

Information on SPS-related activities of the International Trade Centre (ITC)

STDF Working Group Meeting, 20-21 March 2018

(Period covered: November 2017 – February 2018)

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 STDF WG Members is provided below.

PROJECTS

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

(August 2016 – July 2019/ Donor European Union)

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

The Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MoCI) is the main counterpart of this project and beneficiaries include the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL), Ministry of Health (MoPH), National Standards Body (ANSA) and relevant sector associations.

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 (e.g. dried fruits and nuts, fresh fruits and vegetables, saffron, and non-food items). The NES is will be officially launched after endorsement by Afghanistan's High Economic Council.

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

- *Development of Technical Regulations, including SPS measures* (Kabul, 8 July & 5 November) that improved understanding of the WTO agreements on TBT and SPS, the principles for the development of technical regulations and effective market surveillance. A draft Afghan procedure for development of technical regulations was reviewed is being adopted.
- *Code of Good Practice for Preparation, Adoption and Implementation of Standards* (Kabul 4-5, July) that built understanding of related international practices and reviewed the related draft procedure manual with 45 stakeholders. Afghanistan National Standards Authority (ANSA) welcomed the proposed procedure to streamline the standard development activities and adopt international standards as appropriate to the needs of the country.

- *5th National Saffron Conference* (November 7, 2017) where a European buyer shared quality & SPS requirements including market intelligence, sensitizing the National Standards Body (ANSA) on relevant standards.
- *Standardization* (Kabul, 9 July) sensitised 78 private and public sector stakeholders on the role and importance of standards. ANSA staff built their capacity to replicate training delivery.

ITC is assisting Afghanistan organisations such as MAIL, ANSA, MoPH to implement priority actions of the action plans for national and sector trade support strategies, including those for **quality/SPS management**.

Discussion is ongoing with the WTO SPS and TBT Committee colleagues to design and conduct joint ITC-WTO training and coaching of the TBT and SPS NEP and NNA staff.

❖ **Myanmar: Improving food safety and compliance with SPS measures to increase export revenues in the oilseeds value chain)**

(August 2015 – August 2018 / STDF 486)

Under this project implemented in close collaboration with the Ministry of Commerce - MyanTrade,

- One company obtained third party ISO 22000 certification as part of the ongoing Food safety system implementation in 11 SMEs under the training and coaching of 11 local trainers.
- Farmers in two newly established sesame value chains connected with two exporters and realized a 4% price increase compared to previous year and following implementation of GAP.
- Training for main actors along the oilseed value chain is being held for 300 farmers to implement GAP, 20 extension officers and lead farmers to assist farmers, and 5 collectors to implement hygiene and proper use of fumigants and traceability.

The project's social media page (www.facebook.com/itcoilseedsmyanmar) reached 1000 followers.

❖ **Tajikistan: Enabling market access for agricultural products through improved food safety system (STDF)**

(1 March 2018 - 28 February 2021 / STDF PPG 447)

This new approved STDF-funded project just started following the signature of the LoA between WTO and ITC. It is the outcome of the STDF PPG in Tajikistan implemented by ITC. The project goal is to improve the export competitiveness of Tajik Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises with focus on the apricot and honey sectors considered as high priority in Tajikistan. The focus is on enhancing food safety practices in these value chains, notably through better use of agri-chemicals and veterinary medicines.

ITC, is the lead implementing organization for this project; the requesting organisations are the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade (MEDT) and the

Ministry of Agriculture (MoA). A UN-to-UN Agreement between FAO and ITC is under finalisation to enable FAO implement some selected activities in the project, based on FAO's technical leadership, availability of technical resources, past and ongoing related activities in the country to have better synergy with FAO activities in the country and better impact of the project.

❖ **Sri Lanka: Feasibility study for value addition in the fruit and vegetable sector**

(1 October 2017 - 30 October 2018 / STDF PPG 576)

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.

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.

The study commenced in December 2017 with the mission of an ITC international and national expert and an Italian leading company expert on dehydrated fruits. The mission included meetings, a stakeholder roundtable and field visits to producers and processing companies. The 2nd mission of the experts is planned from 3 – 12 March 2018.

❖ **Promoting Intra-regional trade in Eastern Africa–Kenya, Tanzania, Zambia**

(January 2014 – December 2016 / Donor Finland)

This inclusive and sustainable export-led growth project in Kenya, Tanzania and Zambia contributed to improving the competitiveness of producers, SMEs and Trade Support Institutions (TSIs). The project has come to a close with:

- TSIs introduced new food safety and quality-related training and advisory services through local advisors to assist enterprises on HACCP implementation as a result of which, 11 Tanzanian and 5 Zambian SMEs were certified to HACCP. Company audits are ongoing in Kenya.
- 23 enterprises (honey, chilli, and mango) and 20 counsellors in Tanzania and Zambia built their capacity to apply food safety systems - HACCP based on Codex.

❖ **Kenya: Enhancing the export competitiveness of the avocado industry in Kenya (Netherlands Trust Fund III)**

(2014-2017 Donor/ Netherlands-Centre for the Promotion of Imports from developing countries, CBI)

The project is assisting SMEs and farmer groups to increase export capacity; expand business linkages and technical partnerships for new client contracts; and supporting TSIs to improve service delivery capacity to SMEs .

- 10 farmers groups (average of 50 farmers each) were established and linked to 10 exporters with in-depth training to implement GLOBALGAP. Nine groups obtained third-party GLOBALGAP certification.
- Linkages with the Fit for Market programmes established additional training and capacity building support to the groups of farmers beyond the end of the NTF III project.

❖ **Zimbabwe: Strengthening the national sanitary and phytosanitary institutional framework**

(December 2015 - January 2018 / Donor EU)

This project aimed to improve Zimbabwe's SPS infrastructure in order to facilitate exports to the EU and the neighbouring countries. The project came to an end on 4 January 2018 with the following achievements.

- 5 SPS institutions (laboratories and inspection bodies) improved their capacity to provide new testing & inspection services to the private sector, in line with requirements to export food products to EU, through provision of more than 100 items of equipment and necessary training.
- 1 new standard, Zimbabwe Good Agricultural Practice (GAP) on Horticulture (Standard no. ZWS 1019) has been developed and adopted, that enables the SPS institutions to provide a common reference and framework to all farmers to apply GAP, thus improving their ability to meet SPS requirements.
- 37 trainers (27 officers of the extension service of the Ministry of Agriculture and 10 representatives of farmers' associations) are able to train farmers in different regions in Zimbabwe on implementing Good Agricultural Practices.
- Staff from the Ministry of SMEs and Cooperative Development (MSMECD), Ministry of Industry and Commerce (MoIC) of SMEs, and the national trade promotion Organization, ZimTrade acquired an in-depth understanding of EU import requirements and related EC Directives for agricultural products.
- SPS institutions improved their ability to:
 - i. plan and conduct residue monitoring, and a national residue monitoring plan is underdevelopment to comply with EU requirements;
 - ii. prepare their laboratories for international accreditation as per ISO 17025 for improved acceptability of their test certificates in international markets and prepare laboratory business plans for sustainability of their operations; and
 - iii. carry out risk-based official controls for improved effectiveness and resource utilization.

- 98 SMEs have an improved understanding of EPA Rules of Origin, TBT and SPS issues, and EU import requirements.

❖ **Supporting Indian Trade and Investment for Africa (SITA)**

(March 2015-March 2020 / Donor UK-Department for International Development DFID)

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

Following HACCP and GAP trainings in Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, and Uganda, currently 14 enterprises (spices, pulses, and sunflower oil sectors) in these countries are carrying out HACCP implementation with hands-on support being provided through trained advisers who are supporting with diagnostic assessments and implementation of improvement roadmaps.

❖ **The Gambia: Youth Empowerment Project (YEP)**

(January 2017 – December 2020 / Donor EU)

This project aims to contribute to the economic development of The Gambia, by improving the employability of potential and returning migrants. The project focuses on vocational training, creation of micro and small-sized enterprises, and creating and improving employment opportunities in selected sectors through value addition and internationalization.

In this context, ITC is supporting improved compliance of Gambian products to international standards and market requirements including the food and agriculture sectors. A training introducing 20 youth trainers to food safety and Good Hygienic Practices (GHP) was held in October 2017 with the Food Safety and Quality Authority of the Gambia (FSQA). Following this training, FSQA is now rolling-out these workshops in 2 provinces. To support strengthening of food safety practices, a new guide titled “Food Safety and Good Hygienic Practices: Handbook for Gambian Youth Entrepreneurs” was developed and distributed.

Internships of the trained trainers in Gambian SMEs is being organized, to be followed by in-depth training on HACCP implementation with the aim of improving their employment in the food and beverage sector.

FSQA and The Partnership for Aflatoxin Control in Africa (PACA) are organizing a sensitization and awareness campaign on Aflatoxin with the development of radio and television dramas, posters and brochures in local languages.

❖ **Overcoming Trade Obstacles related to Non-Tariff Measures in the Arab countries** (January 2017 – December 2021/Donor USAID)

This project aims to facilitate the coordination of a regional approach to improve the transparency of non-tariff measures (NTMs) in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region and overcome related trade obstacles.

Based on ITC’s NTM studies and analysis of regional trade potential, a workshop towards harmonization of SPS measures was held in Tunisia between 18 and 21

December 2017. The workshop was aimed at national food safety, and animal health regulatory agencies in the region and resulted in specific recommendations from the 10 countries that participated.

OTHER ACTIVITIES, PUBLICATIONS, OR INTERVENTIONS OF INTEREST

HelpMeTrade.org: At the WTO's 11th Ministerial Conference in Buenos Aires, ITC, UNCTAD, and WTO launched a new tool to help in particular smaller firms, benefit from trade. This new online hub – HelpMeTrade.org – provides data on applicable tariffs and taxes; relevant health and safety standards and compliance procedures; details about export and import procedures such as pre-shipment formalities; and current trade patterns and trade agreements. Data will be added to the Helpdesk over a three-year period, and complemented with business information such as buyer and seller contacts as well as trade fair dates and locations.

NTM Surveys: An NTM report for Bangladesh was published in November 2017 "*Bangladesh: Company perspectives – An ITC Series on Non-Tariff Measures*" which identifies main causes of reported difficulties when exporting or importing, including SPS-related issues.

ePing: The number of registered users of this joint UN, WTO, ITC SPS/TBT notification alert has grown to over 3,000. (www.epingalert.org)

Further information:

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

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