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Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures

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**INFORMATION ON SPS-RELATED RECENT AND FORTHCOMING ASSISTANCE AND
OTHER ACTIVITIES FROM THE INTERNATIONAL TRADE CENTRE (ITC)
(OCTOBER 2015 – MARCH 2016)**

The following communication, received on 14 March 2016, is being circulated at the request of the ITC.

The International Trade Centre is continuing its efforts to assist enterprises to meet technical requirements. An update of the SPS-related projects of interest to the WTO Members is provided herewith:

1 PROJECTS

1.1 STDF/PG/354: Improving Safety and Quality of Sri Lankan Fruits and Vegetables

1.1. This project is implemented by ITC in close collaboration with the Ceylon Chamber of Commerce and the Department of Agriculture. By the end of February 2016, 496 officers from the Plant Quarantine Office and Extension and Training Division and 70 officers from the Ministry of Health and Exporters, 150 Field Level Extension Officers, Processors and other relevant stakeholders / have been trained on SPS-related topics. More than 500 farmers from 13 different districts in Sri Lanka were trained on GAP, pest controls, harvest and post-harvest practices. In addition, four networking events were organized between October 2015 and January 2016, where farmers and exporters had the chance to meet and expand collaboration for their businesses. Two of the leading farmers and five exporters went on a study tour to Milan (Italy) in December 2015 to be exposed to the EU market requirements and establish contacts with potential buyers.

1.2. Under the project brochures on good hygienic practices, good agricultural practices, phytosanitary regulations and plant quarantine and food hazards are developed and distributed between the farmers. Development of the SOPs for the Plant Health Office is ongoing.

1.3. The website <http://www.spssrilanka.lk> is being updated with project related news and news on SPS information.

1.4. In the remaining two months of project implementation, an additional 100 farmers are due to be trained and more networking events will be organized to link farmers and exporters. In collaboration with ITC Trade for Sustainable Development Programme (T4SD), the project will pilot the Global Blue Numbers Initiative (a global registry for sustainable farmers) to Sri Lankan farmers.

1.5. The 16th edition of ITC's flagship event, the World Export Development Forum (WEDF), will be held in Colombo, Sri Lanka between 12-13 October 2016.

1.2 STDF 486 – Improving Food Safety and Compliance with SPS Measures to Increase Export Revenues in the Oilseeds Value Chain in Myanmar

1.6. The three-year project implemented by ITC, a close collaboration with the Ministry of Commerce, Department of Trade Promotion and Consumer Affairs, was officially launched on 19 October 2015 with a kick-off workshop. A baseline study to identify the food safety issues along

the value chain is conducted in the three target regions of the project. The report will be released by end-March and validated via a workshop with the participation of ministry representatives and beneficiaries. Oilseed sector public and private stakeholders benefited from the ITC/PTB workshops held in Yangon and Mandalay in January 2016 on export quality management.

1.3 Finland - Promoting Intra-Regional Trade in Eastern Africa–Kenya, Tanzania, Zambia

1.7. ITC is implementing an inclusive and sustainable export-led growth project in Kenya, Tanzania and Zambia aimed at improving the competitiveness of their producers, SMEs and Trade Support Institutions (TSIs). The project is due to end by June 2016. ITC is assisting TSIs to put into practice their advisory services related to food safety and quality, and to train local counsellors to assist enterprises to implement food safety systems based on HACCP.

- In Tanzania: training and coaching of 13 enterprises (honey, chilli, and mango) and ten counsellors on HACCP based on Codex, is ongoing. Between January and February 2016 a three-day workshop on internal verification followed by one-day HACCP documentation clinic and mock audit of enterprises were conducted;
- In Zambia: training and coaching programme on HACCP for ten counsellors and ten enterprises (honey) is ongoing. The third set of training on internal verification and mock audit was conducted in November 2015 and preparation for third-party certification is ongoing; and
- In Kenya: six enterprises producing mango and dry chilli are being assisted to implement HACCP based on Codex.

2 OTHER ITC PROJECTS, PUBLICATIONS OR INTERVENTIONS OF INTEREST

2.1 Export Quality Management (EQM) Publications and Workshops

2.1. In collaboration with Germany's national metrology institute (PTB) workshops on Export Quality Management were organized in Bangladesh, Jordan and Myanmar between November 2015 and January 2016 that enhanced the knowledge and skills needed by organizations to support SMEs in an effective way to improve quality management and comply with the prevailing market access requirements. Other workshops will follow in Palestine (16-17 March 2016), Kyrgyzstan and Egypt in May 2016.

2.2. A companion guide to the ITC/PTB "Export Quality Management: A guide for SMEs" namely "Managing Quality: A directory of services for SMEs" has been released for Jordan and Palestine, both in English and Arabic and available on the ITC website (<http://www.intracen.org/itc/exporters/quality-management/quality-publications-index/>).

2.3. This publication provides an overview of the country's national quality infrastructure that includes food safety and animal and plant health; it also provides contacts of quality-related service providers in the country.

2.2 Non-Tariff Measures (NTM) Programme

2.4. The programme aims to increase transparency and understanding of NTMs – in order to facilitate trade in the long-run. It helps countries to understand the non-tariff obstacles to trade faced by their business sector, and assists in defining strategies and solutions that meet their exporters' needs to speed up and ease cross-border trade.

2.5. New ITC NTM surveys have been launched in Comoros, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Kyrgyzstan, Nepal and Seychelles. These surveys, which are implemented in close collaboration with national authorities, will gather evidence on NTM-related obstacles from over 3,000 companies.

2.6. In addition a survey on NTMs experienced by exporters and importers in the European Union has been completed. Overall, 8,000 companies have been interviewed across the 28 EU countries. This survey has been implemented in collaboration with the European Commission (EC) to better

understand the EU companies' perspectives on sourcing from and exporting to developing countries.

2.7. On November 2015, ITC, together with its partners presented the results of a large-scale survey of Bangladeshi exporters and importers in Dhaka to officials from various ministries as well as representatives of trade support institutions and other stakeholders from the private and public sectors. ITC, in close collaboration with local stakeholders, is currently designing a project which would materialize the workshop's recommendations. Similar workshops are being organized for Benin, Jordan, Mali and the Philippines.

2.8. The ITC series on NTMs has been enriched by the cross-country study "Making regional integration work - Company perspectives on non-tariff measures in Arab States" and the country report "Regulatory and procedural barriers to trade in Kazakhstan". The next NTM survey reports will cover Indonesia, Thailand and Colombia. These reports can be accessed free of charge at <http://ntmsurvey.org/publications>.

2.9. For more information about the NTM project, please contact ntm@intracen.org.

2.3 Trade for Sustainable Development Programme

2.10. The Standards Map web tool, which is run by the Trade for Sustainable Development (T4SD) team at ITC, offers comprehensive information on voluntary standards. The platform recently passed a significant milestone as Standards Map now offers access to 200 standards that related to environmental and social/labour sustainability, food quality and safety issues. Users, especially producers of food products, are better equipped after going through the tool and completing self-assessments, with the knowledge of how their businesses meet quality standards. For more information, please visit the website on <http://www.standardsmap.org>.

2.11. The T4SD team also recently published – in cooperation with FiBL and IISD – The State of Sustainable Markets: Statistics and Emerging Trends 2015, the first global data report on fast-growing voluntary sustainability standards outlines the share of bananas, cocoa, coffee, cotton, forestry, palm oil, soybeans, cane sugar and tea across 14 major standards. See more at: <http://www.intracen.org/publication/The-State-of-Sustainable-Markets/>.

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