

**10 May 2023**

**6<sup>th</sup> vTPA Partnership Platform**

**Participants:** Marlynn Hopper (STDF); Johnson Ssubi (vTPA project in East Africa); Daniela Apu (IICA, vTPA project in Central America); Moslem Barrak (ARAC); Bruno Séchet (Integralim); Cor Groenveld (FSSC 22000) ; Mariam Eid (ATF); Benoit Gnolonfin (ECOWAS); Gabriela Apolo (GlobalG.A.P.); Ian Lucey (GlobalG.A.P.); Jan Kranghard (LRQA); John Duffill (John Crop development); Marcel Gbaguidi (SOAC WAAS); Jao Stein (IFS); Mukayi Musarurwa (COMESA); Nevin Ruehle (Eurofins);  
Observers from the China state administration for market regulation: ZHANG Xianzhi (Department of Food Production Safety Regulation), LI Zhiguo (Department of Food Distribution and Catering Safety Regulation), LI Jun (Department of Special Food Safety Regulation), WANG Mingqiu, (Department of Special Food Safety Regulation), HAN Shihe (Department of Food Safety Sampling and Monitoring).  
UNIDO participants: Yiyi Shen; Ilias Aguenau ; Natalia Fernandez Cedi, Gabor Molnar; Marie Michelle Sarr (vTPA NPC in Senegal).

<b>Agenda</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Introduction of new participants</li><li>• Updates on the pilot countries project</li><li>• Discussion on collaboration opportunities, trainings and auditing</li><li>• Closing remarks</li></ul>
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<b>Topic</b>	<b>Comments</b>
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<b>Introduction</b>	The discussion started with the welcoming remarks by Gabor Molnar. All participants introduced themselves for new members and observers joining from the China State Administration for Market Regulation.
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<b>Update on the project progress in pilot countries</b>	<p>Daniela Apu from IICA updated on the progress of the vTPA project in Belize and Honduras including the collaboration with an expert on risk-based inspection, a survey, online and in-person workshops. Daniela emphasized how useful it was for the Belizean participants to take part in the vTPA assessors training for regulators in Cairo and mentioned that a session for transfer of experiences is planned in Honduras. IICA plan a learning visit to the UK in June 2023 to leverage on the vTPA assessors training workshop.</p> <p>Johnson Ssubi updated on the progress of the vTPA project in Rwanda and Uganda, which concluded the inception phase at the end of March 2023 and started the implementation phase in April. So far, organized and planned activities include workshops for high-level managers from government and the private sector in both countries to create awareness about the project, mapping exercises to identify vTPAs and a workshop for regulators. Johnson also informed about the participation of two delegates from each country in the vTPA assessors training in Cairo and learning visit to the UK.</p> <p>Natalia Fernandez from UNIDO presented the progress of the vTPA project activities in Mali and Senegal including the finalization of the vTPA training tool, comprised of a Model vTPA scheme, the vTPA assessment tool and the related training materials. She spoke about the successful completion of the first vTPA assessor's course in Cairo, Egypt, which</p>
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	<p>was attended by regulators from all countries with STDF-funded pilot projects, as well as from Egypt and Palestine. Cor Groenveld (consultant) served as one of the trainers, together with Mike O'Neil (UK Food Standards Agency).</p> <p>Natalia also updated on a two day GlobalG.A.P. training to be conducted in Mali in May, thanks to the support of GlobalG.A.P., as well as on potential engagements from LRQA (global assurance company) for a risk-based inspection training for local authorities in Senegal.</p>
<b>Regional collaboration between regulators</b>	<p>During the meeting, Gabor Molnar from UNIDO suggested that collaboration between regulators in the same region could create benefits in the economy of scale. Marlynne and Johnson agreed and mentioned their involvement with the Codex Coordinating Committee for Africa and the Bureau of Standards in Uganda to disseminate experiences and lessons to other Africa members. Benoit Gnonlonfin also expressed interest in regional and international trade and involving neighboring countries in the implementation of regional actions. Marcel Gbaguidi from SOAC WAAS reaffirmed his commitment to support a regional collaboration in West Africa.</p> <p>Mariam Eid, from the Arab Task Force updated on the progress of vTPA in the Arab Region. The evolution of private sectors interest in vTPA increased and a dialogue with regulators on the possibility of implementing a regional scheme is being considered.</p>
<b>Trainings and capacity buildings</b>	<p>Participants discussed the importance of auditor competence and the potential for collaboration and training opportunities. Moslem Barrak called on the certification bodies present on the platform to give a training on ISO 17065 that extended in international recognition in compliance analysis. Marlynne suggested that UNIDO could help with the collaboration between the MENA Region and the certification bodies concerned.</p> <p>Cor Groenveld insisted on the need of capacity building on assessment for vTPA projects evolution.</p> <p>Gabor, Marlynne, Natalia, and John discussed their experiences and challenges in implementing vTPA schemes in different regions. They also expressed interest in collaborating and sharing resources to improve capacity development and training for regulators and stakeholders.</p>
<b>Communication on vTPA projects</b>	<p>The group also recognized the need for more PR and marketing to create awareness about the project.</p>
<b>vTPA partnership platform's Minutes</b>	<p>The meeting summary is available on the STDF website under the link: <a href="https://standardsfacility.org/vtpa-partnership-platform">https://standardsfacility.org/vtpa-partnership-platform</a></p>
<b>Date for next vTPA platform</b>	<p>The date for the next vTPA platform remains open. Information will be sent in due time.</p>