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Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures

UPDATE ON THE STANDARDS AND TRADE DEVELOPMENT FACILITY

NOTE BY THE SECRETARIAT¹

This document provides a brief update on the work of the Standards and Trade Development Facility (STDF) since the last meeting of the Committee in July 2019. Delegates are encouraged to visit the STDF website to view and learn from STDF activities and projects, download STDF briefing notes and other publications, and subscribe to STDF's mailing list to receive regular updates on STDF work (<http://www.standardsfacility.org>).

1 EXTERNAL EVALUATION OF THE STDF

1.1. An independent external evaluation of the STDF was carried out by Nathan Associates from September 2018 to July 2019, with a particular focus on the impact and results achieved by the STDF during the period 2014 to 2018. The final report emphasizes the continued added value of the STDF and sets out fresh recommendations to shape its future direction.² Highlights from the evaluation's findings and conclusions include, *inter alia*:

- "The STDF is responding to the needs of developing countries in its focus on building SPS capacities to enable and unlock trade."
- "The STDF and the STDF Secretariat have delivered outputs and results beyond what might be expected given their budget and resources."
- "The Secretariat is regarded as efficient, effective and responsive by founding partners, donors and other stakeholders."

1.2. On 17 June 2019, the STDF Policy Committee³ discussed the report's recommendations to scale and sustain the STDF, which are currently being implemented. In parallel, members are developing a new five-year strategy for the STDF (2020-2024), which will aim to further maximise the impact of its unique structure. The STDF will continue to work on cross-cutting SPS knowledge topics, developing recommendations and identifying good practice, and help developing countries in preparing and implementing innovative and collaborative SPS projects, capturing and disseminating the lessons learned. More information on the new STDF strategy will be made available at the first meeting of the Committee in 2020.

2 AID FOR TRADE GLOBAL REVIEW

2.1. The STDF organized a well-attended thematic session on 4 July during the WTO/OECD Aid for Trade Global Review 2019, entitled "Investing in SPS capacity for safe trade and sustainable development". The session, moderated by Ms Carolyn Rodrigues Birkett, Director of the FAO office in Geneva, brought together public and private sector experts from the cinnamon sector in Sri Lanka, the flower industry in Uganda and the shrimp sector in Guatemala. They shared their experiences with the audience and highlighted: (i) the importance to communicate with high-level decision

¹ This document has been prepared under the Secretariat's own responsibility and is without prejudice to the positions of Members or to their rights and obligations under the WTO.

² The report is available on the STDF website: <http://www.standardsfacility.org/evaluations>.

³ The Policy Committee provides oversight on STDF's strategic direction. It consists of high-level representatives of STDF's partners (FAO, OIE, World Bank Group, WHO and WTO), selected donor members (currently: Sweden, The Netherlands and the United States) and SPS experts from developing countries.

makers the need to invest in SPS capacity; (ii) the value of these investments for the domestic agenda; and (iii) building the sustainability of interventions through strong public-private partnerships and co-funding of programmes. More information about the thematic session is available on the STDF website.⁴

3 WTO PUBLIC FORUM – NEW STDF FILM

3.1. During the recent WTO Public Forum (8-11 October), the STDF released a new film and interview series "Trading Forward: Adapting to a Changing World".⁵ The interviews feature partners, donors and developing country experts speaking on the current global landscape and what more is needed to facilitate safe, inclusive trade. The film sets out how in order to meet the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), investing in SPS capacity in developing countries is vital for people to share in the benefits from trade. During the Public Forum, participants could also visit STDF's stand in the WTO Atrium where samples of Sri Lankan dried fruits, Tajik apricots and sheanut butter products from Nigeria were offered to participants.

4 PRIORITIZING SPS INVESTMENTS FOR MARKET ACCESS: P-IMA

4.1. The STDF continues to help developing countries in SPS planning and decision-making through application of the P-IMA framework.⁶ Work is on-going in Madagascar (STDF/PPG/575)⁷ and the framework will also be applied in Ecuador shortly (STDF/PPG/709).⁸ An STDF project (STDF/PG/606)⁹ to assist selected COMESA members states in using the framework to mainstream SPS investments into their agriculture, trade, and environment planning and financing frameworks, including the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP), is underway (co-funded by the Enhanced Integrated Framework).

5 INFORMATION SESSION ON STDF REGIONAL MRL PROJECTS – 7 NOVEMBER 2019

5.1. On 7 November 2019, the STDF will organize a lunchtime session to present the findings and recommendations of an independent evaluation of three STDF projects in ASEAN (STDF/PG/337)¹⁰, Africa (STDF/PG/359)¹¹ and Latin America (STDF/PG/436).¹² Under these projects, government authorities partnered with multinational pesticide manufacturers, industry associations, farmers and international partners (including the Codex Secretariat, IR-4/Rutgers University and the United States Department of Agriculture) to carry out coordinated and complementary pesticide residue studies. This collaborative approach generated data to support new Codex MRLs for minor-use crops (like dragon fruit, mango, papaya and avocado) and the registration of new, improved, low-risk pesticides for farmers.

6 LIBRARY

6.1. The STDF Library¹³ is an online information repository providing quick and easy online access to a variety of information resources focused on SPS technical cooperation and capacity building. Delegates are encouraged to submit relevant documents to the Secretariat (STDFSecretariat@wto.org) for inclusion in the Library, including: project documents and final reports, training materials, project evaluations/reviews, SPS capacity needs assessments, cost-benefit analyses, case studies, relevant research papers, and other articles on SPS capacity development. The Library complements and includes links to other information systems and databases developed and maintained by STDF partners, donors and other organizations.

⁴ See: <https://www.standardsfacility.org/stdf-aid-trade-global-review>.

⁵ See: <https://www.youtube.com/c/STDFvideos>.

⁶ See: <http://www.standardsfacility.org/prioritizing-sps-investments-market-access-p-ima>.

⁷ See: <http://www.standardsfacility.org/PPG-575>.

⁸ See: <https://www.standardsfacility.org/PPG-709>.

⁹ See: <http://www.standardsfacility.org/PG-606>.

¹⁰ See: <http://www.standardsfacility.org/PG-337>.

¹¹ See: <http://www.standardsfacility.org/PG-359>.

¹² See: <http://www.standardsfacility.org/PG-436>.

¹³ See: <http://www.standardsfacility.org/library>.

7 PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

7.1. The STDF provides advice and support to applicants 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 donors and/or the STDF.

7.2. A total of **97 PPGs** have been approved and funded by the STDF since its inception. Information on on-going and completed PPGs is available on the STDF website.

8 PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

8.1. Project grant (PG) financing for projects is also available from the STDF. Favourable consideration 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 approaches to address SPS constraints; and/or (iii) implement collaborative approaches across food safety, animal and plant health and trade. Beneficiaries must contribute to the project 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.

8.2. A total of **93 projects** have been approved for STDF funding since its inception. Information on on-going and completed projects is available on the STDF website.

8.3. Since its inception, the STDF has devoted 65% of its project and PPG resources to LDCs and other low-income countries (OLICs). The STDF continues to meet its target to devote at least 40% of its project and PPG resources to LDCs and OLICs. In particular, the allocation of PPG resources to LDCs and OLICs remains high (i.e. 71% of the overall budget for PPGs).

8.4. 49% of the number of STDF projects and PPGs has gone to Africa, 24% to Asia-Pacific, 15% to Latin America-Caribbean, and 2% to other regions (Middle East and Europe). In addition, 10% of the STDF projects and PPGs are classified as global.

8.5. 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 **10 January 2020**. Further information on eligibility criteria, application forms, etc. is available on the STDF website.

RECOMMENDED STEPS TO FOLLOW WHEN SEEKING PG OR PPG FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES WITH THE STDF:

1. Browse the webpages for information (aims, eligibility criteria, etc.) on:

- PPGs: <http://www.standardsfacility.org/project-preparation-grants>
- PGs: <http://www.standardsfacility.org/project-grants>

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:

http://standardsfacility.org/sites/default/files/STDFGuidanceNote_English_FINAL_2015.pdf

4. Consult relevant stakeholders in the country/region.

5. Send a brief concept note of your potential project for feedback on eligibility and likelihood of funding (STDFSecretariat@wto.org).

6. Fill out an application form and submit it electronically before the deadline:

- PPGs:
http://standardsfacility.org/sites/default/files/PPGApplicationForm_English_FINAL_2015.doc
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http://standardsfacility.org/sites/default/files/PGApplicationForm_English_FINAL_2015.doc
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