

**8 November 2023**  
**7<sup>th</sup> vTPA Partnership Platform**

**Participants:** Marlynne Hopper, Aichetou Ba (STDF); Martha Byanyima, Johnson Ssubi (vTPA project in East Africa); Daniela Apu (IICA, vTPA project in Central America); Bruno Séchet (Integralim) ; Gabriela Apolo (GlobalG.A.P.); Ian Lucey (GlobalG.A.P.); John Duffill (John Crop development); Morag Webb (COLEAD); Marie-Pierre Mignault (CFIA)  
UNIDO participants: Natalia Fernandez Cedi, Gabor Molnar.

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| <b>Agenda</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update on the project progress in the pilot countries:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UNIDO: AFRAForum;</li> <li>• IICA: latest activities and study trip to UK</li> <li>• vTPA implementation in East Africa</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Engagement of partners for the pilot initiatives: GlobalG.A.P. training in Mali</li> <li>• Round Table Discussion on any other topic</li> </ul> |
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<b>Topic</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b>Introduction</b>	The discussion started with the welcoming remarks by Natalia Fernandez. Marie-Pierre Mignault of the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) attended the meeting as a guest and all participants introduced themselves via chat.
<b>Update on the project progress in pilot countries</b>	<p>Gabor Molnar from UNIDO informed about the African Food Regulatory Authorities Forum organized in Cairo from 11 to 13 October 2023 by UNIDO where regulators showed high interest to modernize food safety practices in different jurisdictions. He mentioned that the vTPA assessment tool was officially launched during the event, which is expected to become an annual event.</p> <p>Gabor also talked about the Risk-based inspection training organized in Senegal from 13-15 November for regulators, inspectors, processors and producers from Senegal and Mali as part of the activities of the project, as well as about UNIDO’s participation at the International Dubai Food Safety Conference in December, where the implementation of the vTPA approach will be discussed.</p> <p>Daniela Apu from IICA updated on the progress of the vTPA project in Belize and Honduras including a learning visit of two regulators from Honduras and two from Belize at end of last semester to the UK FSA. The visit had the objective of understanding how food safety regulators in the UK make use of reliable data and information of the vTPA programs and integrate it in their NFCS based on the codex guidance. Through discussion sessions and dialogue with food safety regulators as well as a field visit to witness the actual implementation of the approach, regulators enhanced their knowledge and understanding on the vTPA programs.</p> <p>Daniela also talked about the main activities currently being implemented in the project, such as virtual sessions to prioritize the</p>

	<p>development of policy papers with countries like Canada, as well as national and regional workshops to build capacity of officers and share experiences from different countries.</p> <p>Johnson Ssubi updated on the progress of the vTPA project in Rwanda and Uganda, which also included the participation of regulators from the two countries in the learning visit to the UK FSA. He mentioned that the regulators also enhanced their knowledge but there is interest in having another benchmark where international vTPAs are used to have a deeper understanding. Johnson also spoke about some of the activities planned for next year including the development of a roadmap or strategic plan for the implementation of the vTPA approach.</p>
<p><b>Trainings and capacity buildings</b></p>	<p>Iain Lucey from GlobalG.A.P. presented the outcomes of the 2-day training provided in Mali thanks to the support of GlobalG.A.P. to the pilot project in West Africa. Around 70-75 participants from ministries, agencies like plant protection, national directorates of agriculture and industry, food safety practitioners and farmers learned about the key principles and functions for food safety and increased market access, implementation of good agricultural practices and the role of certification. On the second day, participants got the opportunity to visit a GlobalG.A.P. certified farm in the region. Participants were satisfied with the training, which also raised some key issues concerning adoption and local awareness and benefits of certification, as well as the lack of available auditors and certification bodies in Mali. Address the gaps before.</p>
<p><b>Round table discussion</b></p>	<p>John Duffill shared how the SAFEGRO Project in Vietnam initiated a discussion about VietGAP and gave an introduction about the activities that are being organized for the project including a training for growers and producers. More information on the improvements to VietGAP for exports to international markets and the intervention plan for the project will be presented at the next meeting.</p> <p>Two additional topics were discussed at the end of the meeting: remote audit and inspection, and auditor scarcity. In the same way that data generated by vTPA programs can help take certain decisions for regulators, such as for the inspection frequency, Gabor Molnar from UNIDO referred to the possibility of using information to decide if a country can conduct remote audit and inspection practices, as it is the case for Indonesia. He also mentioned that remote audit and inspection is already at level 5 in the discussions by regulators to be adopted by the Codex Alimentarius.</p> <p>On the topic of auditor scarcity as it seems that there is no new generation coming with a required level for the global food industry to remain operation, Gabor Molnar informed the partners about a concept note that is under preparation to deal with the issue.</p>

	<p>Marlynne Hopper from the STDF thanked CFIA and GlobalG.A.P. for their contributions to the vTPA pilot projects. She also congratulated Daniela from IICA on all activities conducted and mentioned that prioritizing policy papers with options will be useful in the future. Marlynne also mentioned Land O'Lakes gender analysis on their project, commented on COMESA's work on financing to promote vTPA programmes.</p>
<p><b>vTPA partnership platform's Minutes</b></p>	<p>The minutes are available on the STDF website under the link: <a href="https://standardsfacility.org/vtpa-partnership-platform">https://standardsfacility.org/vtpa-partnership-platform</a></p>
<p><b>Date for next vTPA platform</b></p>	<p>The date for the next vTPA platform remains open. Information will be sent in due time.</p>