



Strategy to strengthen Togo's SPS system

The main purpose of the project is to strengthen the phytosanitary control and certification system for fruit and vegetables. This will improve market access for fruit and vegetables grown in Togo, by guaranteeing, as far as possible, the absence of quarantine pests. The project entails strengthening the framework and the capacities of the inspection and control services and of private operators active in the production and exportation of fruit and vegetables. The capacity-building will involve the establishment of a pilot supply chain that can serve as a benchmark for other plant and animal production subsectors and food producers in Togo and provide them with a model for development.

Ultimately, improved economic activity, sustained by efficient public services, will allow for a diversification of exports and faster economic growth and will thus help to reduce poverty in the agricultural and peri urban areas of Togo.

STDF/PG/375

Status

On-going

Start Date

01/11/2018

End Date

31/10/2021

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

With regards to fresh fruit and vegetables, Togo primarily exports pineapples (fresh and processed), leafy green vegetables and other ethnic products to Europe. Although still at low levels, exports of fruit and vegetables from Togo to the European Union (EU) have more than doubled over the past ten years while exports to the WAEMU region have increased by almost 30% over the same period. Horticulture offers one of the few income generating opportunities for women in rural and urban areas and therefore has a considerable impact on development.

Operators in the pineapple subsector are few in number and often cater for a formal market. For this reason they appear to be better structured. The horticultural subsector, on the other hand, is made up of numerous producers, operating either on their own or as part of a co operative, that supply small scale intermediaries and enterprises with little formal structure.

Since 2016, the country has been facing a significant increase in interceptions owing to the presence of quarantine pests (whitefly, and Bemisia Tabaci in particular), mainly in leafy green vegetables. The presence of these pests is not effectively controlled on exit from Togo. It is therefore necessary to tighten control measures nationwide. If this is not done, Europe could introduce more stringent controls for products originating from Togo or even prohibit imports of certain Togolese plant and plant products to European territory. It is also important to strengthen the organization and technical capacities of private operators and their supporting structures in order to improve pest control in the field and to introduce harvesting and packing measures that will minimize the presence of such pests.

This project will implement some of the actions proposed in the sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) strategy for Togo that was drawn up in 2016 thanks to the [project preparation grant](#) from the STDF.

Expected 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.