



MRL PROJECT IN AFRICA

Led by
AU-IBAR, FAO,
Rutgers University
and USDA

Time-frame
2013 - 2017

STDF funding
US\$446,150
(total project value
US\$1,064,450)

MRL PROJECT IN LATIN AMERICA

Led by
IICA, FAO,
Rutgers University
and USDA

Time-frame
2013 - 2016

STDF funding
US\$374,166
(total project value:
US\$1,195,416)

MRL PROJECT IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

Led by
ASEAN Secretariat,
FAO, Rutgers
University and USDA

Time-frame
2012 - 2016

STDF funding
US\$637,000
(total project value:
US\$1,242,000)

SUPPORTING AFRICA, LATIN AMERICA AND SOUTHEAST ASIA TO MEET PESTICIDE STANDARDS FOR EXPORT

The safe trade gap

When producers and traders in developing countries are unable to meet pesticide residue standards, their fruit and vegetable exports are rejected. That happens because few Maximum Residue Limits (MRLs) exist for tropical crops, or because the MRLs differ from Codex standards or for different trading partners. There are often big gaps in residue data in developing countries due to limited knowledge, and the costs of generating data and registering new pesticides. This discourages private sector investment. As a result, farmers are using older, less environmentally-friendly pesticides, which are less effective for managing pests and diseases and more likely to block trade.

Partnership approach

Across Africa, Latin America and Southeast Asia, government authorities partnered with multinational pesticide manufacturers, industry associations, farmers and international partners to carry out coordinated and complementary pesticide residue studies. This collaborative approach generated data to support the registration of new, improved low-risk pesticides for farmers. With these new crop protection tools, farmers can control pests and diseases more effectively, while meeting international food safety standards and facilitating safe trade. Plus there are added benefits when it comes to agricultural productivity, promoting environmental health and consumer safety.

“Field trials under the project identified new and better options to control pests affecting mango production in Africa. With data from the trials going to help set a new MRL, African mango farmers will see production losses fall and overseas markets open up”.

Paul Osei-Fosu,
Ghana Standards
Authority

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Results

- Thanks to field and lab-based training, over 160 scientists and government officials developed new skills to generate, review and interpret pesticide residue data. This led to more active participation in Codex meetings, making sure developing countries' needs are better reflected.
- Project partners completed 10 new residue studies. Data from the studies is supporting new MRLs for minor-use crops such as dragon fruit, mango and papaya. By the end of the projects, data was generated for at least 10 new Codex MRLs.
- Public-private collaboration plugged data gaps and improved results. Pooling data led to more robust data sets, reflecting geographic and climatic diversity, and generated cost savings of over 90%.
- Government officials gained the know-how to design regulatory frameworks for pesticides that meet public health and environmental objectives. The private sector registered new reduced-risk pesticides in 18 countries, expanding access to environmentally-friendly tools, alongside the new Codex standards coming in 2018-19.

Sustaining impact

- In 2015 project partners set up the Global Minor Use Foundation, supported by the USDA and the private sector. The Foundation builds on the projects' results and has mobilized over US\$550,000 to expand low-risk pesticide options for tropical produce.
- A sustainable model for joint residue projects was launched in over 13 developing countries, with governments funding research, the private sector giving technical support and financing, and the Foundation supporting capacity building.
- The projects' role in catalyzing global public-private sector collaboration was recognized in a high-level statement signed by 17 governments at the 11th WTO Ministerial Conference in 2017.