



**INFORMATION ON SPS-RELATED ACTIVITIES OF
THE INTERNATIONAL TRADE CENTRE (ITC)
(MARCH - JUNE 2018)**

Revision

The following communication, received on 10 July 2018, 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 selected SPS-related activities of interest to the WTO Members is provided below.

1 PROJECTS

1.1 Afghanistan: Advancing Afghan Trade (August 2016 – July 2019 / Donor European Union)

1.1. This project aims to strengthen human and institutional capacities in trade policy, strategy formulation and implementation, including quality management and SPS measures.

1.2. The Ministry of Commerce and Industry is the main counterpart of this project. Beneficiaries include the Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Health, National Standards Body and relevant sector associations.

1.3. A National Export Strategy (NES) document was produced, with public and private sectors agreeing on the action plans for national and sector trade support strategies, including those for quality/SPS management and priority sectors (dried fruits and nuts, fresh fruits and vegetables, saffron, and non-food items). The NES was officially launched by President Ghani in June in Kabul after endorsement by Afghanistan's High Economic Council. The AAT project and collaboration with OIE facilitated by STDF is mentioned in the STDF 2017 annual report (<http://www.standardsfacility.org/annual-report-2017>).

1.4. Awareness and capacity building activities carried out at various workshops relate to:

- *Strengthening TBT and SPS NEPs and the National Notification Authority (NNA)*: A baseline of NNA and NEPs collected via four questionnaires; concept note for a series of video seminars and twinning programmes developed jointly with WTO SPS and TBT Secretariats. First half-day video conference with WTO organised for 25 participants on 7 May but not completed due to internet problems. Discussion initiated with Canada for twinning project;
- *Training Attachment of Food Safety Officials at Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI)*: Concept note developed to sensitize stakeholders on different mechanism of food control authorities in different countries. In collaboration with the Food Safety Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) training agenda developed for eight Afghan high level officials on food control and selection of participants is ongoing;
- *Piloting value chain activities in the saffron sector*: Ongoing follow up with a lead processor/buyer in Italy and various service providers and Afghan stakeholders to activate

partnerships; booklet and database on saffron mandatory, voluntary and buyer's requirements in India, China, European Union under finalization;

- *Metrology*: Three-week training on mass, volume, length and calibration of metrology for three ANSA laboratory technicians; offsite advisory services ongoing to make parameter for metrology operational (1-18 May 2018, India); follow up and advisory service to review the law on legal metrology ongoing.

1.2 Myanmar: Improving food safety and compliance with SPS measures to increase export revenues in the oilseeds value chain (August 2015 – August 2018 - extended till January 2019 / STDF 486)

1.5. Under this project, implemented in close collaboration with the Ministry of Commerce,

- A second company obtained third party ISO 22000 certification as part of the ongoing food safety system implementation in 11 SMEs, under training and coaching of 11 local trainers, with more companies aiming to achieve the same;
- Regular monthly training being provided to more than 300 Farmers in three regions to implement Good Agricultural Practices by trained trainers; contracts facilitated between with buyers and farmers. Safety kits were distributed to farmers;
- A series of workshops have been conducted to develop a manual on quality control at the collection centres.

1.6. The project's social media page (<http://www.facebook.com/itcoilseedsmyanmar>) reached more than 1200 followers. The project is featured in the STDF 2017 annual report (<http://www.standardsfacility.org/annual-report-2017>).

1.3 Sri Lanka: Feasibility study for value addition in the fruit and vegetable sector (1 October 2017 - 30 October 2018 / STDF PPG 576)

1.7. A Project Preparation Grant (PPG) entitled "Development of feasibility study for value addition in the Fruit and vegetable sector of Sri Lanka" is implemented by ITC in close collaboration with the Lanka Fruit and Vegetable Producers, Processors and Exporters Association (LFVPPEA), and supported by public and private sector stakeholders.

1.8. The purpose of the PPG is to:

- i. carry out a feasibility study to evaluate the technical, economic and operational feasibility of value addition of five export crops (pineapple, papaya, banana, mango and passionfruit); and
- ii. develop a five year strategic plan and a short-term operations plan for the LFVPPEA.

1.9. The study continued with a second mission of an ITC international expert, and will be finalised based on the inputs from the study tour to Italy and the discussion with potential partners/buyers in the dehydrated fruit value chain. 14 exporters participated in the study tour in June 2018 (at their own cost) and were exposed to inspection, certification, processing, packaging, bio production, cooperative structure and links with markets. The development of the strategy for LFVPPEA is ongoing with analysis of the survey and initial consultation workshops among members.

1.4 Myanmar: Inclusive tourism development with focus on Kayah state (consolidation) & Tanintharyi (extension) (NTF IV) (1 December 2017 – 30 June 2021 / Donor Netherlands)

1.10. The NTF IV Myanmar project is part of the Netherlands Trust Fund IV /NTF IV programme. The purpose of the fourth Netherlands Trust Fund Programme (NTF IV) is to increase the competitiveness of producers and exporters in selected sectors within priority developing countries. NTF IV Myanmar builds on the results of "NTF III Myanmar - Inclusive Tourism focusing on Kayah state" by expanding tourism product development to an additional state of Myanmar (Tanintharyi) and further consolidating the achieved results at national and Kayah state level.

1.11. The Intermediate Outcome three aims at increasing the competitiveness of SME owners and local providers of tourism products and services. The project will consolidate the results achieved in Kayah state under NTF III and develop one new destination (Tanintharyi). The quality of services (e.g. local communities, local and regional guides, ground-handlers, hotels, restaurants) will be enhanced in both states with particular focus on food quality and safety. Five trainers-cum-counsellors previously trained under NTF III on hygiene are now coaching operators and sensitizing on food safety. Videos are available on the project's Facebook page (Myanmar inclusive tourism project with special focus on Kayah State (ITC)).

1.5 Tajikistan: Enabling market access for agricultural products through improved food safety system (STDF) (March 2018 – 2021 - STDF PG/447)

1.12. The project aims to improve the export competitiveness of Tajik Small and Medium-Sized enterprises and food safety through better use of agri-chemicals and veterinary medicines with focus on apricots and honey sector.

1.13. Through an Agreement being finalized, ITC is partnering with FAO for the implementation of activities in particular related to output 1 "Regulatory and control system for use of agri-chemicals and veterinary medicines established and operational". The first activity under development is the implementation of the baseline collection in conjunction with collection of data related to laboratories and access to finance.

1.6 The Gambia: Youth Empowerment Project (YEP) (January 2017 – December 2020 / Donor European Union)

1.14. To generate employment among youth, ITC is supporting improved compliance of Gambian products to international standards and market requirements, including in the food and agriculture sectors. Following training of 20 youth trainers on Food Safety and Good Hygienic Practices (GHP), further training on Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points is being conducted, with the participation of enterprises. Company visits have been organized to carry out on-site training and diagnostic assessments. It is intended that the trainers pilot HACCP and GHP with enterprises.

1.7 Sudan: WTO Accession (March 2018 - February 2019/ Donor Japan)

1.15. In support of the accession of Sudan to the WTO, ITC is helping the operationalization of designated National Notification Authority and National Enquiry Point for SPS through development of operating procedures and guidance to apply the procedures. Help to formalize a national SPS coordination committee will also be provided.

1.8 Support to the Facilitation of Trade between CEFTA Parties (January 2017 – December 2019/ Donor European Union)

1.16. ITC supports the parties of the Central European Free Trade Area (CEFTA) to increase trade and competitiveness in the region. With the aim to reduce and eventually remove the most distortive non-tariff measures for priority products, of particular economic relevance for the region, ITC has carried out an in-depth diagnostic study of all CEFTA parties in order to understand quality-related barriers and challenges to trade in the region. In April/May 2018, ITC has identified and analysed standards, technical regulations and TBT/SPS measures applicable to various vegetable value chains in all CEFTA parties. Follow-up measures are currently under scrutiny.

1.9 Burundi Market Access Upgrade Programme (MARKUP) (July 2018 – June 2022/ Donor European Union)

1.17. ITC will be implementing a new project to enhance quality infrastructure services to support compliance with SPS measures and technical regulations in Burundi, with particular focus on coffee and tea sectors. The project will focus on strengthening the national quality infrastructure framework, inspection and certification services, and quality-related extension services; improving laboratory testing capacities for coffee/tea.

1.18. The project launch mission is scheduled for September 2018 and will include assessment and stock-taking of current developments in the national quality infrastructure.

2 OTHER SPS-RELATED ACTIVITIES

2.1 SPS Committee thematic workshop on control, inspection and approval procedures (ANNEX C), 10 July 2018, Geneva

2.1. ITC Trade Facilitation and Policy for Business section participated in the roundtable discussion, session 5 "*Opportunities to mobilize resources for SPS capacity building to support the implementation of Annex C*". ITC shared its integrated approach for technical assistance and capacity building to build safe and efficient trade. The unit brings the expertise of the ITC Trade Facilitation and the Quality for Trade teams.

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