

Driving better decision-making: Prioritizing SPS investments for market access (P-IMA)

P-IMA framework

STDF's P-IMA framework is an evidence-based approach to inform and improve SPS planning and decision-making, including on resource allocation. It links SPS investments to policy goals from export growth to agricultural productivity, and poverty reduction, as well as the UN Sustainable Development Goals. In the process, P-IMA encourages public-private dialogue, boosts transparency and accountability, and improves the economic efficiency of investment decisions.



The SPS capacity challenge

Developing countries face many demands to improve sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) capacity to boost agri-food exports and support policy objectives. Yet, the resources available from government budgets and donors are usually insufficient to meet all the needs. Prioritizing SPS investments when resources are limited is not easy. Hard choices need to be made between competing investments. So how can governments and donors figure out where to allocate resources, linked to national goals and objectives? Evidence helps to improve the effectiveness of SPS policy and investment decisions. It is important to show impact and demonstrate value for money. Without a transparent, evidence-based approach, poor decisions can be made, or resources can be invested in areas that do not lead to the greatest impacts.

The evidence-based solution

The P-IMA framework¹ was developed by the STDF together with COMESA, USAID and USDA. P-IMA uses multi-criteria decision analysis to set priorities, based on available information and data. The process engages all relevant public and private sector stakeholders to discuss the various SPS investment needs and identify decision criteria and weights to prioritize investments. By transparently documenting the findings, as well as all the data and information used, it ensures that the SPS priorities generated are open to scrutiny, and delivers impartial information to inform priority policy decisions.

The benefits

- Greater efficiency of SPS investment decisions. Scarce resources can be allocated to support policy objectives on trade, poverty reduction, public health, and agricultural development.
- More transparent and accountable choices between multiple investment options.
- Evidence on the likely impacts of investing in SPS capacity can mobilize additional resources from governments or donors.
- Improved dialogue between public, private and other SPS stakeholders, and more inclusive decision-making processes.

¹ www.standardsfacility.org/prioritizing-sps-investments-market-access-p-ima

P-IMA decision criteria

- **Cost and complexity:** up-front investment; ongoing costs; difficulty of implementation.
- **Trade impacts:** change in value of exports; export diversification by products/markets; impact on SPS reputation.
- **Domestic spillovers:** impact on productivity; on domestic public health; on local environment.
- **Wider social impacts:** impact on employment; on poverty; on vulnerable groups; on food security.



“In Belize, the P-IMA analysis under STDF’s 2012 project continues to influence SPS capacity building. As a result, the food safety laboratory received support and is working towards ISO 17025 accreditation. HACCP certification has catalysed private sector investment to certify two poultry companies, opening the door to regional exports”.

Delilah Cabb, Belize Agricultural Health Authority

Making the case for additional investments in Belize⁴

Belize faced multiple demands to make sure food and agricultural products could access markets. Figuring out where to allocate resources for SPS capacity-building was difficult. The Belize Agricultural Health Authority (BAHA) turned to the P-IMA framework to inform SPS decision-making processes.

The process generated hard evidence for policy makers on the trade-related impacts of building SPS capacity, and helped to ensure that resources went to investments likely to achieve the greatest trade impacts. Encouraging public-private dialogue

helped to build trust and support for BAHA’s work. Based on this, the government identified opportunities to use the P-IMA approach in other ways, including to feed into the development of BAHA’s strategic plan, as well as priority-setting on agriculture, SMEs, and food and nutrition security.

The P-IMA framework continues to demonstrate the expected returns on different SPS investments nationwide, and provides evidence to show policy makers the need for additional investments. For instance, P-IMA was used to affirm the government’s decision and support for new investments to improve animal health controls for live cattle to facilitate exports to Mexico and Guatemala.

P-IMA and cross-cutting issues

P-IMA promotes linkages between cross-cutting issues and SPS capacity building by using social impact criteria, including on vulnerable and marginalized groups, women and the environment. It provides a way to think strategically about SPS investments, highlighting the value of investing in SPS capacity building for the greater good, whilst improving the results of SPS capacity building activities.

⁴ www.standardsfacility.org/PG-365

P-IMA principles

- **Flexibility:** can be used to prioritize several SPS investments, based on diverse decision criteria.
- **Pragmatism:** balances rigour in setting priorities with the challenge of scarce and/or weak data.
- **Participation:** inputs are encouraged from all interested stakeholders that hold relevant information.
- **Transparency:** decision criteria and data used are documented, open to scrutiny and can be challenged.
- **Linkages:** complements sector-specific SPS capacity evaluation tools and other assessments.



“Use of P-IMA helps to raise high-level awareness about the importance of investing in SPS capacity. It improves SPS planning and cross-sectoral coordination and helps to get SPS priorities integrated in national policy and investment frameworks for agriculture, trade and the environment”.

Martha Byanyima, COMESA Secretariat

Mobilizing resources for SPS investments in COMESA²

COMESA member states face many demands and SPS needs to get food and agricultural products to regional and international markets. Figuring out where to allocate resources is challenging. The list of needs is long and resources are limited. STDF is supporting a regional project, in partnership with the EIF, to use the P-IMA framework to prioritize and mobilize resources to strengthen SPS capacity in COMESA member states.

Led by the COMESA Secretariat, the project builds on initial work, facilitated by COMESA, USAID and USDA, that used evidence to prioritize SPS investments. The project will mainstream SPS priorities into larger policy and financing frameworks for agriculture, trade, the environment and climate change. The plan is to mobilize additional resources to meet SPS needs.

The project will promote synergies with FAO work on National Agriculture Investment Plans, with the EIF, the African Union Commission, and with think tanks, the private sector and donors.

It will also strengthen collaboration across agriculture and trade policy in line with a key recommendation from an EIF/STDF study³. By putting SPS investment needs prominently on national and regional agendas, the results will be valuable for other Regional Economic Communities across Africa, and for partners interested in facilitating safe trade to boost development.

Setting the priorities in Malawi

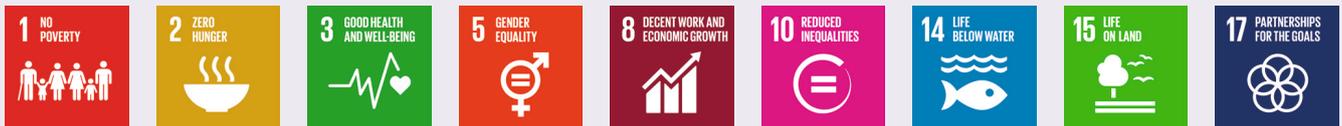
The Ministry of Industry and Trade led efforts to pilot the P-IMA framework in Malawi in 2012, together with other parts of government, the private sector and donors. The findings fed into the National Export Strategy and other country strategies. Using P-IMA, stakeholders had confidence in knowing where to invest in SPS capacity building to boost exports. It promoted dialogue, helped in developing project proposals and securing funding. As a result, the government used P-IMA to come up with a harmonized list of priorities for the National Trade Facilitation Action Plan.

² www.standardsfacility.org/PG-606

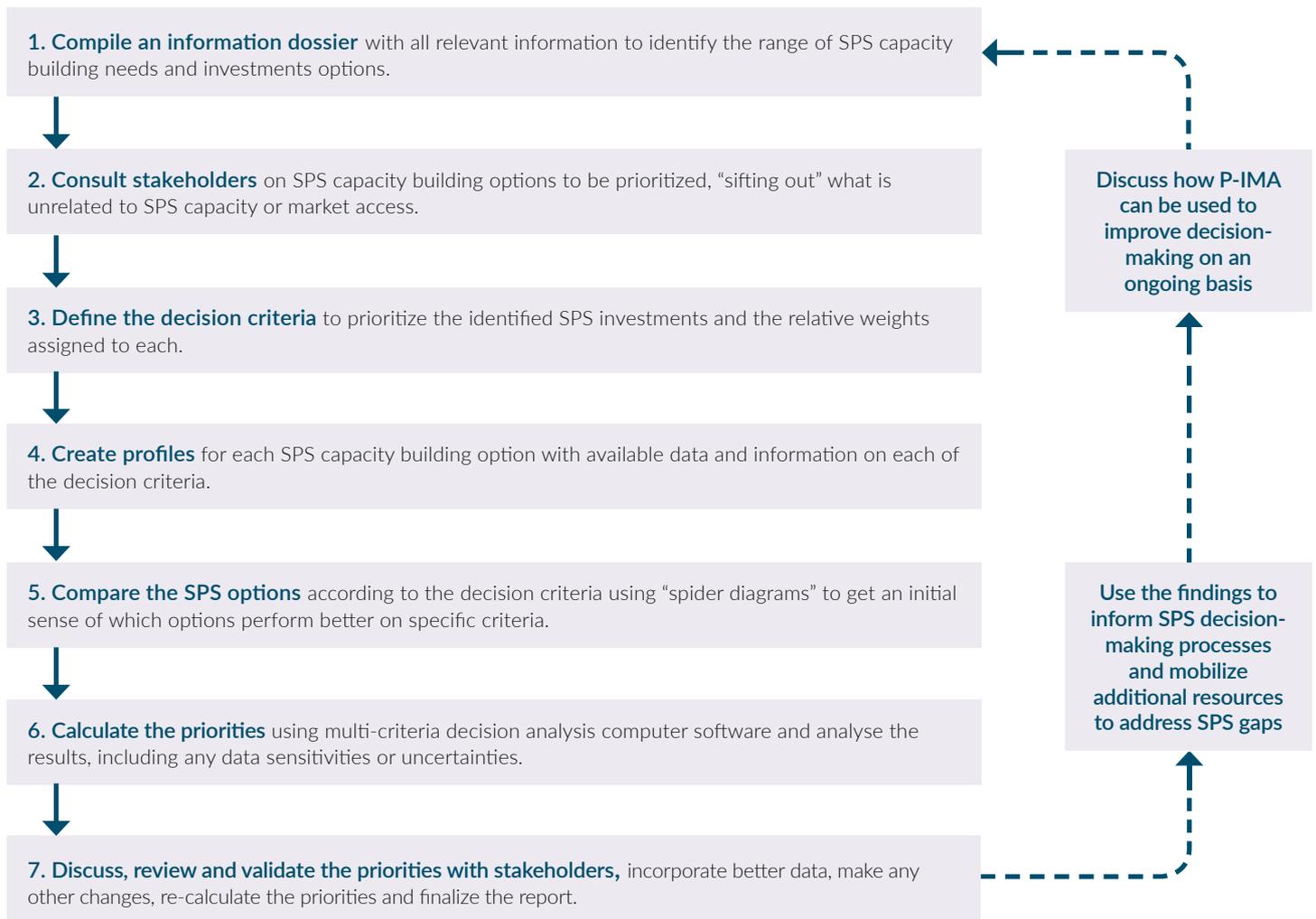
³ Enhancing SPS capacity to promote trade for development in least developed countries: www.standardsfacility.org/sites/default/files/EIF_STDF_Study_Final.pdf

The STDF vision

The STDF is working to advance the Sustainable Development Goals through its vision:
Sustainable economic growth, poverty reduction, food security and environmental protection in developing countries



P-IMA process



How P-IMA can support you

- Improves SPS planning and decision-making processes.
- Provides evidence to develop SPS capacity building projects, and mobilize funds.
- Raises high-level awareness about the value of investing in SPS capacity building.
- Stimulates and informs stakeholder discussions on SPS capacity building needs.
- Guides the development of national action plans to build SPS capacity.
- Integrates SPS priorities into agriculture and/or trade investment plans.

Download the P-IMA user guide:

www.standardsfacility.org/sites/default/files/P-IMA_Guide_EN.pdf

and get in touch at STDFSecretariat@wto.org to find out more.