar](#) briefed the WTO LDC Sub-committee on the benefits of ePhyto implementation. An external evaluation of STDF's ePhyto project ([STDF/PG/504](#)) is currently underway, drawing key findings, recommendations and lessons relevant for future work in this area, including in for food safety and veterinary certification.

2.4 Public Private Partnerships (PPPs)

2.6. The STDF promote [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. The STDF recently hosted a webinar showcasing experiences in [Tanzania](#) where the Ministry of Agriculture, based on a Memorandum of Understanding, has delegated responsibility for selected plant health inspection services to GreenCert, a subsidiary company under the Tanzania Horticulture Association (TAHA).

3 FUNDING

3.1. The STDF provides funding for the development and implementation of collaborative and innovative SPS projects. Since its inception, the STDF has devoted 65% 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, 48% has benefited Africa, 25% to Asia-Pacific, 18% to Latin America-Caribbean, and 9% to other regions (Middle East and Europe). 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](#).

3.1 Project development

3.2. 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 124 PPG applications.

3.2 Project implementation

3.3. 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 practice 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 114 projects applications.

3.3 How to apply for funding?

3.4. 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 **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. Carefully read the [Guidance Note for Applicants](#)
4. Consult relevant stakeholders in the country/region
5. Send a brief concept note of your potential project for comments to: STDFSecretariat@wto.org
6. Fill out an application form and submit it electronically before the deadline:
 - PPGs: https://wto.formstack.com/forms/ppg_application
 - PGs: https://wto.formstack.com/forms/pg_application

4 MONITORING, EVALUATION AND LEARNING

4.1. The STDF Strategy is accompanied by a [Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning \(MEL\) Framework](#) to track progress in terms of achieving results, provide feedback on the management of the Facility and to distil, learn from and communicate key experiences and lessons across STDF's work programme.

4.2. In December 2022, the STDF published a report, which evaluates how (and to what effect) [gender equality](#) is addressed and mainstreamed in STDF's work. The report also draws key findings, conclusions and practical recommendations for improving gender mainstreaming in the future. A gender action plan is currently being developed to implement the recommendations.

4.3. In 2023, the STDF will initiate a cross-cutting assessment of STDF's work focused on the environment (including biodiversity, invasive species and climate change) to learn how to address environmental aspects more effectively in STDF projects and SPS capacity development more broadly.

4.4. The STDF programme is evaluated every five years. The latest [evaluation](#) was conducted in 2018-2019. The next evaluation is scheduled to commence in September 2023 and will be structured around the OECD/DAC criteria of relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and impact.

ANNEX 1**ONGOING STDF PROJECTS AND PROJECT PREPARATION GRANTS (PPGS)****1 COUNTRY PROJECTS AND PPGS**

Country	STDF reference and hyperlink	Project / PPG name
Armenia	STDF/PPG/761	Applying the P-IMA framework to promote export of agricultural products
Bangladesh	STDF/PPG/831	Prioritizing SPS Investment in Bangladesh
Bhutan	STDF/PPG/734	Improved border inspection and control of plant, animal and related products for biosecurity and food safety
Burkina Faso	STDF/PPG/859	Enhancing sesame & cashew nuts exports in Burkina Faso
Burundi	STDF/PPG/773	SPS needs assessment for private and public actors in the Burundian horticultural sector
Cabo Verde	STDF/PPG/869	Strengthening food safety control capacities in Cabo Verde
Ecuador	STDF/PPG/709	Applying the P-IMA framework
Egypt	STDF/PPG/720	Assessing the Establishment of a HPAI Free Compartment in Egypt
Ghana	STDF/PPG/786	Using evidence for aflatoxin control in Ghana
Grenada	STDF/PG/880	Improving SPS capacity for Soursop exports in Grenada
Guinea	STDF/PG/498	Strengthening the phytosanitary system in Guinea
India	STDF/PG/517	Strengthening the spice value chain and improving market access
Indonesia	STDF/PPG/860	Reducing histamines in Pole-and-Line and Handline caught Tuna in Indonesia
Jamaica	STDF/PG/759	Ensuring food safety capacity of the pepper value chain in Jamaica to access strategic export markets
Kyrgyz Republic	STDF/PG/569	Enhancing capacity for food safety management in the fruit and vegetable industry
Mali	STDF/PG/611	Promotion of Codex standards and codes of practice particularly in the smoked fish industry
Nigeria	STDF/PPG/817	Phytosanitary Capacity Evaluation (PCE) to improve the plant health system in Nigeria
Papua New Guinea	STDF/PG/553	Expanding cocoa trade
Philippines	STDF/PPG/722	Piloting the use of Regulatory Impact Assessment in the agriculture and fisheries sector
Peru	STDF/PPG/767	Feasibility study on implementation of zoning as means to control infectious diseases in aquaculture in Peru
Senegal	STDF/PG/672	Meeting sanitary standards to improve the safety of shellfish and boost market access
Sri Lanka	STDF/PPG/721	Strengthening food safety and quality compliance in select Sri Lankan spices
Uganda	STDF/PG/543	Enhancing the capacity of the fruit and vegetable sector to comply with EU phytosanitary requirements
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 for small-scale cross-border traders in Zambia

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
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	Assessing the use of digital and it tools for food trade facilitation in West Africa
Botswana, Mozambique, South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Kenya	STDF/PG/694	Enhancing trade through regulatory harmonization and biopesticide-based residue mitigation in the SADC Region
Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon	STDF/PPG/768	Harmonizing phytosanitary legislation in Central Africa
Eswatini, Lesotho, Namibia, South Africa	STDF/PPG/765	An ISO 17025 accredited mobile laboratory for food safety testing in the SADC region
Mali, Senegal	STDF/PG/665	Piloting the use of voluntary third-party assurances (vtpas) in West Africa
Mozambique, South Africa	STDF/PG/567	Fruit fly free: pest-free and low prevalence areas to support fruit production and exports
Rwanda, Uganda	STDF/PG/842	Piloting a vTPA programme in East Africa to improve food safety in horticulture and fisheries
SADC member states	STDF/PPG/694	overcoming barriers to trade through regulatory harmonization and related research on biopesticides in the SADC Region
<i>Asia and Pacific</i>		
Bangladesh, India, Iran, Laos PDR, 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	Asia pesticide residue mitigation through the promotion of biopesticides and enhancement of trade opportunities
Bangladesh, Cambodia, Lao PDR, 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 pig biosecurity and African swine fever control
<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 pesticide residues in Latin America using biopesticide
Argentina, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Peru	STDF/PG/716	Improving capacity of food safety risk analysis Latin America
Belize, Honduras	STDF/PG/682	Piloting the use of Third-Party Assurance (TPA) Programme in Central America to improve food safety outcomes for public health and trade
Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru	STDF/PG/838	Strengthening regional pest surveillance, monitoring on banana farms in the Andean Community
CARICOM countries	STDF/PPG/733	Piloting the use of the P-IMA framework in the CARICOM region

Region/countries	STDF reference and hyperlink	Project / PPG name
Colombia, Costa Rica, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama	STDF/PPG/716	Food safety risk analysis capacity building in Latin America
Colombia, Ecuador, Peru (and Trinidad and Tobago)	STDF/PG/577	Improving coordination to support management of cadmium levels in cocoa in Latin America and the Caribbean
Colombia, Ecuador	STDF/PG/681	Mitigating trade barriers due to high cadmium levels in cacao
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	Remote inspection practices in food safety for improved trade

3 EVALUATIONS (ON-GOING)

Country(ies)	STDF reference and hyperlink	Project name
Argentina, Plurinational State of Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay	STDF/PG/502	Rolling out phytosanitary measures to expand market access
Developing countries	STDF/PG/504	ePhyto: Enhancing safe trade in plants and plant products