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**Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures**

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**INFORMATION ON SPS-RELATED ACTIVITIES OF  
THE INTERNATIONAL TRADE CENTRE (ITC)  
(NOVEMBER 2016 – MARCH 2017)**

The following communication, received on 21 March 2017, is being circulated at the request of the ITC.

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

**1 PROJECTS**

**1.1 Afghanistan: Trade-related support assistance**

1.1. A new three-year project funded by the European Union and implemented by ITC was launched in November 2016 in Kabul aiming to strengthen human and institutional capacities in trade policy, strategy formulation and implementation, with active engagement of the private sector. Quality management, SPS measures are amongst the focus areas of the project. The Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MoCI) is the main counterpart of this project; beneficiaries include among others the Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Health, National Standards Body and relevant sector associations.

1.2. The first consultation on the development of Afghanistan's National Export Strategy was held on 20-21 February in Kabul – a first step towards setting out trade priorities. The event provided an opportunity for more than 100 representatives from the public and private sector to explore challenges and opportunities for improving Afghanistan's trade performance and share their views on issues such as value-chain improvements, supply capacities, competitiveness and quality management and SPS.

1.3. As a first action on building awareness in the area of quality and SPS, a two-day workshop on the WTO SPS and TBT Agreements was held in Kabul on 15 and 18 February for more than 20 participants from the public and private sector.

**1.2 Myanmar: Improving Food Safety and Compliance with SPS Measures to Increase Export Revenues in the Oilseeds Value Chain (STDF 486) (August 2015 – August 2018)**

1.4. Under the project implemented by ITC in close collaboration with the Ministry of Commerce, the main activities carried out in the reporting period are as follows:

- At farm level: The 1<sup>st</sup> set of training and capacity building was conducted in January 2017. A 5-day ToT on GAP and SPS for 15 Extension Officers, four inception workshops in three regions for more than 400 farmers, buyers, and representatives of institutions. Initial clusters of farmers have been established;
- At collector level: The 1<sup>st</sup> set of training and capacity building was conducted in December. Two one-day theoretical training on hygiene practices and documentation for the storage facilities and collectors were replicated in Mandalay and Magway regions. More than 30 collectors sensitised on Good Hygiene Practices (GHP), five Trainers-cum-Counsellors (TcCs) and ten Departments of Agriculture (DoA) trained;

- At processor level: The 1<sup>st</sup> set of capacity building programme on HACCP was provided to ten processors (sesame, groundnut and sunflower seeds and oil), ten Trainers-cum-Counsellors, eight Food and Drug Authority (FDA) officers. More than 100 stakeholders were sensitised on SPS and food safety in international trade. A total of seven training workshops, ten gap assessment visits of participating companies were conducted in November–December 2016;
- A mapping of the existing financial opportunities for beneficiaries was initiated together with identification of the main types of financial needs by ITC;
- Linkages with the market: a roundtable with a potential international buyer was facilitated on 22 November where the EU technical market requirements along with export opportunities were discussed. A booklet on the ten participating exporters profile was developed; and
- ITC project manager participated in the Myanmar country day on 2 February in Rome organised by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs for more than 250 representatives from public and private sector from Myanmar and Italy and made a presentation on the partnership opportunities in the oilseed sector. Brochures about the STDF project were distributed.

### **1.3 Finland: Promoting Intra-regional trade in Eastern Africa–Kenya, Tanzania, Zambia (ended in 2016)**

1.5. ITC implemented an inclusive and sustainable export-led growth project funded by the Government of Finland in Kenya, Tanzania and Zambia that contributed to improve the competitiveness of their producers, SMEs and Trade Support Institutions (TSIs). ITC assisted 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: 13 enterprises (honey, chilli, and mango) and ten counsellors built capacity on HACCP based on Codex. The third party certification on HACCP by the national standards Body (TBS) is on-going and at the moment four SMEs obtained certification;
- In Zambia: ten counsellors and ten enterprises (honey) built capacity on HACCP based on Codex. Five companies obtained certification by a third-party international certification body; and
- In Kenya: five enterprises producing mango and dry chilli made implemented HACCP based on Codex and are being audited by KEBS.

### **1.4 Netherlands Trust Fund (NTF III): Enhancing the export competitiveness of the avocado industry - Kenya (2014-2017)**

1.6. The project funded by the Government of the Netherlands through the Centre for the Promotion of Imports from developing countries (CBI) is assisting to: 1) increase the export capacity of exporting SMEs and farmer groups; 2) improve the capacity of beneficiary TSIs in providing services to SMEs; and 3) create and/or expand business linkages and technical partnerships/collaborations to ensure SMEs obtain contracts with new clients.

1.7. In the area of quality/SPS an in-depth capacity building programme enabled to establish ten farmers groups (average of 50 farmers each) and link them to ten exporters and train them to implement GLOBALGAP. Nine groups obtained third-party GLOBALGAP certification. Linkages with the Fit for Market programmes are established to support additional training and capacity building to the groups of farmers beyond the end of the NTF III project.

### **1.5 Netherlands Trust Fund – III: Inclusive Tourism Focussing on Kayah State, Myanmar (2014-2017)**

1.8. This project funded by the Government of the Netherlands through CBI aims to boost job creation and socioeconomic development in Kayah State through an inclusive tourism approach that benefits local communities and entrepreneurs. The project is implemented in partnership with the Ministry of Commerce, the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism, the Myanmar Tourism Association, public, private and civil society stakeholders in Kayah State.

1.9. As part of activities aimed at improving the local supply chain for the tourism industry, a pool of ten university students and 15 operators (hotels, restaurants and food and bottle water

producers) and market vendors are trained and assisted to implement hygiene practices and keep records.

### **1.6 Zimbabwe: Strengthening the national sanitary and phytosanitary institutional framework**

1.10. This project, funded by the European Union, aims to improve the SPS infrastructure in order to facilitate exports to the European Union and the neighbouring countries. As part of the activities planned three workshops were conducted during the reporting period:

- A workshop on Rules of Origin (RoO) was held on 9 September 2016 where 40 SMEs learnt about the methodological basis on which different RoO regimes are based, and associated concepts and provisions;
- A workshop on Risk-Based Official Controls was held on 26-30 September 2016; and
- A third workshop was held with the Ministry of SMEs and Cooperative Development, on the WTO TBT and SPS Agreements (11-12 October 2016) where 22 SME participated to clarify the main concepts related to standards and technical regulations (TBT/SPS), their importance, differences and relationship between these, and relevant information resources.

### **1.7 Supporting Indian Trade and Investment for Africa (SITA)**

1.11. This project, funded by DFID, aims to increase the value of business transactions between India and selected African countries with the ultimate objective to create jobs and income opportunities.

1.12. Five training events were held between 15 February – 8 March 2017, to improve food safety in Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda in the pulses, spices and sunflower seed oil sectors. These trainings provided participating small and medium-sized exporters with the practical aspects of implementing HACCP. Three new ITC guides outlining standards and technical regulations in the pulses, spices and sunflower sectors were provided to participating enterprises.

## **2 OTHER ACTIVITIES, PUBLICATIONS, OR INTERVENTIONS OF INTEREST**

### **2.1 Export Quality Management publications and workshops with PTB**

2.1. A Workshop is planned in Egypt, Cairo on 28-29 March 2017 with the objective to enhance the knowledge and skills needed by business support organisations to effectively support SMEs to improve quality management (including SPS) and comply with the prevailing market access requirements. On 30 March the booklet "Managing Quality in Egypt: A Directory of Services for SMEs" will be launched.

### **2.2 NTM programme update**

2.2. Survey status: To date (since 2010) NTM surveys have been carried out in 39 developing countries and the European Union implying interviews with over 28,000 exporters and importers; in 2017, Sudan will be added to the list of countries.

2.3. EU survey results were released in December 2016. The survey of over 8,000 companies across the 28 member States gives insights on obstacles to trade between the European Union and developing countries and a benchmark and point of comparison for survey results from other countries.

2.4. Compared with developing countries, much fewer companies report problems related to NTMs. However, for exporters who report NTM-related trade obstacles, SPS and TBT measures top the list of burdensome requirements.

2.5. We have recently published survey reports for Thailand, Indonesia and the European Union. The list of publications to be released in 2017 is substantive and includes both country publications (e.g., Bangladesh, Benin, Comoros, Mali, Nepal, Philippines) and regional publications (e.g., ECOWAS).

2.6. Information about regulations, including SPS and TBT measures is continuously being updated – recent updates include India and selected Arab States. ITC's Market Access Map contains NTM information for a total of 90 countries – additional are in the process of being added (e.g., Bangladesh).

2.7. In November 2016, WTO, UNDESA and ITC jointly launched ePing (<http://www.epingalert.org/en>). The system allows users (e.g., companies, enquiry points, trade support institutions) to receive alerts about SPS and TBT notifications for products and countries of their interest. To date, more than 1,500 users registered to the system. The three organisations are designing capacity building offers, particularly for enquiry points but also for other types of users.

2.8. Upcoming projects: in 2017, ITC will be implementing a regional trade obstacles alert mechanism in UEMOA. This will allow companies to report obstacles to intraregional trade, including issues related to market requirements, product certifications and recognition of documents.

Further information:

NTM-related publications, including country-specific survey reports, can be accessed free of charge at <http://www.intracen.org/publications/ntm>. Survey results are available in a more interactive format via <http://www.ntmsurvey.org>. For more information about ITC's NTM programme, please contact [ntm@intracen.org](mailto:ntm@intracen.org).

### **2.3 2017 World Export Development Forum (WEDF): Budapest, Hungary on 25-26 October 2017**

2.9. The theme of the 2017 flagship event of ITC, hosted by Hungary's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, will focus on "Trade – a Force for Good: Include, Innovate, Integrate". The two-day event will explore how trade can be a driver of inclusive growth and job creation focusing on small and medium enterprises (SMEs).

2.10. For more information on WEDF 2017, including the programme and registration, please visit <http://www.intracen.org/wedf>.

For more information, please contact:

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