



STDF WORK PLAN 2014

I. INTRODUCTION

1. This document contains the Work Plan for the STDF in 2014, the third year of STDF's Medium Term Strategy (2012-2016). Planned activities and outputs are organized under the following "strategic results" of the STDF: (i) enhanced collaboration in SPS-related technical cooperation; (ii) improved capacity of beneficiaries to identify and prioritize SPS needs and formulate project proposals that are able to secure funding from STDF or external funding sources; and (iii) improved capacity of beneficiaries of STDF-funded projects to analyse and implement international SPS requirements. The logical framework is provided in **Annex 1**.

2. Implementation of this Work Plan will depend on adequate staffing in the STDF Secretariat, continued funding from donors (ideally through multi-annual contributions) and continued engagement of STDF partners. Sections V and VI provide information on staffing and the estimated budget for 2014, based on STDF's annual target level of donor funding of US\$5 million.¹

II. ENHANCED COLLABORATION IN SPS-RELATED TECHNICAL COOPERATION

3. The Medium Term Strategy places particular emphasis on STDF's role as a knowledge platform for exchange of information and experiences and the identification, dissemination and replication of good practice. In this context, the STDF will undertake work on the following cross-cutting topics of common interest to partners, donors and beneficiaries:

A. IMPLEMENTATION OF SPS MEASURES TO FACILITATE SAFE TRADE

4. In 2013, the STDF initiated research work in Africa and Asia to analyse the implementation of SPS measures, procedures and processes in the context of trade facilitation. This work examines the SPS controls applied to selected food and agricultural products by specific exporting and importing countries, and how they are implemented in practice.² In addition, the work considers on-going initiatives to improve SPS protection and reduce trade transaction costs by: (i) simplifying, standardizing and/or harmonizing SPS measures, procedures and processes; and/or (ii) enhancing collaboration between SPS authorities and other organizations involved in trade.

5. Two regional reports, describing and analysing the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the work in Africa and Asia, will be completed in the first quarter of 2014. These reports will: (i) analyse the current practices and experiences in the implementation of SPS controls, through the lens of trade facilitation, for the particular products/countries selected, and (ii) identify key lessons, good practices, common challenges, opportunities and recommendations to reduce trade transaction costs linked to SPS measures and improve SPS protection at a lower cost to traders and consumers.

6. This work is expected to generate new knowledge and information resources on a topic of widespread interest, which has not been systematically addressed. It will provide a basis to identify promising approaches and opportunities to improve the implementation of SPS measures in a way that advances trade facilitation. Based on the regional reports, and on results of parallel research work conducted in Latin America³, the following specific activities are envisaged:⁴

- Prepare a synthesis study, targeted at policy-makers and practitioners involved in the SPS area (including staff of food safety, animal and plant health and trade authorities) and/or

¹ For ease of reference, the Work Plan is denominated in United States (US) dollars. However, the WTO maintains financial and accounting records in Swiss Francs (CHF).

² In Africa, participating countries include Botswana, Malawi, Mozambique, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe. In Asia, countries include Cambodia, Lao PDR, Philippines and Thailand.

³ Financed and implemented by the Inter-American Development Bank.

⁴ More detailed information on this work is contained in the Background Note that was discussed in the Working Group in March 2013.

trade facilitation (including customs authorities), that analyses available experiences, identifies good practices and lessons learned, and makes recommendations to promote and enhance the role of SPS agencies in collaborative border management.

- Prepare an STDF Briefing Note and dissemination of all information materials generated through this work to members, as well as the broader trade and development community, through the STDF website, electronic newsletter and other communication channels.
- Identify opportunities, including through the Working Group, for wider dissemination of the findings of this STDF work.

B. FINALIZING THE MCDA TOOL TO PRIORITIZE SPS INVESTMENT OPTIONS

7. In June 2013, the STDF organized a workshop in Geneva on the use of the Multi Criteria Decision Analysis (MCDA) tool to prioritize SPS capacity building options for market access. The workshop was attended by a total of 44 participants, representing STDF partners, donors, observer organizations, STDF developing country experts and other experts from developing countries who had applied the tool. Participants reviewed and took stock of experiences and lessons learned in countries where the current MCDA framework was used, and considered options to improve the methodology and process through which it is applied.

8. Based on the recommendations of the workshop, and following discussions in the Working Group in October 2013, the following activities will be implemented:⁵

- Revise and finalize the current MCDA user guide into a practical and easy-to-use MCDA toolkit, including further clarifications on: (i) the particular focus of MCDA on market access; and (ii) the use of specific terms (identification, prioritization, compliance, etc.). Since "multi-criteria decision analysis" represents just one component of the prioritization process, consideration will be given to clarify the title of the "MCDA" tool.
- Establish a peer review group, consisting of [selected developing country experts familiar with the tool], to contribute to the revision and finalization of the toolkit.
- Monitor and evaluate on-going use of the MCDA framework to learn from and disseminate experiences and lessons, including through STDF communication channels. Include relevant documents (SPS needs assessments, project documents and evaluation reports, cost-benefit analysis studies, etc.) in the STDF Virtual Library.

C. NEW STDF VIDEO

9. The STDF video, "Trading Safely: Protecting Health, Promoting Development", developed in 2009, has been widely distributed and shown at numerous workshops, training courses and other events. The video (also translated and produced in Arabic, Chinese and Russian) is widely perceived as a very successful project, and has also helped in increasing the visibility of the STDF.

10. Building on the success of the video, the STDF will initiate the preparation of new film material in 2014-2015. This could take the form of case stories that demonstrate the usefulness of specific approaches in building SPS capacity and that link to previous and on-going STDF work. Examples include the use of SPS capacity evaluation tools, public-private partnerships to build SPS capacity and/or links between SPS technical cooperation and other areas such as trade facilitation, climate change and environmental protection. A proposal will be tabled for discussion in the Working Group in March or October 2014.⁶

D. INFORMATION DISSEMINATION

11. The STDF has limited resources and continues to place emphasis on the use of internet and other (on-line) communication technologies to maximize the impact of information dissemination activities. More specifically, the following activities will be pursued:

⁵ More detailed information on this work is available in the Background Note that was discussed in the Working Group in October 2013.

⁶ This activity was part of STDF's 2013 Work Plan but was not implemented.

- (a) Website. The new STDF website will be kept up-to-date and further enhanced in terms of content.
- (b) Virtual Library. Activities will focus on awareness-raising to: (i) generate a steady supply of new documents for inclusion in Library; and (ii) increase the use of the Library among the SPS community.⁷
- (c) Project fact sheets. The Secretariat will prepare and publish at least eight new project fact sheets for selected STDF projects, describing their background and objective, (expected) results and lessons learned. One STDF Briefing Note will be drafted and published summarizing the lessons learned across a wider range of STDF-funded projects.⁸
- (d) E-mail newsletters: The Secretariat will issue at least two STDF electronic newsletters. Efforts will be made to increase the number of subscribers to the E-mail distribution list.

12. The Working Group is the main forum for discussion on SPS-related technical cooperation, capacity needs assessments, evaluations, etc. Two meetings are planned in Geneva on the margins of the SPS Committee, in March and October 2014.⁹ Travel expenditure of developing country experts to the meetings will be covered by the STDF. Partners, donors and other providers of SPS-related technical cooperation are encouraged to share information in advance of the meetings to facilitate discussions. Presentations by partners and others may be scheduled about their SPS-related technical cooperation activities.

13. The WTO SPS Committee continues to be an important platform to disseminate information on STDF's work. In line with recommendations made by the Committee during the Third Review of the Operation and Implementation of the SPS Agreement, the STDF continues to report to the Committee under the standing agenda item "Technical Assistance".¹⁰ The STDF also reports on its activities to annual/regional meetings of Codex, IPPC and OIE, to other relevant WTO committees, and will participate in global/regional/national WTO SPS training events, where appropriate.

14. The STDF continues to interact and strengthen its relationships with other organizations involved in the implementation of STDF activities and projects, or the delivery of SPS-related technical cooperation more broadly. In line with the provisions on observer status in STDF's Operational Rules, these organizations may attend meetings of the Working Group. The Secretariat continues to participate in selected external events to disseminate information about the STDF and its work, monitor developments, foster synergies, and promote coherence and coordination in the delivery and provision of SPS-related technical cooperation. Bringing the results of STDF's work to the attention of (potential) donors is also important and may warrant a number of visits to donors in capital.

15. The Secretariat will maintain close collaboration with other units in the WTO, notably the Aid for Trade Unit and the Enhanced Integrated Framework (EIF). The EIF is essential to STDF's coordination role and to the achievement of STDF's target to devote at least 40 per cent of project grant resources to Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Other Low Income Countries (OLICs). In addition to SPS-related project development (see Chapter III), the STDF will continue to collaborate with the EIF in the preparation, validation and update of Diagnostic Trade Integration Studies (DTIS, Tier 1).

⁷ Reference is made to the background note discussed in the Working Group in October 2013.

⁸ This sub-activity was not implemented in 2013.

⁹ Meetings will be scheduled for one day and a half, or two days. The Working Group may request the Secretariat to organize a meeting of the Policy Committee towards the end of the year. An overview of tentative STDF meeting dates and deadlines in 2014 is provided in **Annex 3**.

¹⁰ See document G/SPS/53.

III. IMPROVED CAPACITY OF BENEFICIARIES TO IDENTIFY AND PRIORITIZE SPS NEEDS AND FORMULATE PROJECT PROPOSALS THAT ARE ABLE TO SECURE FUNDING FROM STDF OR EXTERNAL FUNDING SOURCES

16. As in previous years, it is anticipated that the STDF will receive a large number of applications for funding (both projects and project preparation grants) for initial review by the Secretariat at stage 1 of the review process.¹¹ These applications are usually at various stages of development, ranging from two-page concept notes to fully-fledged proposals. The Secretariat will review the applications and provide advice and support to applicants, where appropriate, notably in terms of SPS needs assessment, priority setting and proposal development. This work will consume a relatively large portion of staff time.

17. Within the STDF, project preparation grants (PPGs) are the main mechanism to assist beneficiaries in the articulation of their SPS needs. Predicting the number of PPG applications to be funded through the STDF in 2014 is difficult given that the number and quality of applications received is beyond the Secretariat's control. Based on experiences, the STDF will aim to approve and contract at least four project preparation grants (PPGs) for funding, corresponding to an average of two PPGs approved at each Working Group meeting. Normally up to US\$50,000 will be available to eligible organizations under a PPG.

18. The STDF will continue to assume a pro-active role in the implementation of PPGs and the design of resulting projects. In some instances, this may include accompanying selected consultants during (parts of) their missions. The resulting projects may be submitted to the STDF for funding (in part) or to another donor. Given the limited resources available in the STDF Trust Fund, emphasis will continue to be placed on the use of PPGs as a vehicle for mobilizing funds (including "co-funding" options) for resulting projects outside the STDF, where feasible and appropriate.

19. In consultation with relevant STDF partners, and if the necessary resources are available in the Secretariat, the STDF may also accept to review SPS-related projects and programmes initiated by other organizations and initiatives. This includes draft proposals submitted by the EIF Secretariat to the WTO for comments ("Tier 2" proposals).

IV. IMPROVED CAPACITY OF BENEFICIARIES OF STDF-FUNDED PROJECTS TO ANALYSE AND IMPLEMENT INTERNATIONAL SPS REQUIREMENTS

20. Predicting the number of projects which will be funded through the STDF in 2014 is similarly difficult given that the number and quality of applications received is again beyond the Secretariat's control. The overall level of funding in the Trust Fund may be another limiting factor.¹² With these caveats in mind, the STDF will aim to approve and contract at least four project grants, corresponding to an average of two applications at each Working Group meeting. It is anticipated that the average STDF contribution to these projects will be approximately US\$ 700,000.¹³

21. The following six projects were selected by the Working Group for external evaluation and are outstanding. Out of these, the STDF will contract at least two ex-post evaluations in 2014. Up to US\$25,000 is budgeted for each evaluation.

- (a) STDF/PG/126 (Assistance to establish a horticulture industry organization in Tanzania);
- (b) STDF/PG/255 (West African Fruit Fly Initiative or WAFFI), in combination with STDF/PG/313 (Continuation of WAFFI), STDF/PG/287 (fruit fly newsletter) and STDF/283 (Support for SPS risk assessment in the mango export sector in Mali)

¹¹ As outlined in the STDF Operational Rules.

¹² In the event the financial resources of the Facility are insufficient to fund all the projects approved, the Working Group will give priority to staffing requirements necessary to fulfil existing commitments, then to funding activities under STDF's first strategic result area (enhanced delivery and coordination of SPS-related technical co-operation), then to funding PPGs, and lastly to projects. See paragraph 86 of the Operational Rules.

¹³ Corresponding to the average STDF contribution to projects approved in 2012-2013.

- (c) STDF/PG/155 (Market oriented SPS training services in Nicaragua)

V. REPORTING AND EVALUATION

22. The Secretariat will report to the Working Group on the implementation of this Work Plan in March and October 2014. The Secretariat will also report to the WTO SPS Committee at the meetings scheduled in 2014. Towards the end of the year, the Secretariat will initiate the preparation of the STDF 2014 Annual Report for presentation, discussion and approval by the Working Group at its first meeting in 2014.

23. The Working Group is also expected, at its first meeting in March 2014, to discuss the conclusions and recommendations and the follow-up to the external mid-term review of the Facility (conducted in 2013). Additional resources, up to US\$ 100,000 are budgeted to follow up on the recommendations of the mid-term review, if and where appropriate.

VI. STDF SECRETARIAT

24. The Secretariat is housed in the Agriculture and Commodities Division (AGCD) of the WTO and includes the Secretary, four professional staff and one administrative assistant. The WTO continues to provide the STDF Secretary from the WTO's regular budget. Staffing needs in terms of implementing the activities outlined in this Work Plan are incorporated in the budget under each of the three strategic result areas (see **Annex 2**).¹⁴ Table 1 below provides an overview of the estimated staffing costs in 2014. The WTO may decide to hire additional temporary staff for the STDF in the event of specific activities or a sudden increase in the Secretariat's workload.

Table 1: Estimated staffing costs of the STDF Secretariat¹⁵

Title	Grade	Annual approximate cost including salary and benefits
STDF Secretary	Grade 9	NA – funded from WTO regular budget
2 Economic Affairs Officers	Grade 8	CHF 390,000 (total)
2 Economic Affairs Officers	Grade 7	CHF 290,000 (total)
Administrative assistant	Grade 4	CHF 100,000
Total approximate cost		CHF 780,000 or US\$ 819,000 (1.05 exchange rate)

VII. BUDGET ESTIMATE

25. **Annex 2** sets out an indicative budget for the STDF in 2013 totalling US\$ 5,117,770. In the event of a shortfall in the total amount of funding received, some activities may be scaled back or dropped from the Work Plan. In practical terms, given the priority-setting established in the STDF Operational Rules, any scaling back will affect most the ability of the STDF to approve project grants.

26. Expenditure related to project development and project funding will be subject to approval by the Working Group on the basis of requests for funding. Other elements will be implemented on the basis of approval by the Working Group of this Work Plan (notably in terms of activities in Chapter II and staffing).

¹⁴ STDF staffing levels are reviewed as part of the STDF mid-term review.

¹⁵ The information included in this table is an approximate projection of the cost. The actual cost will depend on the individual circumstances of the staff member, including place of recruitment, dependents, etc. Staff may be promoted in accordance with WTO rules and procedures.

ANNEX 1

LOGICAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE WORK PLAN (2014) OF THE STDF

	Indicators ¹⁶	Sources of verification	Assumptions
Goal			
To contribute to sustainable economic growth, poverty reduction, food security and environmental protection in developing countries			
Purpose			
To improve the human, animal and plant health status of developing countries and their ability to gain and maintain access to markets			
Strategic Result 1: Enhanced collaboration in SPS-related technical cooperation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No. of joint activities initiated among STDF WG members and observer organizations, as facilitated by STDF No. of SPS-related initiatives that apply STDF tools, guidelines, briefing notes, etc. Level of satisfaction of STDF WG members and observers with effectiveness of collaboration and application of good practice in SPS-related technical cooperation Increase in traffic to STDF website and in amount of information downloaded 		

¹⁶ Indicators at the strategic result level are left unchanged, pending the outcome of the STDF mid-term review.

	Indicators ¹⁶	Sources of verification	Assumptions
Activity			
Conduct research on interface and linkages between SPS and Trade Facilitation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publication of two regional reports (Africa, Asia) and one synthesis study • One STDF Briefing Note • Participation in selected external events to disseminate results 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • STDF documents for Working Group, SPS Committee • STDF website 	
Revise and finalize the MCDA toolkit to prioritize SPS investment options	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publication of revised MCDA toolkit • Creation of peer review group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • STDF documents for Working Group, SPS Committee • STDF website 	
Information dissemination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updates to new STDF website • Preparation and publication of eight new project fact sheets • One STDF Briefing Note • 5% increase in persons subscribed to STDF e-list • Publication of STDF two e-newsletters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • STDF documents for Working Group, SPS Committee • STDF website • Electronic distribution system 	
Organize two Working Group meetings (March and October 2014) and one Policy Committee meeting (December 2014)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting reports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • STDF documents for Working Group, Policy Committee, SPS Committee • STDF website 	

	Indicators ¹⁶	Sources of verification	Assumptions
Prepare new audio-visual material	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Background note for discussion in Working Group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> STDF documents for Working Group STDF website 	
Participate in external events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participation in selected external events to disseminate information about STDF and its activities, monitor developments, and promote coherence and coordination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Documentation/web site related to external events STDF documents for Working Group, SPS Committee STDF website 	
Strategic Result 2: Improved capacity of beneficiaries to identify and prioritize SPS needs and formulate project proposals that are able to secure funding from STDF or external funding sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No. of SPS-related project proposals that have applied capacity evaluation and prioritization tools No. of projects resulting from STDF PPG / project applications that are funded by STDF or external funding sources Level of satisfaction of STDF PPG / project beneficiaries on improvements in their capacity to identify and prioritize SPS needs and formulate project proposals 		

	Indicators ¹⁶	Sources of verification	Assumptions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of support and guidance to applicants • Review of PPG and project applications • Contracting of approved PPGs • Guidance / supervision of PPG implementation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Four PPGs approved in 2014 • Four PPGs contracted in 2014 • Four projects approved in 2014 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • STDF documents for Working Group, SPS Committee 	
<p>Strategic Result 3: Improved capacity of beneficiaries of STDF-funded projects to analyse and implement international SPS requirements (as per specific project objectives)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achievement of specific targets for individual projects • Rating of projects by external evaluator 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contracting of approved projects • Guidance / supervision of project implementation • Contracting of ex-post evaluations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Four projects contracted in 2014 • Ex-post evaluations carried out for at least two projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • STDF documents for Working Group, SPS Committee 	

ANNEX 2

Table 1: Budget estimate for the STDF 2014 (US\$)				
Strategic result	Activity	Amount	Number	Sub-total
Enhanced Collaboration in SPS-related Technical Cooperation	Prepare synthesis study on SPS and Trade Facilitation and one STDF Briefing Note	0	2	0
	Revise and finalize MCDA toolkit and create peer review group	150,000	1	150,000
	Prepare new STDF film product	200,000	1	200,000
	Update and promote STDF website	0	1	0
	Prepare and publish eight project fact sheets	0	8	0
	Prepare and publish one STDF Briefing Note on STDF projects (lessons learned)	0	1	0
	Update and promote STDF Virtual Library	0	1	0
	Prepare and distribute two e-newsletters	0	2	0
	Participate in selected external meetings	5,000	20	100,000
	Other costs related to information dissemination (e.g. renewal of licences, working group lunch/coffee, etc.)	20,000	1	20,000
	STDF Working Group meetings (travel of six developing country representatives @ \$6,000 per person)	36,000	2	72,000
	STDF Policy Committee (travel of three developing country representatives @ \$6,000 per person)	18,000	1	18,000
	Staffing to support coordination activities (one Grade 8, one Grade 7)			357,000
				Sub-total
Improved capacity of beneficiaries to identify and prioritize SPS needs and formulate project proposals that are able to secure funding from STDF or external funding sources	Advice and support to applicants and review of project and PPG applications	0	30	0
	Four PPGs contracted	50,000	4	200,000
	Staffing to support project development (50% of one Grade 8 and 50% of one Grade 7)			178,500
				Sub-total
Improved capacity of beneficiaries of STDF-funded projects to analyse and implement international SPS requirements (as per specific project objectives)	Four projects contracted	700,000	4	2,800,000
	Evaluation of completed projects	25,000	2	50,000
	Staffing to support project implementation (50% of one Grade 8 and 50% of one Grade 7)			178,500
				Sub-total
Other	One administrative assistant	105,000		105,000
	Follow-up STDF Mid-Term Review	100,000		100,000
				Sub-total
Total				4,529,000
Administrative overhead	Overhead costs	0		588,770
Grand Total				5,117,770
Overhead costs on project implementation are normally shared between the WTO (1%) and the organization implementing the project or providing oversight services (12%).				

ANNEX 3

STDF RELEVANT DATES 2014¹⁷

MARCH (GENEVA)

2 January	Deadline for submission of applications
27 February	Deadline for circulation of applications and review by STDF Secretariat
13 March	Deadline for circulation of other meeting documentation
26-28 March	Working Group meeting

OCTOBER (GENEVA)

21 July	Deadline for submission of applications
15 September	Deadline for circulation of applications and review by STDF Secretariat
29 September	Deadline for circulation of other meeting documentation
13-14 October	Working Group meeting

DECEMBER (TBC)

November	Deadline for circulation of documents to the Policy Committee
December	Policy Committee meeting

¹⁷ Dates are tentative and subject to confirmation prior to each meeting.