



## Strategy to strengthen Togo's SPS system

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The project aimed to improve market access for fruit and vegetables grown in Togo, by guaranteeing the absence of quarantine pests.

**STDF/PG/375**

**Status**

Completed

**Start Date**

01/11/2018

**End Date**

31/10/2022

**Project Value (US\$)**

\$827,294

**STDF Contribution (US\$)**

\$603,955

**Beneficiaries**

Togo

**Implementing Entities**

Europe-Africa-Caribbean-Pacific Liaison Committee (COLEACP)

**Partners**

Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Hydraulics, Togo

**Background**

Togo's primary fruit and vegetable exports to the Europe Union (EU) are pineapples (fresh and processed), leafy green vegetables and other indigenous products. Horticulture offers one of the few income-generating opportunities for women in rural and urban areas and has a considerable impact on development.

Since 2016, Togo has faced a significant increase in EU interceptions due to quarantine pests in leafy green vegetables, particularly whitefly and *Bemisia tabaci* Gennadius.

To reduce the number of interceptions, the project focused on tightening border controls by:

- strengthening the organization and technical capacities of private operators to improve pest control in the field, and harvesting and packaging measures to minimize the presence of pests.

·building capacity in plant inspection and protection services.

·improving communication and dialogue between private operators and the public service to increase the understanding of the issues faced by exporters and facilitate their resolution.

This project implemented some of the actions proposed in Togo's sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) strategy, which was drawn up in 2016, resulting from a [project preparation grant](#) from the STDF.

## **Results**

### ***Stronger institutional framework and inspection and control services applying risk based good practices for inspection***

The project involves building the capacities of the plant inspection and protection services, in terms of both tools (databases, notification tracking system, etc.) and skills (risk analysis, inspection planning, etc.), so that they are able to perform their duties more efficiently.

In particular, the project will support the implementation of a capacity building plan for control officers, especially those involved in the phytosanitary inspection and certification of products to be exported to the EU. This action plan will focus on the concept of risk based control and on inspection procedures and methods. The development of monitoring and tracking tools will also ensure availability of the information needed to oversee operations.

A mechanism to facilitate communication and the exchange of information and experience between central government and field inspectors, on the one hand, and between port inspection teams and airport inspection teams, on the other, will also be established.

### ***Increased capacities in the fruit and vegetable sector and a well established professional organization of exporters***

The project also aims to strengthen the capacity of private operators, in their own individual activities but, above all, as subsector participants, to exchange information on shared problems and thus to take concerted action and speak with a single voice where the horticultural sector is concerned.

The establishment of an organization that defends the mutual interests of enterprises active in the fruit and vegetable sector, as well as the exchange of information and cooperation with private operators, should be encouraged.

To this end, the project will focus on strengthening the structural and organizational framework of the professional organization that represents exporters, strengthening the technical capacities of the structures that support production and exports, and strengthening individual enterprises, with a view to ensuring the adoption of good practices (agricultural, traceability, harvesting and post harvesting practices, etc.) through technical assistance, the training of trainers, themed training and theoretical and practical training.

### ***Ongoing dialogue between the private horticultural sector and the public services***

The project aims to improve communication and dialogue between private operators and public services. This should increase understanding of the problems in the private sector, particularly those faced by enterprises focused on international exports, and facilitate their resolution.

To achieve this goal, the project will support the establishment of an appropriate communication mechanism, the exchange of information, and analysis of the sector's problems (including those related to equipment, logistics and trade requirements, etc.). It will promote a spirit of cooperation with and between stakeholders and will also contribute to the development of an internal and external communication strategy for the Togolese sector and its representatives.