

STDF 354 PROJECT- NEWSLETTER

(JUNE 2015)

Improving Safety and Quality of the Sri Lankan Fruits and Vegetables

The International Trade Centre (ITC), the Ceylon Chambers of Commerce (CCC), with the support of the Standards and Trade Development Facility (STDF) of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) are partnering with the Department of Agriculture (DOA), The Ministry of Health, The National Agribusiness Council (NAC) and the Sri Lanka Fruit and Vegetables Producers Processors and Exporters Association (LFVPPEA) and relevant private and public stakeholders in Sri Lanka to contribute to:

“Improve the safety and quality of the Sri Lankan Fruits and Vegetables” (STDF 354)

The project aims to 1) build and sustain the competence of public and private stakeholders to comply with quality and food safety international requirements, 2) improve the international, regional and national market opportunities of selected value chains of fruits and vegetables with the ultimate goal of income generation.

Duration of the project: March 2013 – February 2016

NEEDS BEING ADDRESSED

- Non-compliance with Non-Tariff measures of the agricultural goods in target markets;
- Minimal measures taken at growing stage to ensure quality and safety;
- Improper pesticide and fertilizer use;
- Poor post-harvest practices, handling, sorting, inappropriate storage and transportation;
- Lack of awareness and training on the importance and requirements of international Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) measures, and benefits;
- Lack of a proper pest risk analysis system;
- Poor coordination among different stakeholders to address SPS issues of the F&V sector.

The project focuses on the improvement of the six crops being identified with high potential of export, predominantly grown in selected targeted districts: **pineapple; papaya; mango; green chilli; tomato** and **protected agriculture**.



PROJECT PROGRESS

- **Output 1:** *The value chain of selected crops of fruits and vegetables are assessed.*

A study to assess the current status of the F&V value chain in Sri Lanka has been conducted, six crops identified with domestic and international export potential and 13 districts where they are predominantly grown. Key stakeholders along the chain have been identified

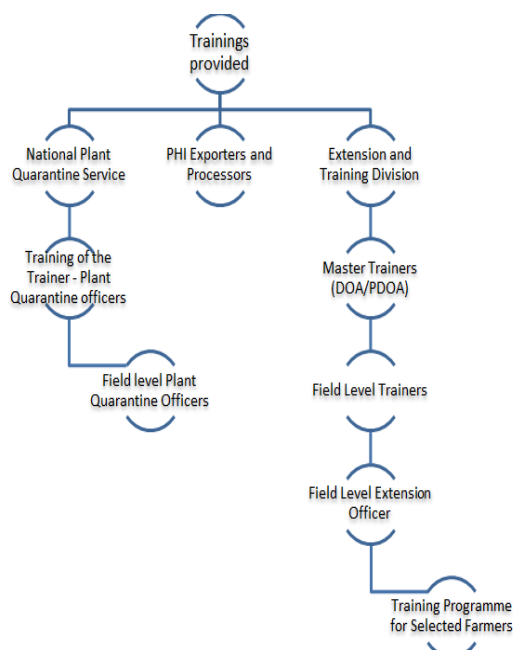
- **Output 2:** *Enhanced availability of information on updated regulated pest lists.*

Information on pests, weeds, and diseases has been collected and the draft regulated pest list has been submitted to the Director General of Agriculture; Pest identification and surveillance equipment has been provided to the Plant Quarantine Department.

- **Output 3:** *Enhanced capacity of public and private stakeholders on understanding and complying with SPS standards.*

An intensive Training of Trainers and capacity building programme has been undertaken in the SPS area for more than 50 staff of the DoA at National Plant Quarantine Service and training of more than 200 Master Trainers, Field Level Trainers, and Field Level Extension Officers of the Extension Division.

- One Training of the Trainer program for Plant Quarantine Officers (20 Trainees) – 10 days;
- One Training program for Plant Quarantine Officers (18 Trainees) – one day;
- Two Training programs for Field Plant Quarantine Officers (50 trainees) – 5 day each programme;
- Two additional training programmes for 90 Plant Quarantine inspectors at the airport and sea port on SPS (focus on pest identification/control)
- TOT Program for Master Trainers (28 Trainees) - 10 days;
- Two TOT Programs for Field Level Trainers (47 trainees) - 10 days each programme;
- Six training programs for Field Level Extension Officers (149 Participants) - 5 days each;
- One Workshop for MOH Inspectors, Exporters, Processors and other stakeholders (70 participants) - 2 days
- Nine trainings to farmers – 5 days;



Name of the District	Crop	No of farmers trained
Gampaha	Pineapple	19
Kurunegala	Pineapple	12
Kandy	Protected agriculture	22
Anurathapura	Chillies	29
Puttalam	Chillies	28
Nuwara Eliya	Protected Agriculture	27
Nuwara eliya	Tomato	29
Matale	Tomato	27
Badulla	Protected Agriculture	34



- **Output 4:** *Enhanced availability, accessibility and awareness of information on and compliance with SPS standards.*

Training materials covering key SPS related areas have been released and made available in English, Sinhala, and Tamil; The website www.spssrilanka.lk has been designed and it is regularly updated to enhance availability, accessibility and awareness of information on SPS in the Fruits and Vegetables sector in Sri Lanka.

- **Output 5:** *Improved public-private cooperation and networking between stakeholders.*

In order to improve private-public sector cooperation, sessions have been organized, to address SPS-related issue and comply with EU regulations.

Five Project Steering Committee meetings held.



Additional activities funded by ITC to strengthen the impact of STDF project:

- Mapping of SPS- related Trade Support Institutions (TSIs) and a two-day workshop implemented for 18 TSIs to develop a coordination / networking mechanism in the F&V sector (for the findings see www.spssrilanka.lk)
- Reviewing of the plant health control system and provision of on-site recommendations to improve the compliance with the EU plant health regulations
- Assessing of the public and private laboratories in SL for priority tests

RESULTS

- The capacities of the staff of the DoA National Plant Quarantine Service (NPQS) and the Extension Division have been strengthened. As a result, more than 400 officers have improved their knowledge and skills in the area of SPS. A pool of master trainers and the best performing trainees of the NPQS cascaded training programs;
- Formal training on GAP for master trainers, field level extension officers, and farmers have been introduced for the first time;
- Intensive training on Pest Risk Analysis (PRA) based on IPPC methodology was conducted for the first time in Sri Lanka;
- Locally trained DoA officers are conducting ongoing Training for farmers;

Training modules available at the DoA:

- Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS): What are the SPS measures and how to meet them;
- Good Agricultural Practices (GAP), Pesticide use, Post-harvest handling
- Pest Risk Analysis (PRA) based on IPPC methodology
- Pest and disease management at field level

- Improved laboratory facilities at the NPQS laboratory by providing modern equipment for pest identification and surveillance activities;
- Presentations and workshops have been given to raise understanding on SPS issues and raise awareness of the benefits of the project.
- Increased collaboration between public and private stakeholders in Sri Lanka and with the EU to respond to trade related issues such as compliance with EU requirements.
- Improved ability to comply with EU plant health regulations and official audit of the Food and Veterinary Office (conducted in February 2015) with the assistance of the trained PQO and the other trained staff of DOA. As a result the number of notifications of non-compliance in EU has been reduced;

NEXT STEPS

- A Complete Regulated Pests list will be published and made available;
- Training sessions on GAP, Pest Control, Post-harvest practices, for farmers in more groups covering papaya and mango will take place in the coming months to reach out a target of 500 farmers;

Name of the District	Crop
Monaragala	Papaya
Monaragala	Mango



- Additional support will be provided to strengthen the capacity of Sri Lanka to implement the action plan in response to the EC FVO mission conducted in February 2015.

- An evaluation of the best performing farmers and agri-extension officers will be conducted;



- A study tour to Thailand for the selected best performers will be organized;
- Networking sessions allowing better Public-Private Sector coordination and business match making will be held;
- Further development of spssrilanka.lk website and a sustainability plan is to be implemented;

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