

## Terms of Reference

### **Piloting the use of Third Party Assurance (TPA) programmes to improve food safety outcomes for public health and trade in Africa**

#### **Background**

1. Food business operators (FBOs) have the primary role and responsibility for managing the food safety of their products and for complying with regulatory requirements relating to those aspects of food under their control. Competent Authorities require FBOs to demonstrate that they have effective controls and procedures in place to protect the health of consumers and ensure fair practices in food trade. As a result, many FBOs use quality assurance systems, including voluntary third-party assurance (vTPA) programmes to reduce supply chain risks and confirm food safety outcomes.

2. Voluntary third-party assurance (vTPAs) programmes are formal, documented food safety systems to improve food safety outcomes. The Codex Committee on Food Import Export Inspection and Certification Systems (CCFICS) defines a voluntary Third-Party Assurance Programme as a "non-governmental or autonomous scheme comprising of the ownership of a standard that utilises national/international requirements; a governance structure for certification and enforcement, and in which FBO participation is voluntary".<sup>1</sup> In most cases, the private sector develops and manages these programmes though in some countries, government authorities responsible for private sector and industrial development also develop and promote the use of vTPA programmes on food safety.

3. Competent authorities are increasingly taking account of and/or using information and data from using vTPA programmes to better inform their risk profiling of food businesses, inform the implementation of risk-based inspection and more effectively target resources within their national food control system. Using vTPA programmes is seen to offer potential to help competent authorities and industry improve food safety outcomes, while allowing each to operate within their defined roles and responsibilities. vTPA programmes also have the potential to deliver other benefits, such as flexibility to respond to changing conditions, greater efficiency, increased buy-in by the private sector, improved compliance, etc.

4. In October 2018, the STDF Working Group approved two project preparation grants (PPG) to develop regional projects to pilot the use of vTPAs in selected countries, based on public-private collaboration. The application from Africa (STDF/PPG/665, attached in Appendix 1) was submitted by the Directorate of Fisheries Resources in Uganda, the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Infrastructure of Senegal, and the National Food Safety Agency of Mali. The application from Central America (STDF/PPG/682) was submitted by the Belize Agricultural Health Authority (BAHA) and the National Service for Agrifood Health and Quality (Servicio Nacional De Sanidad Y Calidad Agroalimentaria, SENASA) in Honduras.

5. In approving these two applications, the Working Group agreed on the importance of ensuring linkages and synergies in the work to be carried out under both PPGs, particularly given the expected similarities and commonalities between the two regional projects to result from these PPGs (even if the individual country contexts differ). The expectation is that the two regional projects to result from these PPGs would follow a broadly similar approach, and test and assess some common elements, so that the experiences and outcomes could also be compared across the two regions and

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<sup>1</sup> CCFICS. Proposed Draft Principles and Guidelines for the Assessment and Use of Voluntary Third-Party Assurance Programmes (At Step 3). Document discussed and agreed at the CCFICS meeting in Brisbane, October 2018.

different country contexts (i.e. through the use of common metrics). As such, concerted efforts will be made during the work under each PPG to identify and encourage linkages and synergies across the two regions, as well as to identify and encourage South-South linkages and cooperation across the two resulting regional projects.

6. The Working Group made some recommendations to support the implementation of these two PPGs, including to: (i) clearly identify the type of information to be collected and analysed as part of the consultation process with stakeholders; (ii) consider the activities that could be delegated to TPA programmes, without compromising the integrity of national food control systems; (iii) consider the potential risks associated with the use of TPA programmes and how to address these risks. The STDF Working Group recognized the linkages between these PPGs and the ongoing work by the Codex Committee on Food Import Export Inspection and Certification Systems (CCFICS) to develop "Draft principles and guidelines for the assessment and use of voluntary third-party assurance programmes."

### **Implementation arrangements**

7. This document sets out the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the implementation of the Africa PPG (STDF/PPG/665) by an international consultant. This international consultant will carry out this work in close collaboration with the STDF Secretariat, relevant government and private sector stakeholders in the three beneficiary countries (Mali, Senegal and Uganda).

8. To ensure synergies with the related PPG work be carried out in Central America, and facilitate the development of two (separate but inter-connected) regional proposals, the international consultant for the Africa PPG will also consult and closely collaborate with IICA and other stakeholders (including technical experts / consultants) involved in the work in Central America.

9. The international consultant will also cooperate with any other relevant stakeholders with an interest in the work to be carried out under the PPG in Africa, such as Kenya which chairs the Codex Coordinating Committee for Africa, CCAFRICA, Regional Economic Communities. In addition, the international consultant will collaborate with relevant STDF Partners (including FAO), other interested organizations (e.g. GFSI), as well as organizations in STDF donor countries (Canadian Food Inspection Agency, CFIA and UK Food Standards Agency) that are involved in related work and/or have offered in-kind support to these PPGs. The STDF Secretariat will convene a small informal advisory committee, with representatives from these different organizations, to discuss the PPG work and resulting project proposals (by phone or Skype) at key points during work under both the Africa and Central America PPGs.

### **Purpose and expected results**

10. The purpose of the PPG will be to develop a regional project proposal to pilot and assess how vTPA programmes may be used in practice in selected African countries to improve food safety outcomes, with a focus on specific commodities, products and supply chains. In Africa, the supply chains are expected to include: the fisheries sector in Mali, the horticulture sector in Senegal (which mainly exports green beans, cherry tomatoes, mangoes, sweet corn and melons), and aquaculture value chains in Uganda.

11. Key tasks to be carried out by the international consultant will include: (i) desk research, information collection and analysis; (ii) face-to-face consultations (including stakeholder workshops) with relevant public and private sector stakeholders in each of the three beneficiary countries to discuss, develop and validate the resulting regional project proposal; (iii) consultations on the resulting project proposal (by Skype, video conference and other possible means within the available budget) with other relevant organizations; (iv) facilitation of a meeting, to be organized on the

margins of the Global Food Safety Conference in Nice, France (25-28 February 2019), for an in-depth preparatory discussion on both the Africa and Central America PPGs and expected regional projects with relevant stakeholders including IICA, selected representative from the beneficiary countries in each region, and other interested organizations.

12. The international consultant will enable relevant public and private sector stakeholders in Mali, Senegal and Uganda to:

- Discuss the context, needs and opportunities that exist for the private sector and regulatory authorities to make use of vTPA programmes to improve food safety outcomes in their countries;
- Discuss and agree on the key elements of a regional project proposal including the objective, approach, logical framework, budget and timeframe, specific roles and responsibilities, assumptions and risks, implementation and management, monitoring and evaluation, etc.;
- Agree on and commit to the specifics of their expected role and involvement in the resulting regional project.

13. The resulting regional project will be expected to improve understanding about how different approaches to TPA programmes (including information and data generated by TPA auditors) may be used in developing countries to bolster compliance and build confidence in the country's national food control system (NFCS). For instance, how can vTPA programmes support regulatory authorities (e.g. by improving risk-profiling of food businesses, better prioritisation of resources) and the private sector (increased confidence in levels of compliance with regulatory requirements, improved food safety outcomes at industry/sector level)? How can vTPA programmes help to target inspection resources more efficiently, or to build food safety capacity of small-scale producers and small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to build their capacity? The work should also identify and assess the challenges facing relevant public and private sector stakeholders linked to vTPA programmes, the risks involved, and what is needed to enable developing countries to benefit from this approach.

#### **Key tasks for the international consultant**

14. Key tasks to be carried out by this international expert will include:

- i. Conduct preparatory desk research including Skype calls / interviews with relevant stakeholders in Africa, Central America and elsewhere.
- ii. Carry out two missions to the three beneficiary countries (Mali, Senegal and Uganda) to: collect relevant information on the selected sectors/value chains; meet relevant public and private stakeholders to explain the concept of TPAs, discuss and agree on a framework for public-private collaboration in the selected value chains as part of the resulting project; discuss relevant capacity building needs and challenges and obtain views on the proposed regional project.
- iii. Facilitate and report on workshops with relevant public and private stakeholders in each country.
- iv. Consult other relevant stakeholders, including Kenya (Chair of the Codex Coordinating Committee for Africa), relevant Regional Economic Communities in Africa (e.g. COMESA), STDF partners (including FAO), other relevant private sector stakeholders (including GFSI), organizations in STDF donor countries (Canadian Food Inspection Agency, CFIA and UK Food Standards Agency) that are involved in related work and/or have offered in-kind support, as well as any other bilateral donors or other organizations that may be interested in contributing to or supporting the resulting project.
- v. Participate in Skype/phone discussions of the informal advisory committee, convened to discuss the PPG work and resulting regional project proposals at key points during work under both the Africa and Central America PPGs.

- vi. Participate in the G2B meeting on the margins of the Global Food Safety Conference in Nice (Feb. 2019), and facilitate a brainstorming meeting on the margins of this conference with relevant stakeholders, including representatives of the PPG beneficiaries from Africa and Central America, the STDF, IICA and other partners to discuss the two PPGs and project proposals to be developed.
- vii. Provide advice and inputs to encourage synergies between the two separate regional projects to be produced through the Africa and Central America PPGs.
- viii. Draft and finalize a complete proposal for a regional project in Africa that has the support and commitment of relevant government and private sector organizations in the beneficiary countries, as well as other relevant stakeholders.

15. The international expert will deliver the following outputs:

- i. A short report on the implementation and outcomes of activities under the Africa PPG. This report should:
  - a. analyse and assessing the feasibility, practicability, challenges (e.g. costs, affordability for SMEs, legal aspects) and different types of models of using voluntary TPA programmes, and the expected outcomes and benefits (if any) for government and private sector stakeholders, based on the in-country work.
  - b. describe the activities carried out by the consultant, the results achieved, and the key stakeholders involved and/or consulted (including contact details).
  - c. attach copies of relevant documents produced under the PPG (any relevant documents should be provided to the STDF for inclusion into the STDF online Library).
- ii. A complete proposal for a regional project in Africa that encourages public-private collaboration, based on vTPA programmes, to improve food safety outcomes in the participating countries. The project proposal should:
  - a. Consider the needs of relevant stakeholders (e.g. national government authorities, private sector stakeholders, etc.), as well as the national/regional options and requirements (e.g. financing, human resource needs, etc.) to improve food safety outcomes and increase exports in the selected/identified commodities and products in the selected value chains.
  - b. Clearly elaborate, based on consultation with the stakeholders, the purpose, scope, specific objectives, and expected outcomes, outputs and activities of the proposed project, based on a coherent logical framework. The logical framework should include indicators to measure performance, sources of verification and any key risks and assumptions.
  - c. Clearly identify the roles and responsibilities of all concerned public and private stakeholders, and outline a practical mechanism for project implementation and management.
  - d. Identify linkages, synergies and complementarities to work carried out under the related PPG in Central America, including opportunities for South-South cooperation, dialogue and exchange of lessons and experiences across Africa and Central America.
  - e. Identify linkages, synergies and complementarities to relevant (past/ongoing/planned) activities and projects supported by donors and development partners, as well as ongoing work within CCFICs, and relevant STDF work.
  - f. Include a detailed estimate of the budget required to implement the proposed project and, where possible, identify possible donors and/or private sector support.
  - g. Consider cross-cutting issues related to gender and environmental aspects of the proposed project.
  - h. Include a detailed work plan and timetable for project implementation.

- i. Identify and assess the possible risks and challenges faced in the proposed project, as well as risk mitigation strategies to ensure its success and sustainability.

### **Budget and Timeframe**

16. An estimated budget for implementation of the PPG is US\$ 52,000.
17. The planned starting date is 15 February 2019, with expected completion by 15 September 2019.

### **Profile for the International Consultant**

18. The international expert is expected to possess the following qualifications and skills:
  - Advanced degree in food safety or a related subject.
  - At least 7 years of relevant work experience in developing countries, including experience in development and implementation of food safety capacity building projects in Africa.
  - In-depth knowledge about SPS and food safety requirements related to TPA programmes, and/or related to the selected commodities and value chains.
  - Proven ability to work effectively with diverse public and private sector stakeholders (including high-level government officials, farmers, food businesses, donors and international organisations).
  - Fluency in English and French.