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JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME

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ACTIVITIES OF THE STANDARDS AND TRADE DEVELOPMENT FACILITY (STDF) PROGRAMME IN THE REGION

Report by the WTO Secretariat¹

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Standards and Trade Development Facility (STDF) is a global programme in capacity building and technical cooperation established by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE), the World Bank, the World Health Organization (WHO) and the World Trade Organization (WTO). It assists developing countries to meet food safety, animal and plant health (sanitary and phytosanitary or SPS) measures in international trade. Other organizations - including the International Trade Centre (ITC), the Organization for Economic and Development (OECD), the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) – as well as donors and developing countries also participate in the Facility.²

2. The STDF has two main aims:

- to assist developing countries enhance their expertise and capacity to analyze and to implement international SPS standards, improving their human, animal and plant health situation, and thus ability to gain and maintain market access; and
- to act as a vehicle for raising awareness on the importance of SPS issues, coordination among technical cooperation providers, the mobilization of funds, the exchange of experience and the dissemination of good practice in relation to the provision and receipt of SPS-related technical cooperation.

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

² More detailed information on the STDF can be found on the [STDF website](#).

II. EVALUATION

3. An independent evaluation of the STDF was completed on 14 November 2008.³ The review judged the overall performance of the STDF to be good, and in many important areas very good. Furthermore, the performance of the Secretariat was highly rated by virtually all stakeholders and by the evaluator. The final report has been circulated to the SPS Committee as document G/SPS/GEN/899 and can be downloaded on the [WTO SPS gateway](#).

4. The evaluation was discussed by the STDF Policy Committee on 16 December 2008 and led to a review of the [STDF Operational Rules](#) and [Operating Plan for 2009](#). The new documents incorporate various recommendations made in the evaluation and place further emphasis on STDF's coordination function. According to the evaluator, the STDF's future lies in coordination "since it has a comparative advantage here and can play a unique role in assisting developing countries in the future". Both documents can be downloaded from the STDF website at www.standardsfacility.org.

5. Other recommendations to improve the STDF's work related to the information flow and the STDF website are currently being implemented. The evaluation concluded that the Secretariat and the partners, donors, observers and recipient countries have a shared responsibility to make STDF's existence and activities more widely known and to raise its profile. There is a need to improve the funding situation to meet the target of US\$5 million per year, preferably in multi-annual commitments, to implement the STDF work programme for 2009 and beyond.

III. CO-ORDINATION

6. Increasing importance is being placed on the STDF's role as a co-ordination mechanism and centre of good practice. Within the framework of the Aid of Trade Initiative, three regional consultations were initiated in 2007 to examine SPS capacity building needs and responses in terms of the provision of capacity building in East Africa, Central America and three countries in the Greater Mekong Delta Sub-Region (Cambodia, Lao PDR and Viet Nam).⁴ The first component of this work was a review of SPS capacity evaluation studies, overviews and SPS-related technical assistance provided in the period of 2001-2006 in each region. Results were presented during the Regional Reviews of Aid for Trade in Peru, Philippines and Tanzania in September 2007.⁵

7. The second part of this work was to take stock of where SPS capacity building needs are not being met and to identify actions to mobilize resources to address these needs. A number of the needs identified relate to improving capacity in the food safety area. Regional workshops to present the findings of this work took place in Cambodia (20-21 May 2008), Uganda (28-29 May 2008) and Guatemala (11-12 June 2008). The reports of these consultations, as well as the national and regional balance sheets developed, are available on the [STDF website](#) (www.standardsfacility.org/regional_consultations.htm).

8. As part of its co-ordination mandate, the STDF has organized a series of thematic events for delegates of the SPS Committee and additional participants from developing countries. A workshop on SPS-related capacity evaluation tools developed by international organizations took place in Geneva on 31 March 2008. An information session on private standards was held on 26 June 2008 with representatives of the Africa Observer Project, the Global Food Safety Initiative (GFSI), International Certification and Risk Services (CMi) and the World Bank. Information on these events, including the

³ The evaluator was Dr. Stuart Slorach, formerly of the Swedish National Food Administration, and former chair of the FAO/WHO Codex Alimentarius Commission and the European Food Safety Authority's Management Board.

⁴ Aid for Trade aims to help developing countries, particularly least-developed countries, develop the trade-related skills and infrastructure that is needed to implement and benefit from WTO agreements and to expand their trade. The Aid for Trade initiative was launched at the Hong Kong Ministerial Conference in December 2005.

⁵ G/SPS/GEN/812.

presentations made and podcasts of sessions is available on the [SPS gateway](http://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/sps_e/sps_e.htm) of the WTO website (www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/sps_e/sps_e.htm).

9. In collaboration with the Organization of Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) the STDF held a workshop on good practice in SPS-related technical co-operation, just prior to the October 2008 meeting of the SPS Committee in Geneva. The meeting was attended by some 250 persons including delegates from the SPS Committee and 60 officials from developing countries. The workshop provided an opportunity to consider the Paris Principles on Aid Effectiveness in the context of the highly technical area of SPS-related technical cooperation and presented the findings of the STDF/OECD research to identify elements of good practice in the design, implementation, outputs and the achievement of higher-order objectives for projects in East Africa, Central America and the Greater Mekong Delta Sub-Region.

10. The workshop concluded that while there is clarity about what should be avoided in technical cooperation, there is less clarity about how to practically implement the Paris Principles on Aid Effectiveness on the ground. Another conclusion focused on the importance of measuring the impact of SPS assistance on trade performance and the need to develop and systematically apply indicators for this purpose. A summary report of the workshop ([G/SPS/R/52](#)), presentations and podcasts of discussions are available on the [WTO SPS gateway](#). An overview and synthesis of the findings of the regional research on good practice is available in [G/SPS/GEN/875](#). In addition, the Secretariat has prepared a [briefing note](#) on the conclusions of the good practice work for general distribution.

11. The STDF prepared a desk study ([G/SPS/GEN/900](#)) on SPS needs and assistance of eight Least Developed Countries (LDCs), i.e. Benin, Cambodia, Lao PDR, Lesotho, Mozambique, Rwanda, Senegal and Yemen. The study was based on a review of existing needs assessments, notably the Diagnostic Trade Integration Studies prepared under the Enhanced IF and other publicly available information. The report complemented and strengthened UNIDO's broader programme proposals aimed at addressing the supply-side constraints of the eight LDCs and identified areas where future SPS technical cooperation activities with a positive trade effect might be focused. The final report was presented at the [LDC Ministerial Conference on Aid for Trade](#) on 19-20 November 2008 in Siem Reap, Cambodia, jointly organized by WTO and UNIDO.

12. As part of its coordination role, the Secretariat prepared a background paper for the "Open-Ended Working Group for the Development of an IPPC Capacity Building Strategy" held in Rome, Italy, from 8-12 December 2008 ([G/SPS/GEN/898](#)). The objective of the report was to identify current flows of phytosanitary technical cooperation, examine how phytosanitary needs are evaluated and discuss how these can be mainstreamed into national development plans. The Secretariat also participated in an International Conference on "Sharing Innovative Agribusiness Solutions" organized by UNIDO in Cairo, Egypt, on 26-27 November 2008.

13. The revised [STDF Operating Plan](#) contains a detailed description of coordination activities planned for 2009. This includes the organization of two global thematic events on SPS capacity building and cost-benefit analysis (25 June 2009, back-to-back with the SPS Committee meeting) and on SPS risks and climate change (date and venue to be confirmed). New research work will also be conducted on the development of indicators to evaluate the impact of SPS capacity building and on possible synergies between trade facilitation and STDF work.

14. At a regional level, the STDF is planning to organize a meeting in mid-2009 to coordinate responses to combat fruit fly in West Africa. The meeting will provide an opportunity for national and regional organizations, donors and other stakeholders to discuss mechanisms to control fruit fly and mobilize funds for a multi-year Action Plan. More information on STDF's work in this area can be found on the [STDF website](#). Consideration will also be given to holding one additional regional consultation similar to the ones held in 2008 in Central America, East Africa and the Greater Mekong Delta Sub-Region.

IV. INFORMATION DISSEMINATION

15. The STDF is developing a short film to raise awareness about the importance of SPS capacity for international trade and economic development. The film will provide an introduction to SPS issues and their impact on trade and showcase examples from three countries that have been affected by SPS issues. The film should be available before the end of 2009.

V. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

16. As a financing mechanism, the STDF provides grant funding to public and private sector organizations in developing countries seeking to comply with international SPS standards and hence gain or maintain market access. Two types of grants are available through the STDF: project preparation grants (PPGs) and project grants. PPGs are a key mechanism for future STDF programme development. PPGs help overcome constraints faced by developing countries in the articulation of their needs and are a mechanism for ensuring synergy with other on-going initiatives, in particular the Enhanced IF and the Aid for Trade. Greater reliance will be placed on the use of PPGs to provide a basis for donor interventions and as a vehicle for the mobilization of funds. A total of 31 PPGs have been approved and funded by the STDF since its inception.

17. The main criterion in awarding preparation grants is the likelihood that the project developed may receive funding. Final project funding may be provided by the STDF or from another funding source (e.g. a bilateral donor). Much greater emphasis is being placed on the use of PPGs to provide a basis for donor interventions and as a vehicle for mobilizing funds for projects developed by the STDF.

VI. PROJECT FUNDING

18. The STDF funds technical co-operation activities which:

- address underlying issues of SPS capacity building in beneficiary countries (in particular in low income countries, or on a regional basis), ideally through innovative, preventative and/or pilot projects which may be replicated by other donors; and
- which aim to address gaps in SPS information, training materials or which aim to improve co-ordination among SPS technical co-operation providers through collaborative projects.

19. An overview of the current status of STDF projects and project preparation grants as at 30 January 2009 is provided in Annex I.

20. It is to be noted that the [STDF Operational Rules](#), as revised and adopted in December 2008 by the STDF Policy Committee, include new eligibility criteria for STDF-funded projects. In the future, funding will be dependent on the beneficiary country or countries' classification in the OECD Development Assistance Committee List of ODA recipients. Applications for STDF funding can be made at any point in the year but should be received 60 working days in advance of each Working Group meeting in order to be considered at that meeting. Forthcoming deadlines for submission of funding applications are as follows:

- 3 April 2009; and
- 7 August 2009.

ANNEX 1

STDF PROJECTS AND PROJECT PREPARATION GRANTS

30 January 2009

(a) Projects awaiting contracting

Project	Title	Objective	Budget (US\$)
STDF 116	Establishment of a traceability system for the livestock sector in Costa Rica	Develop a sustainable traceability system in the livestock sector which facilitates the management of the information related to agricultural units and epidemiological events.	465,220
STDF 155	Nicaragua-Market Oriented Training Service on Standards Application	Establish SPS professional training units, to develop training manuals, quality and good process controls for pilot products.	537,435
STDF 255	Regional Initiative on the fight against fruit flies in West Africa	Conduct tests in pilot mango orchards using different fruit fly control and other Integrated Pest Management techniques to monitor and control fruit fly populations in 8 pilot countries.	279,620
STDF 126	Support for the establishment of the Horticulture Development Council of Tanzania	Assistance to the Tanzanian horticulture sector to address SPS issues.	268,755
STDF 230	Establishment of Pest Free Areas for Lethal Yellowing Disease in Coconuts	Build phytosanitary capacity to implement international standards to manage LYD in palms and thereby expand market access for coconuts.	346,528
STDF 238	Development of accredited Good Practices and HACCP certification schemes for fresh and processed food products in Guatemala	Implement accredited inspection and certificates for GAPs, GMPs and HACCP recognized by the competent authorities.	397,420
STDF 246	Development of SPS Action Plan for Cambodia	Identify actions to be taken to enhance the SPS system in Cambodia.	250,000

(b) On-going projects funded by STDF

Project	Title	Objective	Budget (US\$)
STDF 48	Quality control for shea and cashew nut products in Benin	Apply good agricultural practices to overcome problems of mycotoxin contamination in shea and cashew nut production.	470,575
STDF 127	Support for SPS information systems in Benin	Improve information flows on SPS requirements, particularly in the private sector in Benin.	359,790
STDF 62	Strengthening food safety in Cameroon	Reactivate a national committee on food safety and train public and private sector stakeholders in Cameroon.	445,964
STDF 171	East African Phytosanitary Centre	Build phytosanitary capacity and increase market access through the establishment of an East African Phytosanitary Centre.	729,375

Project	Title	Objective	Budget (US\$)
STDF 170	Strengthening the capacity of government SPS officials in Nepal	Train government officials on implementation of SPS measures. Project supports Integrated Framework (IF) Diagnostic Trade Integration Study (DTIS).	347,900
STDF 134	Capacity building to improve fish trade performance of selected West African countries	Improve knowledge and awareness of SPS issues in the fisheries sector in five West African countries.	469,000
STDF 69	Improved capacity to ensure safety and quality of Yemeni seafood products	Assist the Yemen Seafood Exporter's Association to improve the quality and safety of Yemeni seafood products.	408,750
STDF 173	Assessing capacity building needs of food control systems in developing APEC Member Economies	Train food safety regulators from developing member economies in Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) using FAO's food safety capacity evaluation tools.	113,000
STDF 108	Developing institutional capacity of countries in the Americas to participate in the SPS Committee	Promote more active and effective participation in SPS Committee through a regional review of SPS compliance structures and practices.	585,588
STDF 133	Building capacity to use the Phytosanitary Capacity Evaluation (PCE) Tool in the Pacific	Train National Plant Protection Organizations (NPPOs) in the South Pacific to evaluate their services using the PCE tool.	179,000
STDF 145	Rwanda Horticulture Export Standards Initiative (RHESI)	Increase Rwanda's exports of fruit, vegetables and flowers in international and regional markets. Project developed based on IF DTIS.	526,647
STDF 146	Strengthening phytosanitary controls in Mali (with a focus on mango exports)	Expand international market access for fresh produce from Mali through improved phytosanitary control capacity. Project developed based on IF DTIS.	518,800
STDF 114	Effective aflatoxin management system in Brazil nut production	To recover and consolidate export market access through implementation of an effective system to reduce aflatoxin contamination in the Brazil nut production chain.	619,664
STDF 65	Develop a private/public safety control system for the horticultural export sector in Guinea	Assist the public and private sector to meet official and commercial standards for fruit and vegetable exports through development of a safety control system. Project developed based on IF DTIS report.	530,300
STDF 79	Quality information on SPS issues – a prerequisite for capacity building	Improve the sharing of information on Codex, OIE and IPPC standards (and supporting scientific evaluations) through the International Portal on Food Safety, Animal and Plant Health (IPFSAPH).	470,000

(c) **Completed projects funded by STDF**

Project	Title	Objective	Budget (US\$)
STDF 13	Development of Regional Action Plans to Enhance Veterinary Capacity in East and West Africa	Develop regional strategies to strengthen veterinary capacity in East and West Africa with emphasis on improved surveillance, reporting, control and implementation of international standards.	305,000

Project	Title	Objective	Budget (US\$)
STDF 120	Risk analysis and risk assessment training in India	Enhance knowledge and skills of Indian officials on risk analysis and risk assessment procedures.	153,600
STDF 15	Expanding SPS capacities at national and regional levels	Develop a training programme and core group of trainers to deliver training for veterinary officials.	130,614
STDF 89	International Plant Health Risk Analysis Workshop	Enhance expertise and capacity of countries and NPPOs to conduct pest risk analysis (PRA).	147,000
STDF 56	Capacity building to enhance implementation of the Codex Alimentarius Code of Practice on animal feeding	Strengthen implementation of good animal feeding practices and good manufacturing practices through development of training manuals, regional workshops in Africa, Latin America and Asia and country-level training.	150,000
STDF 37	Assistance to developing countries in the implementation of International Standard for Phytosanitary Measure (ISPM) 15	Train officials on implementation of ISPM 15 (Guidelines for regulating wood packaging material in international trade) to ensure minimal trade disruptions.	332,000
STDF 14	Evaluation of capacity of national veterinary services	Develop a veterinary capacity evaluation tool based on the IICA Performance Vision Strategy document.	37,000
STDF 20	Country-based plans for SPS-related development	Carry out baseline studies of SPS capacity and apply cost-benefit analysis to examine returns on investment in terms of foreign trade and an improved SPS situation.	170,862
STDF 19	Model arrangements for SPS stakeholder involvement at the national level	Improve SPS-related information flows and information sharing between the public and private sector with positive spin-offs for market access.	291,218
STDF 9	Model programme for developing food standards within a risk analysis framework	Strengthen capacity of low income countries in the Asia Pacific Region to develop food standards based on international requirements and participate in Codex.	69,536
STDF 10	Support to pilot activities for national implementation of the International Portal on Food Safety, Animal and Plant Health in Turkey and Uganda	Establish national windows for IPFSAPH through training and the development of a handbook.	55,000
STDF 5	STDF Database	Establish a database covering the period 2001-03 to: i) help reduce duplication and gaps in activities; and ii) track SPS-related technical assistance flows and trends.	45,100

(d) **Projects developed by STDF but funded by other organizations**

Project	Title	Objective	Budget in US\$
STDF 100	Strengthening the national food control system for the fisheries sector in Cape Verde	Assist the fish processing sector in Cape Verde to comply with international food safety standards.	232,647
STDF 113	Strengthening SPS controls in Burundi	Enhance the capacity of the Burundi Bureau of Standards (BBN) including training on SPS compliance for public and private sector officials.	513,000

Project	Title	Objective	Budget in US\$
STDF 66	Project preparation grant in Mozambique	Improve SPS compliance for horticulture exporters in regional and international markets. Project based on IF DTIS.	600,000

(e) **Projects for which approval has been revoked by the Working Group**

Project	Title	Objective	Budget in US\$
STDF 64	Facilitating livestock trade in Djibouti	Facilitate livestock trade from Djibouti through training for private and public sector veterinary officials. Project based on IF DTIS.	560,000

STATUS OF APPROVED PROJECT PREPARATION GRANTS (PPGS)⁶

(a) PPGs awaiting contracting

Project	Title	Objective
STDF 268	Harmonization of the Legal, Regulatory and Institutional Framework for SPS control Management System	Strengthening the relevant legislation and improving institutional coordination to raise confidence among trading partners.

(b) PPGs currently being implemented

Project	Title	Objective
STDF 242	Elaboration of SPS needs expressed in the IF DTIS of Comoros	Assess SPS human resource and infrastructure needs based on the IF DTIS and formulate a proposal to improve the competitiveness of the litchi and lobster sectors.
STDF 232	A phytosanitary capacity building strategy for Africa	Improve phytosanitary capacity in African countries through the development and implementation of a phytosanitary capacity building strategy.
STDF 221	Supporting implementation of SPS standards in Burkina Faso	Identify specific SPS issues and constraints affecting sesame production and exports and develop a project proposal aimed at overcoming these constraints and improving market access.
STDF 234	Design of Lao GAP scheme	Create institutional infrastructure to ensure market access for agricultural products from Lao PDR.
STDF 105	Compartment-alization	Design a demonstration project on how to apply compartmentalization.
STDF 191	Enhancing Sierra Leone's national SPS capacity	Design a national SPS framework.
STDF 165	Improving fruit production SPS controls in Madagascar	Assist Madagascar to establish pest-free places of production.

(c) Completed PPGs resulting in a project which has been funded

Project	Title	Objective
STDF 171	Phytosanitary Centre of Excellence	Revise a project document to establish a Phytosanitary Centre of Excellence in Kenya. If funded the project would address issues raised in the IF DTIS reports for Uganda, Tanzania and Rwanda.
STDF 155	Nicaragua market-oriented training service on standards application	Survey Nicaragua's SPS requirements in the plant health sector to improve export competitiveness.
STDF 127	Strengthening the capacity of the Benin Chamber of Commerce to track SPS-related development in exports markets	Establish an information centre within the Benin Chamber of Commerce to ensure that firms are aware of SPS measures affecting their existing or planned exports.
STDF 126	Assistance to establish a horticulture industry organization in Tanzania	Develop a business plan and facilitate the establishment of a horticulture association in Tanzania.
STDF 116	Establishment of a traceability system for the livestock sector in	Assist in the development of the animal health directorate's National Epidemiological Surveillance

⁶ All PPGs are funded from the STDF. The budget for PPGs is US\$20,000 unless otherwise indicated.

Project	Title	Objective
	Costa Rica	Programme by introducing a traceability system for livestock farms.
STDF 113	Project preparation grant to survey food safety needs in Burundi	Apply the FAO/WHO "Guidelines to Assess Capacity Building Needs in Official Food Control Systems" to survey the food safety situation in Burundi and develop a trade-related project.
STDF 88	Nepal SPS training project preparation grant	Evaluation of the training needs of Nepal's SPS authorities and design a training programme.
STDF 102	Project preparation grant for Mali	Design a project to enhance SPS capacity in the fruit and vegetable sector.
STDF 103	Project preparation grant for Rwanda	Design a project to enhance SPS capacity in the fruit and vegetable sector.
STDF 63	Project preparation grant in Benin	Application of FAO/WHO "Guidelines to Assess Capacity Building Needs in Official Food Control Systems".
STDF 69	Project preparation grant in Yemen	Survey of SPS issues in the fisheries sector and project design. Project based on needs identified in IF DTIS report.
STDF 64	Project preparation grant in Djibouti	Field research and design of project in the livestock sector in Djibouti. Project based on needs identified in IF DTIS report.
STDF 65	Project preparation grant in Guinea	Develop a project proposal that builds on the UNCTAD evaluation of costs of compliance in the tropical fruit sector. Project based on needs identified in IF DTIS report.
STDF 66	Project preparation grant in Mozambique	Develop a project proposal that builds on the UNCTAD evaluation of costs of compliance in the tropical fruit sector. Project based on needs identified in IF DTIS report.
STDF 62	Project preparation grant in Cameroon	Apply the FAO/WHO "Guidelines to Assess Capacity Building Needs in Official Food Control Systems".

(d) **Completed PPGs for projects which have not been funded**

Project	Title	Objective
STDF 223	Strengthening the official food control in Moldova to support the emerging food businesses	Assess requirements to strengthen official food controls, standards and food inspection based on specific priority commodities identified in the World Bank Action Plan and develop a proposal for follow-up.
STDF 172	Expanding Nigeria's food exports through enhanced SPS capacity	Enhance Nigeria's capacity in the SPS area and improve the country's ability to export high-value food products.
STDF 46	Project preparation grant on implementation of Codex standards (WHO Africa)	Assist WHO Africa to develop a project proposal to support selected African countries to implement Codex standards.
STDF 100	Strengthening the national food control system for the fisheries sector in Cape Verde	Assist the fish processing sector in Cape Verde to comply with international food safety standards.
STDF 101	Eritrea project preparation grant	Apply FAO/WHO "Guidelines to Assess Capacity Building Needs in Official Food Control Systems" and design a project.
STDF 52	Post-harvest contamination in Malawi and Zambia	Develop a project proposal to address post-harvest contamination problems in the paprika and groundnut sectors in Malawi and Zambia. Project based on IF

Project	Title	Objective
		DTIS.
STDF 61	Project preparation grant in Cambodia	Fieldwork in Cambodia to develop a project proposal. Grant application presented in July 2005.
STDF 38	Agricultural Health and Food Safety Laboratory Needs Assessment for CARICOM Countries	Survey laboratory capacity in CARICOM to develop a project to assist in development of a regional strategy on laboratory infrastructure.

(e) PPGs revoked by the Working Group

Project	Title	Objective
STDF 68	Project preparation grant on SPS cooperation for South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC)	Support regional cooperation on SPS issues among SAARC countries.