



# EXTERNAL ASSESSMENT *of* GENDER MAINSTREAMING *in* STDF'S WORK

# EXTERNAL ASSESSMENT OF GENDER MAIN — STREAMING IN STDF'S WORK

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>1.EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>2.INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>3.METHODOLOGY</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>4.FINDINGS</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>6.RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	<b>52</b>
<b>7.REFERENCES</b>	<b>56</b>
<b>8.ANNEXES</b>	<b>62</b>

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**THE STDF WORKING GROUP (WG) COMMISSIONED THIS ASSESSMENT TO EVALUATE “HOW (AND TO WHAT EFFECT) GENDER EQUALITY IS ADDRESSED AND HOW GENDER IS MAINSTREAMED THROUGHOUT THE WORK OF THE STDF” AND TO DRAW KEY FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND PRACTICAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVING GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN THE FUTURE.**

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# LIST OF FIGURES AND TABLES

**Figure #1** Assessment Phases

**Box #1** Best Practices Example: Ginger Competitiveness Project

**Box #2** Best Practices examples: FAO Integrated Production and Pest Management Programme in Africa

**Table #1** Examples of gendered wording

**Table #2** Results Matrix Indicators

**Table #3** Gender Mainstreaming Best Practices

**Table #4** Suggested Changes for PPGs and PG Application Forms

**Table #5** Suggested Guiding Questions

# ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

<b>EIF</b>	Enhanced Integrated Framework
<b>GAFT</b>	Global Alliance for Trade Facilitation
<b>GBVs</b>	Global Value Chains
<b>FAO</b>	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
<b>ICT</b>	Information and Communications Technology
<b>IMSMEs</b>	Informal, Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises
<b>IPPC</b>	International Plant Protection Convention
<b>ITC</b>	International Trade Centre
<b>MEL</b>	Monitoring Evaluation and Learning
<b>MRLs</b>	Maximum Residue Limits
<b>NTM</b>	Non-Tarif Measures
<b>OECD</b>	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
<b>PGs</b>	Project Grants
<b>P-IMA</b>	Prioritizing SPS Investments for Market Access
<b>PPGs</b>	Project Preparation Grants
<b>PPPs</b>	Public-Private Partnerships
<b>SDGs</b>	Sustainable Development Goals
<b>Sida</b>	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
<b>SPS</b>	Sanitary and Phytosanitary
<b>STDF</b>	Standards and Trade Development Facility
<b>TFA</b>	Trade Facilitation Agreement
<b>TFAF</b>	Trade Facilitation Agreement Facility
<b>ToR</b>	Terms of Reference
<b>UNECE</b>	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
<b>UNIDO</b>	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
<b>UNWOMEN</b>	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality & the Empowerment of Women
<b>VfM</b>	Value for Money
<b>WBG</b>	World Bank Group
<b>WHO</b>	World Health Organization
<b>WOAH</b>	World Organisation for Animal Health
<b>WTO</b>	World Trade Organization

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*The findings, interpretations and conclusions expressed in this document are entirely those of the author. They do not necessarily represent the view of the STDF or any of its partner agencies or donors.*







# 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



The Standards and Trade Development Facility's (STDF) support for women's economic empowerment dates back to its inception in 2004, with women actively benefiting from projects and capacity-building workshops. In 2015 applicants were formally asked to share the potential impact their project could have on women. Recognition of women's "role as small-scale farmers, processors, and workers in agri-food value chains and cross-border traders" can be found in STDF's recent Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Framework, along with some gender-related indicators.

Recent data indicates that women face greater barriers compared to men in accessing the skills and productive resources required during the different stages of the Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) compliance process. The magnitude of these challenges could be further exacerbated by factors such as women's vulnerable position in global value chains (GVCs) and demands for high volumes of exports, which may prove to be too large for small producers (Henson, 2018).

For example, as highlighted in a recent report by the Food Trade Coalition for Africa, women are at greater risk of being excluded from the global market due to the prohibitive costs of meeting market requirements, a situation that has only worsened in the wake of rising food prices and disrupted supply chains as a result of Covid 19.

Although the 2020-2024 STDF Strategy and the STDF Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Framework have contributed to raising awareness of the role and needs of women when complying with trade-related SPS measures, STDF projects and knowledge work have not necessarily been formulated in a gender-sensitive manner.

In response and building on the recommendations of the 2019 External Evaluation, the STDF Working Group (WG) commissioned this assessment to evaluate "how (and to what effect) gender equality is addressed and how gender is mainstreamed throughout the work of the STDF" and to draw key findings, conclusions and practical recommendations for improving gender mainstreaming in the future.

The assessment was intended to have a special focus on women. Although efforts have been made in the past, less attention has been paid to the differences, concerns, and experiences faced by women in the design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of STDF's programme and knowledge work.

For that purpose, the assessment adopted a multimethod qualitative evaluation approach designed to capture the extent to which the roles and needs of women are being mainstreamed in STDF's work, including a Literature Review, a Project & Document Analysis, and a Stakeholder Consultation, with the STDF Secretariat, founding partners, donors, observers to the WG meetings and agencies implementing and/or overseeing the implementation of STDF-funded projects.

The assessment sought to answer the following, overall evaluation questions:

- **Relevance:** How relevant is STDF's work to advancing gender equality?
- **Coherence:** How coherent is STDF's approach to gender mainstreaming?
- **Effectiveness:** To what extent is STDF's gender mainstreaming approach producing results?
- **Efficiency:** Does STDF's gender mainstreaming approach employ time and resources efficiently?
- **Impact:** Has STDF's gender mainstreaming approach delivered higher-level outcomes?
- **Sustainability:** Are STDF's efforts and approach towards gender mainstreaming likely to be sustainable?

The overall conclusion of the assessment, conducted between January and July 2022, is that the STDF has taken practical steps to mainstream gender in its workstreams and processes, but to a limited extent. For example, while attention has been given to the collection and presentation of information disaggregated by sex, less attention has been given to identifying the challenges women face in complying with SPS measures, and how these can be addressed in projects. This is mainly explained by the lack of a clear mandate from the Working Group on how to address gender issues, coupled with limited evidence on the gendered nature of SPS measures.

The assessment identified as well several detailed conclusions for consideration, which are summarised briefly below:

- **Conclusion 1:** The level of awareness of the gendered impacts of SPS measures remains low among STDF members and partners, limiting the integration of gender mainstreaming into processes and project development.
- **Conclusion 2:** STDF's leadership has not consistently supported the implementation of gender mainstreaming efforts.
- **Conclusion 3:** Accountability for gender mainstreaming remains ambiguous at all levels.
- **Conclusion 4:** The STDF is not sufficiently exercising its convening power to assess and exchange views on the situation of other partners in bringing gender considerations into an SPS context.

The report also advises implementing the following recommendations by first identifying which are STDF's priorities and needs on this matter, and, secondly, taking small steps to further introduce gender mainstreaming in all STDF workstreams. In doing so, the assessment also takes into account the relatively small and unique programme that is the STDF.

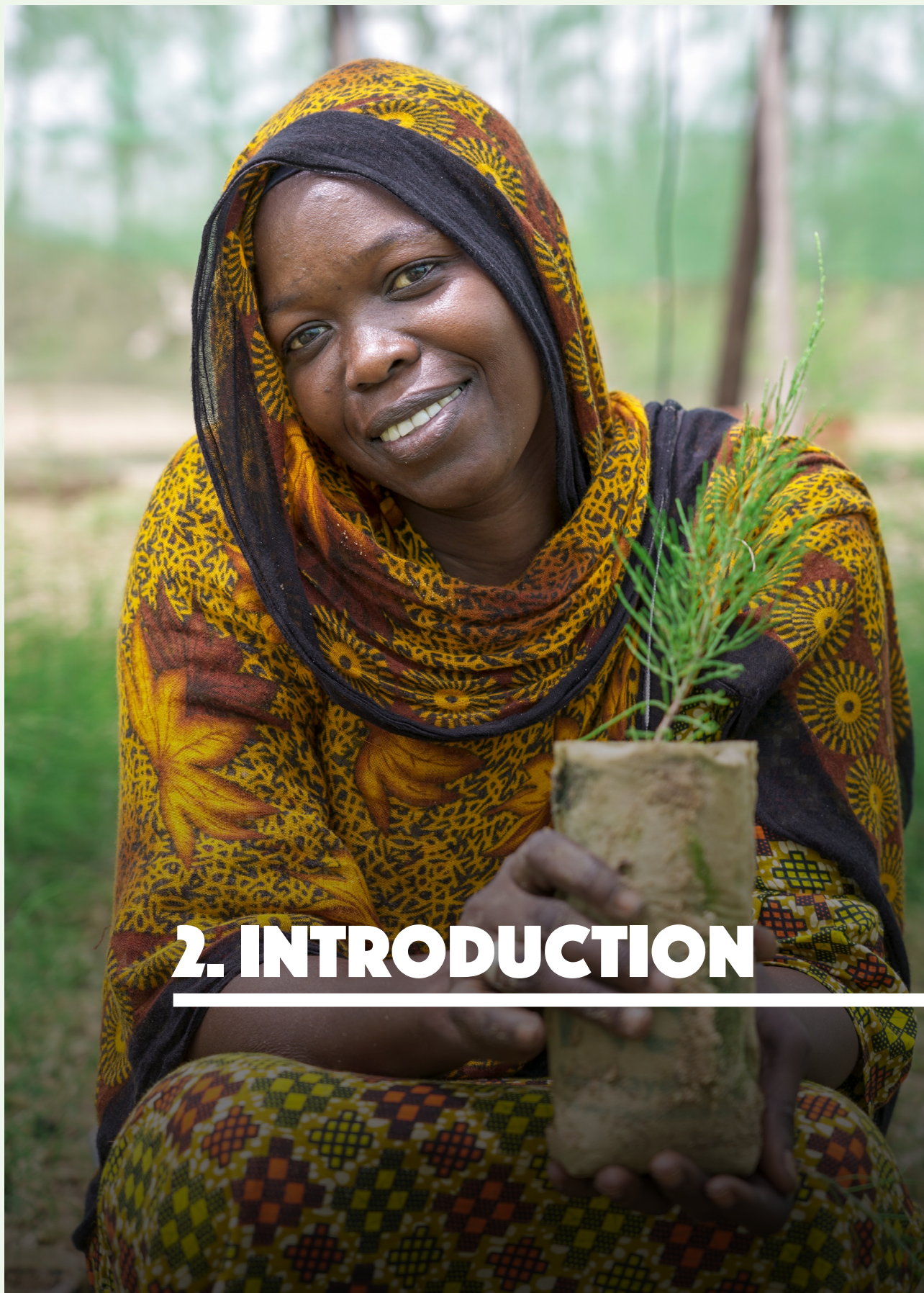
- **Recommendation 1:** The STDF Working Group should consider developing a Gender Action Plan, based on priorities and needs, to enable a permanent support structure that embraces a vision of gender equality, backed by the necessary resources and accountability systems, while taking into account the size and nature of the STDF partnership.
- **Recommendation 2:** The STDF Working Group to adopt a leadership role in promoting the exchange of views, practices, and information through a range of platforms, to build momentum around the potential gendered impact of SPS measures.
- **Recommendation 3:** The STDF Partnership should consider reviewing its operational documents (e.g. including PPG and PGs application forms, Guidelines for evaluation, and report templates) to allow for a more coherent approach to gender mainstreaming and thus respond more effectively to the real and specific needs of women and men.
- **Recommendation 4:** The Working Group should review and assess potential future changes to ensure monitoring and evaluation systems are accountable for gender equality, particularly MEL indicators.
- **Recommendation 5:** To raise awareness and build knowledge on gender mainstreaming (including gender concepts and equality issues) across members of the STDF partnership as a means to strengthen the results of SPS capacity development.
- **Recommendation 6:** To make gender issues more visible in STDF's current Website and communications.

The assessment argues that the implementation of these recommendations will require a strong commitment and follow-through of the Working Group to further mainstream gender in their operations, processes, and workstreams. To sustain these efforts, the WG should reach first a common understanding of the type of approach and strategy they seek to implement and to communicate progress with the STDF partnership at large, to raise awareness among partners of the importance of doing so.

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**THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGS) RECOGNIZE THE URGENT ACTIONS NEEDED TO ENSURE THAT WOMEN AND GIRLS HAVE EQUAL RIGHTS AND OPPORTUNITIES, AND TO END ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION, VIOLENCE, AND ALL HARMFUL PRACTICES AGAINST THEM. PROGRESS TOWARDS GENDER EQUALITY AND SDG 5 IS SEEN AS AN ACCELERATOR AND CENTRAL TO THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE OTHER 17 SDGS. UN WOMEN'S FLAGSHIP REPORT ON THIS ISSUE CALLS FOR GREATER COLLABORATION TO ADDRESS GENDER INEQUALITIES, INCLUDING THE POTENTIAL NEGATIVE EFFECTS THAT TRADE LIBERALIZATION MAY HAVE ON WOMEN.**

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## 2. INTRODUCTION



## Background and Context

The Standards and Trade Development Facility (STDF) was formally established in 2004 by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH<sup>1</sup>), the World Bank Group (WBG), the World Health Organization (WHO), and the World Trade Organization (WTO).

Designed to facilitate safe trade, the STDF assists countries by helping improve their capacity to meet SPS requirements and international standards for food safety (Codex), animal (WOAH) and plant health (International Plant Protection Convention, IPPC).

The STDF has supported over 200<sup>2</sup> Project Preparation Grants (PPGs) and Project Grants (PGs) since its inception, providing vital assistance to developing and least developed countries. Examples of PGs include an online traceability system for small-scale beekeepers in Guatemala ([STDF/PG/515](#)), the upgrade of a pest surveillance data and reporting system in the Asia Pacific region ([STDF/PG/432](#)), and efforts to expand fish trade in West Africa ([STDF/PG/134](#)).

As stated in the WTO [Agreement](#) on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures, SPS measures include all relevant laws, decrees, regulations, requirements, and procedures that governments employ to protect human, animal, and plant life or health. Examples include, “processes and production methods; testing, inspection, certification and approval procedures; quarantine treatments, (...) sampling procedures and methods of risk assessment; and packaging and labelling requirements directly related to food safety”.

Compliance with SPS measures, guidelines and regulations, along with other Non-Tariff Measures (NTM) represents a major challenge for exporters in low and middle-income countries<sup>3</sup>. There is growing evidence to suggest that, although country- and sector-specific, women appear to face greater disadvantages in accessing the skills and resources required during the compliance process compared to their male counterparts<sup>4</sup>.

Although women have been direct beneficiaries of STDF projects on matters such as improving food safety in the shea and cashew nut value chains in Benin ([STDF/PG/048](#)), and vegetable production in Nicaragua ([STDF/PG/155](#)), in 2015 greater focus was given to gender equality by the STDF members. After an STDF Working Group request, considerations of gender and environmental issues were integrated into the guidance notes and application forms of the PPGs and PGs as cross-cutting issues. Additional efforts include a 2016 [Briefing Note](#), titled “Inclusive Trade Solutions: women in SPS capacity building”, which highlights the critical role of women in global value chains, and a two-day gender awareness and sensitisation training offered by Sweden to the STDF Secretariat team in 2021.

Cross-cutting issues are addressed in [STDF's 2020-2024 Strategy](#), and gender indicators were added to STDF's [MEL Framework](#) and Results Matrix. In 2021 the STDF Working Group commissioned an external assessment to be carried out during 2022 to measure the effectiveness of its current approach and identify results, challenges, and actionable recommendations to better operationalize gender mainstreaming into STDF's workstream.

<sup>1</sup> Founded as OIE

<sup>2</sup> A total of 223 since its inception.

<sup>3</sup> WB. 2005. Food Safety and Agricultural Health Standards: Challenges and Opportunities for Developing Country Exports.

<sup>4</sup> Henson, Spencer. 2018. Gender and Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures in the Context of Trade: a Review of Issues and Policy Recommendations.



## Purpose and Scope of the Assessment

The purpose of this external assessment, as articulated in the Terms of Reference (ToR), is to evaluate “how (and to what effect) gender equality is addressed and how gender is mainstreamed across STDF’s work”, and draw key findings, conclusions and practical recommendations to improve gender mainstreaming in the future (for definitions of concepts see Annex #1).

It should be noted that the assessment was intended to have a special focus on women as explained in the ToRs, which was finalized with the support of interested STDF Working Group members<sup>5</sup>. Although efforts have been made in the past, less attention has been paid to the differences, concerns, and experiences faced by women in the design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of STDF’s programme and knowledge work. Still, the recommendations resulting from the assessment are designed to proactively promote gender equality, benefiting both men and women.

“Gender equality” implies that the interests, needs and priorities of both women and men are taken into consideration, recognizing the diversity of different groups of women and men.

While **gender equality is understood as the goal, gender mainstreaming is considered the strategy**, as it seeks to give attention “to gender perspectives as an integral part of all activities across all programmes”(UNWOMEN)

The specific objectives of the assessment are the following:

- **To assess** the gender responsiveness of STDF’s knowledge and project work from 2015 to date, particularly its efficiency, effectiveness, and sustainability.
- **To assess** to what extent elements of gender mainstreaming are visible in STDF’s wide range of internal and external documents and inform the future development of documentation.
- **To identify** best practices in addressing gender issues (with a focus on women specifically) associated with trade-related SPS measures.
- **To advise** on strategies and actions to contribute to ongoing gender mainstreaming efforts, and to suggest priorities areas and practical recommendations to better deliver on gender equality outcomes in STDF’s work.

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<sup>5</sup> Future assessments, if any, should focus on both women and men, and ideally address the intersection between gender, sexuality, disability, and ethnicity, among others.

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**COMPLIANCE WITH SPS MEASURES, GUIDELINES AND REGULATIONS, ALONG WITH OTHER NON-TARIFF MEASURES (NTM) REPRESENTS A MAJOR CHALLENGE FOR EXPORTERS IN LOW AND MIDDLE-INCOME COUNTRIES. THERE IS GROWING EVIDENCE TO SUGGEST THAT, ALTHOUGH COUNTRY- AND SECTOR-SPECIFIC, WOMEN APPEAR TO FACE GREATER DISADVANTAGES IN ACCESSING THE SKILLS AND RESOURCES REQUIRED DURING THE COMPLIANCE PROCESS COMPARED TO THEIR MALE COUNTERPARTS. (SPENCER HENSON, 2018)**

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## 3. METHODOLOGY

## Key methodological elements

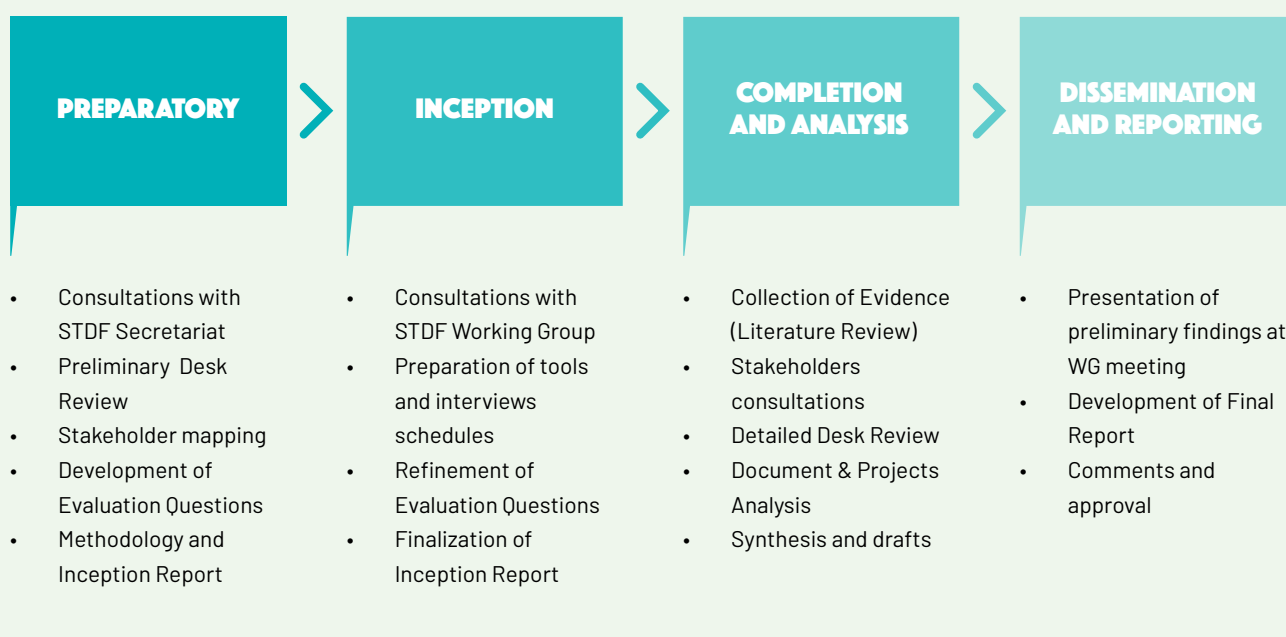
The assessment adopted a [multimethod qualitative evaluation approach](#) designed to capture the extent to which the roles and needs of women are present in STDF's work.

The intended primary users of the assessment are the STDF Working Group and the STDF Secretariat. In addition, the findings and recommendations are expected to support gender mainstreaming in SPS capacity development work, led by the broader SPS community.

The assessment followed a [participatory and utilization-focused approach](#), informed by the intended primary users' needs, with a view to ensure learning and ownership.

The qualitative methods deployed to carry out the assessment – including a Literature Review, Project & Document Analysis, and Stakeholder Consultations – were finalized and agreed during the Inception phase. They were discussed with the STDF Secretariat and a Peer Review Group<sup>6</sup>, established to assess the validity and quality of the assessment.

The assessment was conducted in four main phases between January 2022 and July 2022 as summarized below:



The assessment adhered to ethical data collection protocols and international standards to protect participants, and ensured independence, proper identification, informed consent, confidentiality, among other measures.

Wider dissemination of the findings of this assessment – and how they may be used to support SPS capacity development more broadly – is planned after publication.

<sup>6</sup> Comprised of different Working Group Members.

## Evaluation questions

The design of the Evaluation Questions reverted to the Terms of Reference, which provided a comprehensive list of lines of enquiry. Questions were reviewed and some re-formulated during the Inception Phase to effectively reflect the scope of the assessment.

Questions were organized consistent with the OECD DAC Evaluation Criteria and divided into main and sub-questions (see [Annex #2](#) ).

The assessment was undertaken across the following lines of inquiry:

- **Relevance:** How relevant is STDF's work to advancing gender equality?
- **Coherence:** How coherent is STDF's approach to gender mainstreaming?
- **Effectiveness:** To what extent is STDF's gender mainstreaming approach producing results?
- **Efficiency:** Does STDF's gender mainstreaming approach employ time and resources efficiently?
- **Impact:** Has STDF's gender mainstreaming approach delivered higher-level outcomes?
- **Sustainability:** Are STDF's efforts and approach towards gender mainstreaming likely to be sustainable?

## Data collection and analysis

During the Preparatory Phase, a [desk review](#) of the STDF documents was carried out, to preliminarily assess the extent to which a gender perspective had been included in STDF workstreams. This included Annual Reports, Mid-term strategies and MEL documents, Communication Plan, Briefings, and other externally-targeted publications.

Semi-structured interviews with the STDF's Secretariat and a [stakeholder mapping](#) exercise were carried out during February. A list of questions for the semi-structured stakeholder interviews was developed, informed mainly by the desk review findings and the Evaluation Matrix<sup>7</sup> (see [Annex #3](#) ).

Development of the evaluation tools and refinement of the assessment questions took place during the inception phase, with input from the STDF Secretariat and the Peer Review Group. A [literature review](#) was conducted based on relevant sources, such as peer-reviewed academic and scientific journals, conference proceedings, and other examples of grey literature.

For project analysis, PGs and PPGs were purposively selected to maximize learning. An initial selection of projects was shared with STDF staff to improve the reliability and quality of the findings. The preliminary list focused on PGs and PPGs that had been initiated or approved in and/or after 2015, taking into consideration a balanced representation in terms of beneficiary country or territory, budget level, and project typology. Subsequently, a final selection was agreed upon, including 20 Project Grants and 16 Project Preparation Grants (see [Annex #4](#) ).

For the structured interviews with STDF founding partners, donors, implementing organizations, and other key relevant partners, audio recordings were transcribed and coded using qualitative data management software (for a full List of consulted stakeholders see [Annex #5](#) ).

The Document Analysis was guided by the key evaluation questions and was carried out using a 4-score scale system to assess the degree of inclusion of the gender perspective in the PPGs. Similarly, the Project Analysis was conducted by applying a 4-scoring scale system (see [Annex #6](#) ).

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<sup>7</sup> The excerpts selected and presented in this Report are those relevant to the Evaluation Questions and do not represent the totality of the interviews conducted.



The preliminary results were presented at a meeting of the Working Group held in Geneva in June 2022. Members had the opportunity to share their reactions and comments on the preliminary findings and recommendations, which were considered along with additional feedback provided by the Peer Review Group.

## Methodological limitations and challenges

The Terms of Reference set out a broad scope of analysis for the assessment, including (i) an in-depth review of Project Preparation Grants and Project Grants selected for this purpose; (ii) STDF's internal and external documentation, encompassing briefings, events, newsletters, publications, result stories, WG documents, plans, reports, evaluations, among others; (iii) consultations with STDF's Secretariat, Working Group members, STDF's global partnership partners, intermediate project beneficiaries, and other relevant stakeholders. Reasonable adjustments were made to limit the scope during the course of the assessment.

The selection of PPGs and PGs – in consultation with the STDF Secretariat – was done through purposive sampling, combining typical case sampling with maximum variation sampling, as a way to capture findings across different regions, sectors, and completion status, among other factors. While not representative of all the completed and ongoing projects funded by the STDF since 2015, this method allowed reaching qualitative findings that apply to the broader population of projects. The review of additional PGs was key to making more observations.

Perceptions and opinions about gender equality, from interviews with the STDF Secretariat and stakeholders, were susceptible to reporting bias. To counter this limitation, questions were formulated hypothetically, and findings were complemented with other objective indicators.

The lack of a baseline study and systematic collection of gender-related interventions (both at the project level and in external programme evaluations) was a limitation. It was necessary to reconstruct data. For example, as to whether the ToRs for project/programme evaluations called for the inclusion of a gender expert or gender expertise, and whether gender performance indicators were included in monitoring and evaluation efforts. The development of a rating scale system made it possible to track progress against pre-defined standards, allowing for aggregation and synthesis of findings.



## Relevance

This section addresses the relevance of STDF's work to advancing gender equality. It covers the extent to which gender equality and women's needs have been relevant to the efficient implementation of SPS measures and SPS capacity. It also assesses the extent to which STDF's work has adapted to emerging priorities such as Covid-19 and what entry points exist to promote and address gender equality to strengthen SPS capacity and facilitate safe trade.

### How relevant is gender equality in the efficient implementation of SPS measures and SPS capacity development?

Until recently, trade policies have often been characterized as gender-neutral. That accepted narrative was supported by the fact that WTO legal texts and the subjects and objects of WTO rules do not distinctively define what is meant by beneficiaries, nationals, or interested parties, to name a few. However, the claim to neutrality was challenged by observers from both the gender studies and the international trade fields, who began to analyze the implications of trade on individuals according to their sex and social context (UNCTAD, 2010).

The growing evidence on the relationship between trade liberalization and women's economic status has contributed to an even better understanding how trade policy can improve gender equality. Although the impact differs depending on a country's specific economic structure and trade composition, among other factors, studies have shown that trade has the potential to both reduce and reinforce existing gender inequalities.

Based on the literature review, there is evidence, for example, of the positive impact of trade liberalisation on women's earnings and employment (see e.g. Kabeer 2012, Chinhui 2013, Fontana 2009). Studies have shown that trade has the potential to reduce the gender wage gap and increase female labour participation. This was the case in the manufacturing sector in Mexico. A study in the early 2000s found that trade liberalisation in the country – between 1987 and 1993 – led to a decrease in wage discrimination in that sector (World Bank 2002).

Other studies have explored how greater openness to international trade may deteriorate the relative position of women in the labour market. Empirical evidence shows that in some cases women workers remain in low-skilled jobs after trade liberalization, especially if availability for training is limited, restricting their participation in value chain upgrading (Bussolo and De Hoyos 2009, ILO 2017, Ngouhouo 2020). Lower levels of education, limited mobility, household, and care responsibilities, among other constraints, limit women's participation in training activities.

Since the publication of the [WTO Buenos Aires Declaration on Trade and Women's Economic Empowerment](#) in 2017, gender equality has been featured prominently on the multilateral trading system agenda. Signatory countries<sup>8</sup> have committed to "make trade and development policies more gender-sensitive" and to share "best practices in conducting gender-based analysis", among other efforts to better understand gender-related trade impacts.

Considered a "stepping stone on the road to advancing gender equality and women's economic empowerment in the WTO" (CIGI, 2018) the Buenos Aires Declaration has contributed to elevating the issue within the organization and at the country level. For example, six thematic seminars were held between 2018 and 2019. The information shared during these seminars, including on gender considerations in FTAs and women's experiences in GVCs, was subsequently captured in the [report](#) "Delivering on the Buenos Aires Declaration on Trade and Women's Economic Empowerment".

<sup>8</sup> 127 WTO members and observers have endorsed the Buenos Aires Declaration to date.

A new Ministerial Declaration on Advancing Gender Equality and Women's Economic Empowerment in Trade was expected to be adopted at the Twelfth WTO Ministerial Conference in 2022 (MC12). Instead, the co-chairs of the Informal Working Group on Trade and Gender issued a brief [statement](#) reporting what WTO members have done over the past five years on inclusive trade and gender equality, stressing the importance that gender-responsive trade policies and rulemaking have in creating "an ecosystem that supports women's economic empowerment".

Given that women constitute, on average, 43% of the agricultural labor force in developing countries (FAO, 2021) and considering their prominent role in global value chains, it is particularly relevant to study how women may, for example, be more at risk to changes brought about by new technologies in the standard's compliance process (Shaw and Jobes, 2019). What is more, in Africa, over 50% of women are reported being involved in agriculture (Ndemera, 2022). In Sub-Saharan Africa, women represent 90% of informal workers and are heavily represented in informal, micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) (UNDP and AfCFTA Secretariat 2020). Women are also estimated to account for 70% of informal cross-border traders (UNDP and AfCFTA Secretariat, 2020). In addition, the wage-earning gap differences between women and men in rural Africa is estimated to be between 15-60% (ILO 2019).

Recent data from the International Livestock Research Institute indicates that "men often own more animals than women, and more valuable animals as well", yet it is women who are behind animal health care, which calls for a better understanding of gender issues when designing interventions (ILRI, 2021).

Moreover, as noted in the latest International Trade Centre (ITC) NTM survey report, smaller firms (less than five employees in total) are the most affected (57%) by non-tariff measures (NTMs), particularly small exporters in developing countries, with the agri-food sector being one of the most affected by SPS regulations.

While the differentiated impacts that trade can have on different segments of the population continue to be studied, less attention has been paid to the gender dimension of SPS measures.

### How relevant is gender equality in the efficient implementation of SPS measures and SPS capacity development?

**Finding 1.** Evidence remains limited, and additional research efforts are required to fully assess the potential impact that compliance with trade-related SPS measures has on different social groups, including women.

While the effects of non-tariff measures (NTMs) on women and men are well documented, fewer studies have directly examined the gendered impact of trade-related SPS measures. Evidence has shown that compliance with NTMs is more challenging for women, due to high compliance costs and the complexity of regulatory requirements.

**“For technical measures such as sanitary and phytosanitary and technical barriers to trade, compliance requires that businesses can comprehend at least the basics of production and customs clearance processes”. UNCTAD, 2022**

A joint WTO-WBG publication provides detailed information on NTM-related difficulties faced by women-owned and women-managed enterprises. According to the report, data from a survey of 1,200 companies in Pakistan revealed that "66% of women-owned exporting firms reported difficulties with NTMs, compared to 51% of male-owned firms. The latter, is particularly connected with compliance of product standards and certification procedures (World Bank and World Trade Organization, 2020).

In support of the above, a recent UNCTAD study confirmed that the lack of technical skills -necessary to understand and comply with NTMs - is greater for women than for men, due to disadvantages in access to training activities, explained mainly by lack of time due to household and care responsibilities (Eyzaguirre, 2020).



Another study on the implications of the EU technical barriers to trade (TBT) and sanitary and phytosanitary measures on gender relations in the agricultural labor market (Kareem, 2017), which considered the period between 1995 and 2012, showed that “the inability to comply with these measures, especially by small and marginal farmers, many of whom are women, results in reduced employment opportunities for them compared to men”. The author also found that limited access to credit and collaterals (such as land ownership) restricts women’s ability to comply with such measures.

Spencer Henson’s (2018) work expands on these findings, suggesting that SPS measures can potentially have even more adverse impacts on women in low- and middle-income countries. Looking at changes in value chain structures, and the critical skills needed for SPS compliance, women, who are over-represented in labour-intensive production roles, face a greater risk of exclusion.

Although Henson indicates that the likely effect on women will have to be studied on a case-by-case basis, taking into account the context in which compliance occurs, some known factors could have an even greater impact. These include the prevailing level of SPS capacity, if women occupy a vulnerable position within the value chain, and the lack of critical skills and resources, among others.

For example, a study showed that a group of Ugandan farmers reported an improvement in all levels of coffee production management and a significant increase in their income since receiving training on organic certification to improve coffee yields and bean quality. Because coffee plantations in Kapchorwa district are owned exclusively by men (giving them control over resources as well) the income received by women was much lower, despite being behind almost all aspects of coffee production, including weeding, fertilizer application, harvesting, processing, and transportation (Bolwig, 2012).

Although scarce, the evidence suggests that women’s socio-economic constraints and other barriers to participation, such as women’s concentration in informal employment, small business, their lack of access to information, financial services, and Information Communication and Technology (ICT), or low literacy and educational gaps should be taken into account and as an entry point when designing SPS capacity building programmes.

### **How and to what extent is STDF’s work relevant to the promotion of SDG 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls?**

#### **Finding 2.** STDF’s work is aligned to a moderate extent with Sustainable Development Goal 5 but lacks consistency.

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) recognize the urgent actions needed to ensure that women and girls have equal rights and opportunities, and to end all forms of discrimination, violence, and all harmful practices against them. Progress towards gender equality and SDG 5 is seen as an accelerator and central to the achievement of the other 17 SDGs. UN Women’s flagship report on this issue calls for greater collaboration to address gender inequalities, including the potential negative effects that trade liberalization may have on women.

STDF’s Vision contributes to the United Nations 2030 Agenda, including SDG 5. The 2017 Annual Report lays out its contribution towards meeting SDG 2 on zero hunger, SDG 8 on decent work and economic growth, and SDG 17 on revitalizing global partnerships. Other priority areas include SDG 1 on no poverty, SDG 5 on gender equality, and SDGs 14 and 15 on life below water and life on land.

The 2018 and 2019 Annual Reports contain information on how certain PGs have contributed to the SDGs, including SDG 5, however, monitoring and reporting on these features has not been consistent. The 2020 and 2021 annual reports do not link any Project Grants results to the SDGs, including SDG 5.

The 2019 External Evaluation findings called on donors and partners to better engage with the existing SDG framework, including “developing more evidence and visibility on how the STDF’s work supports the Sustainable Development Goals, including poverty reduction and gender”. The Evaluation found that while some Annual Reports are structured around the SDGs, they are not specifically targeted or explicitly monitored.



The said evaluation also noted that “climate and the environment seem to be much more aligned to STDF activities and SPS in general, particularly regarding the use of chemicals and their effects on the environment, and the effects of climate change on disease and pests”. This observation can help interpret the lack of more explicit attention to gender as opposed to other cross-cutting issues.

The relatively limited attention to SDG5 has been detrimental to the advancement of these issues within STDF's work. According to one interviewee, “SDG 5 is not part of the 5 “core” SDGs to be supported by the STDF Strategy 2020-2024, due to a lack of consensus among working group members”. In addition, references to SDG5 are ambiguous and not linked to strategic measures, which detracts from its value.

For example, concerning SDG 5, the STDF 2020-2024 Strategy falls short in detailing how attention to cross-cutting issues such as gender will “generate decent work and productive employment opportunities for women and men”. The new MEL Framework offers more concrete ideas on how to achieve that goal, by paying attention “to the role of women as small-scale farmers, processors, and workers in agri-food value chains and cross-border traders, as well as to the gender sensitivity of policies, regulatory processes, and sanitary and phytosanitary measures.” Although these gender considerations are expected to be tracked and reported on, the results have not yet been produced and/or disseminated.

The lack of recognition of SDG 5 represents a disadvantage for the STDF in comparison to some STDF partners (e.g. FAO) and members (e.g. ITC) that track their progress against SDG5. If gender equality is not given due attention, or if it is not understood as a fundamental part of the STDF's work, the Facility will not be able to fully support the 2030 Agenda.

### **To what extent has cooperation with other institutions dealing with gender issues been undertaken?**

**Finding 3.** Interactions with gender-focused initiatives with STDF partners and other members are limited, but there is great potential for improvement.

Examples of increased attention to initiatives, such as the WTO's 2017 Buenos Aires Declaration on Trade and Women's Economic Empowerment, were found in the 2017 Annual Report. As a result, the STDF Working Group held a session on SPS, gender, and trade in 2018, led by Spencer Henson, professor at the University of Guelph and agri-food standards expert. The presentation “highlighted the STDF's efforts to mainstream gender in its work, and the need to continue sharing good practices. It recommended deepening gender in projects supported by the STDF and other donors”.

In addition, the STDF Secretariat has participated in high-level WTO events during International Women's Day. However, there was no additional evidence to date supporting other internal collaborations with WTO in-house initiatives.

It is important to note that WTO's work on gender is guided by the 2017-2021 and 2021-2026 Action Plans which seek to support WTO members in integrating gender into their trade policies, build capacity on those matters, foster research and the collection of data among other actions, including efforts to mainstream gender issues in the WTO Secretariat.

Also at the WTO, there are the [Trade & Gender 360 Strategy](#) and [BRIDGE](#) capacity-building initiatives targeting government officials and women entrepreneurs, respectively. Most recently, the WTO launched a Gender Research Center in 2021 that houses a research database on trade and gender issues.

Based on the consultations with donors and partners, interviewees questioned the extent to which the STDF Working Group is currently collaborating with the existing WTO's gender-related initiatives. According to an interviewee the STDF could benefit from aligning its work with existing frameworks, by “looking first internally at what has been done across the WTO and other partners, instead of working on the margins”. Another interview argued for the STDF “to participate in the Informal Working Group on Trade and Gender. There are

lots of reflections there and one of the mandates of the Informal Working Group at the WTO is to develop a gender mainstream work”.

Both the IPPC and WOAHA have recently begun to examine how to incorporate gender considerations into their work and processes, focusing first on identifying the needs and strategic reasons for doing so. While discussions are still at an early stage, these initial efforts will open up potential opportunities for collaboration in the future.

Under UNECE's [Gender Responsive Standards Initiative](#), designed in 2016 to provide a “practical pathway for standards bodies wishing to take a step towards making the standards they develop and the standards development process they follow gender-sensitive,” several webinars and face-to-face meetings have been held with representatives from a wide range of institutions. Learning from this initiative and its subsequent declaration is beneficial for the WG members, especially given the diversity of institutions actively participating in it, including international standards bodies, and UN organizations, among others.

Another interviewee suggested “consider collaborating with Working Group members that are already gender champions and active in the delivery of these initiatives”, including those under the WTO Informal Working Group on Trade and Gender, which work is based on 4 pillars: “experience sharing; considering the concept and scope for a “gender lens”; reviewing analytical work undertaken, and; contributing to the Aid for Trade work programme”.

The SPS Committee, where WTO members discuss “issues related to the implementation of the SPS Agreement and potential trade concerns” has recognized STDF's good practices. In their latest Review of the operation and implementation of the SPS agreement, a reference to the 'Inclusive Trade Solutions: Women in SPS capacity building' briefing was made. While thematic sessions on cross-cutting topics have taken place in the past, gender equality has rarely been addressed in the SPS Committee Agenda. While it is dependent on member states to bring gender issues to the attention of the SPS Committee, the STDF's work on this topic (including future joint events and/or presentations) may provide an opportunity to promote increased awareness and discussion on these issues.

Lastly, the STDF has yet to explore potential collaborations with, for example, the Global Alliance for Trade Facilitation (GAFT), which in 2020 analyzed the WTO's Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA) through a gender lens and launched a tool offering “development practitioners and implementors with an in-depth analysis of the TFA Section I Articles from a gender perspective”.

### How relevant are STDF's objectives and workstreams to the needs of women?

**Finding 4:** Attention to women's needs within the STDF's work has been limited. While it has made progress, especially at the project level and with the inclusion of gender-sensitive indicators, gender mainstreaming is not yet sufficiently institutionalized<sup>9</sup>.

Before this assessment no gender audit or evaluation had been conducted with an exclusive focus on gender equality. Consequently, there is no baseline against which to measure progress. Four independent evaluations of the STDF have been conducted to date. There has been little attention to women's issues, so findings have been limited, mainly due to the absence of this criterion in the terms of reference.

An external evaluation conducted in 2005 suggested including specific gender-related questions as part of the monitoring of STDF projects, including How well is the project addressing socio-cultural issues and taking into account gender issues?, Does the project acknowledge and accepts gender roles and gender-related needs? Still, this recommendation was not reflected in the subsequent strategies.

The 2008 and 2014 external evaluations contained no reference to gender equality or the potential gendered impacts of SPS measures. The 2019 evaluation, conducted by Nathan Associates, argued that the STDF focused on “identifying the number of women beneficiaries or participants, rather than on the integration of gender issues into SPS activities”. Other findings include: gender has not been addressed as part of knowledge work or in coordination activities related to SPS capacity building, and a lack of consensus among WG

<sup>9</sup> Understood as a strategy or approach which is systematically integrated into a habitual practice within an institution or organization

members on the need to incorporate cross-cutting issues into projects, arguing that if they “focus too much on cross-cutting issues (gender and environmental issues), they may lose their focus”.

Reflecting on the limited attention given to gender in the 2019 External Evaluation, it appears that gender mainstreaming has not systematically been incorporated in STDF work along with an adequate structure or action plan. One interviewee stated that the inclusion of gender issues has been “mainly donor-driven,” particularly when donors began to inquire about the impact that projects have had on women’s economic empowerment. Another interviewee added that “to this day there is no one unique set of expectations regarding what to expect from gender”.

The STDF WG has not yet discussed about their capacity, needs, and perception of what gender means for the delivery of STDF’s mandate. While the design of a gender mainstreaming strategy “should not be based on the personal understanding of staff”, (EIGE, 2022) internal transparency on how gender mainstreaming can contribute to better achieving STDF’s Vision and Mission is crucial to understanding the potential concerns around this particular issue.

As previously described, in 2015 the Working Group welcomed the recommendations suggested by the Secretariat on introducing “cross-cutting issues” (defined at the time by a focus on gender and environmental issues) to the revised PPG and PGs application forms, and Guidance Document for applicants. One member of the WG also suggested “extend the gender definition by not limiting it to women and women’s rights”, as noted in the Summary Report of the STDG Working Group Meeting (12–13 October 2015). Changes were noted with reservations, connected with the belief that “it could move attention away from the main focus of the STDF”.

Although it was not until 2015 that gender was added as a criterion, women have been both active participants and primary beneficiaries of STDF projects since its inception. For example, the “Ginger Competitiveness Project: Improving the SPS Capacity of Nepalese Ginger Exports through Public-Private Partnerships” ([STDF/PG/329](#)), implemented by FAO and Nepalese public and private sector organizations (and funded in partnership with the Enhanced Integrated Framework (EIF)), trained nearly 2,000 farmers, 60% of whom were women, in good agricultural practices (GAP), post-harvest handling of ginger and other techniques to improve safety and quality (see Box #1).

The project “Building the Business Capacity of Smallholder Shrimp and Prawn Farmers” ([STDF/PG/321](#)) provided training sessions on improved management practices to Bangladeshi farmers, mostly women. Results included an increase in income by 70% and an increase in crop yields by approximately 60–70%.

The report also noted that, by working together, farmers developed local support networks “with the knowledge, skills, and support needed to improve the safety and quality of shrimp production, and provide a steady supply to processors.” In particular, the final report noted that savings accumulated by one group of women farmers enabled them to extend credit to other groups.

While projects have benefited women over the years, one of the issues highlighted by the STDF Secretariat was the particular interest in learning how to consistently integrate women’s needs and other considerations into all stages of the project cycle and knowledge products. Implementing organizations also expressed interest in receiving more clarification on what is “expected” and more guidance on how to better incorporate a gender perspective into projects.

**Box #1: Best Practices Example: Ginger Competitiveness Project****Ginger Competitiveness Project: Enhancing Sanitary and Phytosanitary Capacity of Nepalese Ginger Exports through Public-Private Partnerships STDF/PG/329**

**Objective:** Increased income level of ginger farmers through improvements in SPS arrangements and value addition for export to India and other countries

- The 'Ginger Competitiveness Project' interventions were based on a value chain approach. Women were identified as crucial stakeholders in the ginger value chain very early in the project design. Their roles and characteristics were accounted for throughout the implementation of the project and its results.
- Explicit efforts were made to select women from different groups of farmers and to encourage greater participation of women as participants in the various modules of training.
- Seasonal training provided to ginger farmers (2012-2015) resulted in an increase in ginger agricultural production and income by more than 60%.
- Other results include a reduction of post-harvest loss, improved techniques to control pests and diseases, and the establishment of a new ginger washing facility, among others.
- Training materials were expected to be "reproduced, shared widely and necessary revisions and updates incorporated".

For example, the Ex-Post Evaluation of the Project "Strategy to strengthen the SPS system in Comoros" ([STDF/PG/242](#)) rated the attention given to cross-cutting issues as 'marginal', since gender equality was not included in the onset of the project design. There were no specific gender-sensitive indicators in the logical framework. Women's participation in the training sessions averaged 24% overall. The project was approved in 2012, before the introduction of gender equality in the application form, and was completed in 2018.

In addition, based on interviews with the STDF Secretariat, special attention was given to learning how to identify entry points where gender-related issues can be addressed in institutional capacity-building projects, compared with value chain projects where gender differences are more pronounced. According to one interviewee, "while much depend on the type of the project, I believe it's necessary to receive more guidance on those more policy related or institutional related projects".

However, there is no consensus among donors and partners on how to address this call for more guidance. While some suggested a guidebook with specific questions, another interviewee recommended editing the Guidance Note for Applicants to make sure gender issues "are an implicit part of the project and not an additional component". The Working Group will need to reflect on what kind of support to offer to respond to the demand for more guidance and support.

**How and to what extent has STDF's work adapted to emerging priorities (Covid-19 and other contextual changes) and its potential impact on women's needs?**

**Finding 5.** The STDF has adapted to new priorities, including Covid-19, by actively assessing the disruption the pandemic is having on the implementation and delivery of STDF projects. However, it has missed the opportunity to consider the needs and challenges that women may face when trying to participate as beneficiaries during this period.

A special section on the Website is dedicated to updates on this matter. Additionally, implementing organizations were surveyed about project planning, implementation, and spending. However, no changes to programming or knowledge work were reported concerning women specifically, who due to family caregiving responsibilities may experience problems participating in the projects.

Women-owned or women-led companies have been disproportionately impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic compared to businesses led by men. A recent study by the World Bank evidenced that women resumed operations at a slower pace than those led by men, especially significant for micro-enterprises, and those in the hospitality sector. The study that look at data across 49 mostly low- and middle-income countries from the World Bank's Business Pulse Survey (BPS) and Enterprise Survey (WBES) programmes showed that while in general women-led businesses are not at higher risk to experience supply shocks as a result of the pandemic, the gender gap is statistically significant and to the disadvantage of women in low income and lower middle-income countries (World Bank, 2021).

The first STDF [report](#) on risks and mitigation measures, published in April 2020, stated that additional efforts were needed to understand the gender impact of Covid-19. The document recognized the disadvantaged position of women "in benefiting from agricultural production and trade". The subsequent report in November 2020 addressed the impact on gender equity and anticipated this assessment as an effort to better understand the gender impacts of the pandemic. However, no additional references were included in the 2021 and 2022 reports.

**“ Since the economic impact has aggravated inequalities among men and women, as employees and in other different roles they might have, it makes it even more important to look at the linkages between gender and SPS”. Interviewee**

As training and workshops were postponed or moved to online platforms, the STDF missed the opportunity to assess, for example, whether the targeted beneficiaries (including women) had access to technology, the internet, and if they needed additional training to make use of new technologies relevant to distance learning; or how care functions might limit women's participation in such activities.

During interviews with STDF's donors and partners, interviewees recognized the negative impact that Covid-19 is having on women's economic development. One interviewee shared that "it has really underlined our approach in terms of prioritizing and focusing on women, and supporting women's economic empowerment in relation to trade". According to another interviewee "Covid-19 has renewed our focus on gender equality in programming".

## Coherence

### How coherent is STDF's approach to gender mainstreaming?

The section below assesses the degree to which gender mainstreaming is clearly addressed throughout STDF's workstreams, and how STDF's documents support gender equality in an action-oriented way. The section also considers the extent to which communications materials are gender sensitive.

### To what extent is gender mainstreaming addressed clearly and in an actionable way throughout STDF's project cycle and knowledge work?

**Finding 6.** The STDF has taken moderate steps to ensure gender mainstreaming across its workstreams, still, the absence of a Gender Action Plan has resulted in a lack of clear objectives and expected results.

There is no Gender Action Plan, nor has the Working Group adopted gender mainstreaming as an operating strategy. While gender issues have been addressed more prominently at the project level, there are no specific objectives or accountability structure that



allows the integration of gender perspectives at all levels. The adoption of a specific gender mainstreaming approach has not been adequately discussed, resulting, according to partners, in a lack of clarity and consistency.

In contrast, a Gender Action Plan will normally include gender equality objectives, time-bound targets and outputs, implementation tools and methodologies, monitoring and accountability mechanisms as well as a specific budget. Developing it will allow the STDF to implement a gender mainstreaming strategy through a systematic, gradual, and planned process.

Several organizations (including some of STDF partners) have gender policies in place along with detailed operational guidelines. For example, the World Bank Group's work on gender is guided by their 2016-2023 Gender Equality Strategy; in 2020 FAO updated its Policy on Gender Equality for the next decade; the European Commission's work on gender equality is framed by its Gender Equality Strategy, to name a few.

The PPG application form asks applicants to share a brief explanation of "how cross-cutting issues (e.g. gender, environment) are relevant to the PPG and, if applicable, how they will be addressed". The wording is not clear enough, as it induces applicants to choose one or the other. In contrast, the PG application form has a section dedicated to gender-related issues, which allows for special attention to be paid to the topic.

The MEL Framework offers some concrete examples of how gender considerations will be identified, assessed, and monitored in STDF projects and knowledge work. Still, efforts are not necessarily supported by practical guidance to ensure a coherent response. For example, indicators are not linked to specific gender results or address specific gender disparities.

In this regard, one partner suggested reviewing the aspirations and expectations of the STDF, first by exploring the meaning and implications of different approaches, such as 'gender-sensitive', 'gender-responsive', and/or 'gender-transformative', and then agreeing on a strategic and targeted approach.

The adoption of any of these gender mainstreaming strategies should be part of a gradual process. For instance, implementing a gender-transformative approach - which "seeks to actively examine, challenge and transform the underlying causes of gender inequality rooted in inequitable social structures and institutions", will require careful consideration of the role the STDF wants to play connected to its mandate, Vision and Mission.

Overall, the lack of a clear mandate from the Working Group on how to address gender issues, combined with limited attention to gender in the 2019 External Evaluation, has resulted in an ambiguous approach to gender mainstreaming. This can be seen in the PGs and PPGs application forms and monitoring systems.

### **How and to what extent gender equality issues have been integrated into PPGs and PGs application forms?**

**Finding 7.** The usefulness of the PPG and PG application templates as guidance documents to support gender mainstreaming varies.

The project analysis reviewed a total of 20 PGs from 2015 to date, including application forms, final evaluation reports, and ex-post evaluation reports, when available.

The assessment found that 40% of PGs did not address gender issues at all in their application forms and/or subsequent reports. Of that total, 71% corresponded to completed projects. Only 30% addressed these issues to a limited extent, usually including general data on women's labour force participation in the country, or the number of women participating in technical training.

In contrast, among those PGs that addressed gender issues to a moderate degree (20%), gender mainstreaming took the form of methodologies to ensure women's active participation during the project, such as surveys, and detailed information on the constraints faced by women in a particular sector.

When it comes to specific examples, one exception to this finding is the completed [STDF/PG/489](#) project on improving market access for small-scale fisheries in West Africa implemented by the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO). The project developed a comprehensive gender strategy to guide data collection and the identification of women's different needs, especially in terms of their access to and control over resources in the value chain. For example, the project consulted different stakeholders to ascertain the role of women in the "different stages of the sector's value chain, and in particular in marketing and artisanal processing".

Another precedent is the ongoing project, titled "Piloting the use of voluntary third party assurances (vTPAs) in West Africa", also implemented by UNIDO ([STDF/PG/665](#)). This PG includes a gender analysis of the value chain and the development of an action plan with the participation of all stakeholders. This will allow training and coaching to be designed according to the needs of the participants, including women.

After reviewing the application forms and terms of reference of the selected PPGs, 56% of them did not address gender issues at all, particularly those classified as technical assistance projects. Only 38% of the 16 took gender into account to a limited extent. The latter translates into proposals including mainly general references, usually in the form of qualitative data. For example, "women are often excluded from access to training opportunities in Papua New Guinea's male-dominated society". In addition, only 2 PPGs addressed, to a limited extent, how the project aligned to existing gender-related frameworks.

One of the explanations for these discrepancies can be found in the fact that both the application forms and the guidelines do not provide any definition of how gender should be adequately addressed in the project<sup>10</sup>. This is related to the limited knowledge of the members of the Working Group on the importance of gender for the effective implementation of the STDF mandate.

The guidelines include, in addition to gender equality, the concept of women's empowerment, which is not found in other documents, a concern shared among some of the implementing organizations interviewed for this assessment. One interviewee for example argued that addressing gender "is not clear for us. At what level? How deep do they expect us to go?" According to another interviewee "the STDF should make it very clear what it is expected as an outcome".

However, when asked about this issue, there was no broad consensus among the STDF Working Group on how to improve the PPG and PG application forms. One interviewee mentioned that "though there is no one size fits all, as the projects are very diverse, it will be useful to have more mainstream questions at the programme and the project level". According to another interview, "It really depends if there are funding a feasibility study, or other, to what extent are we micromanaging or imposing criteria for small scale grants".

The percentage of project proposals resulting from the PPGs for the 2012-21 period was 71%, equivalent to a total of 34 projects. Of these, 25 were funded by the STDF, while 6 sought external funding. Given this evidence, it is critical to encourage applicants to apply a gender perspective at the earliest stage of proposal development. One member from the STDF Secretariat argued that "when reviewing new project applicants, most Working Group members focus on technical issues. While Sweden has previously requested the STDF Secretariat to address gender while introducing new project applications to the Working Group, the issue of gender hardly comes up when members review projects".

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<sup>10</sup> Such as projects that include assistance activities, including workshops, training, studies, and development of assessment tools.

One interviewee raised the idea of asking the grantees and implementing agencies of future and approved projects to conduct gender analysis, when applicable, allocating a specific amount from the budget for this purpose.

While both applications forms can be further edited to better reflect the potential positive/negative effects of a particular project on gender equality and identify other possible gender constraints (see Recommendation #3), the advantage of conducting a gender analysis is the identification of the “differences between and among women and men in terms of their relative position in society and the distribution of resources, opportunities, constraints, and power in a given context” (EIGE, 2022).

### How and to what extent gender equality issues have been identified and supported by STDF's Knowledge Work?

**Finding 8.** STDF has produced a substantial number of knowledge work-related products and materials. However, the inclusion of a gender mainstreaming perspective remains limited in number and scope.

After reviewing the STDF knowledge work products, there is little evidence to suggest that gender issues are taken into account. For example, the revised work on Public-Private Partnerships<sup>11</sup> (PPPs) – available on the STDF website – does not include any explicit reference to gender equality or information on gender-related partners. The work under Electronic SPS Certification fails to mention any gender considerations, except for one Briefing Note. Although the positive impact of SPS e-certification on women traders is stated, it is not articulated in detail.

On the contrary, the [P-IMA Framework](#)<sup>12</sup> helps to identify the likely impacts that investment in SPS capacity may have on trade, poverty levels, employment, and women. The role of women as traders and producers is captured in a fictitious case study, and “impact on women” is included as a decision criterion when implementing the P-IMA framework. Women are included under vulnerable groups when the preferable alternative is to refer to women ‘in vulnerable situations’. Still, it was observed that of the analyzed Projects Grants that applied the P-IMA evaluation tool, the impact of SPS investment on women was recognized.

The 2021 Guide on [Good Regulatory Practice to Improve SPS Measures](#) sets out clear ways for SPS regulators to consider the gender impacts of SPS measures, including specific questions designed to promote a gender perspective. It also advocates for Regulatory Impact Assessments (RIAs) to take gender-related factors into account.

The only recorded information exchange on gender equality issues at the Working Group, prior to 2022, is the presentation by Spencer Henson in 2018 of an Australia-funded study named Gender and Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures in the Context of Trade, which addressed the gendered impact of SPS measures.

### To what extent do STDF documents support gender mainstreaming and gender equality in a clear and action-oriented way?

**Finding 9.** Despite improvements, STDF's documents' support for gender mainstreaming and gender equality is limited. Efforts are required to allow for a more strategic and coherent approach.

Based on a review of the wide range of internal and external STDF documents, the understanding of gender equality is limited. STDF documents do not provide any definition of the terms inclusive trade, inclusion, and/or gender equality. The concepts are often confused and used interchangeably in documents. In some cases, gender is presented as biological sex, and in others, gender is associated with different economic roles (see Table #1).

<sup>11</sup> Operational since 2010.

<sup>12</sup> Designed in collaboration with USAID, USDA, COMESA, and developing country governments, the P-IMA framework aims to improve SPS planning and decision-making, especially in prioritizing investments in SPS capacity building.

Gender is encouraged to be addressed in PPGs and PGs application forms and at the reporting stage. The project progress report requests comments on cross-cutting issues. However, as mentioned above, no specific instructions are available to ensure that both analysis and reporting provide more clarity on the possible gender dimension of the project. One implementing agency reported that "It is not really highlighted in the application forms or necessarily emphasized in the monitoring and evaluation. So, basically you are only going to get what you are asking for".

The assessment noted that there were expressed concerns among the STDF Secretariat about the lack of a common understanding between them on what gender equality means for SPS measures. One interviewee argued that "There is no one unique set of expectations regarding what to expect from gender. Ideally we will be to move forward to a common and shared understanding". According to another interviewee "some kind of alignment is important, at least on the importance of gender". A need to further explore these differences should be considered.

These findings also echo a 2020 Gender Assessment conducted by Sida and linked to a planned new funding contribution to the STDF." The report suggested "increasing the knowledge about the difference between sex and gender". Another observation pointed out by Sida was the use of the word gender in conjunction with different writings across STDF strategic documents.

**Table #1 Examples of gendered wording**

Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Framework, pg.23	"Efforts will also be made to ensure that gender equality is addressed within project and PPG applications, and that different genders are encouraged to submit applications"
STDF Project Application Form, Target beneficiaries, q.8	"For instance, how are <b>different genders</b> involved (e.g. as producers, farmers, traders, workers in food business operations) in particular value chains of relevance to the project, what constraints (if any) do they face, and how could they be addressed to take advantage of new opportunities? How are different genders expected to benefit from the project? Inclusion of gender-specific indicators, wherever possible, is encouraged".
Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Framework, pg. 23 - 29	<p>"Gender equality, environmental benefits, and MSME inclusiveness will be measured in projects and PPGs".</p> <p>"Cross-cutting issues including climate change, the environment, gender equality, inclusiveness (such as micro, small and medium-sized enterprises)"</p>



### How and to what extent are PGs aligned to gender equality national policies and programmes?

Of the selected project grants, only two of the 16 made explicit reference to national policy commitments and/or gender equality policies. First, the project “Promotion of Codex standards and codes of practice in the smoked fish sector and implications for food security in other sectors in Mali” ([STDF/PG/611](#)) describes alignment with the country’s national priorities as seen in the agreement between the Government of Mali and the United Nations Integrated Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), including the contribution to the upgrading of value chains as a way to ensure “the sustainability of income-generating activities, specifically targeting women”.

Second, the project’s “Strategy to strengthen Togo’s SPS system” ([STDF/PG/375](#)) application form mentions how it aims “to contribute to the realization of Togo’s National Gender Equity and Equality Policy (PNEEG)”, focusing on the advancement of women’s empowerment and their effective participation in decision-making at all levels of the development process. However, since both projects are still ongoing, there is no information on the extent of what has been achieved on this regard.

The assessment also found that while other projects alluded to links to assistance frameworks there was no reference to the gender equality components of those programmes. For instance, the project “Piloting an Improved Animal Identification and” Registration System In Mongolia ([STDF/PG/534](#)) failed to mention the focus on women integrated into the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) 2017-2021.

Similarly, the project “Improving food safety and compliance with SPS measures to increase export revenues in the oilseeds value chain” ([STDF/PG/486](#)) missed the opportunity to follow the guiding principles of the “Nay Pyi Taw Accord for Effective Development Cooperation” (between the Government of Myanmar and Development Partners) in terms of ensuring the evaluation integrates targets for gender equality and women’s empowerment. The Final Report only mentions the percentages of women who benefitted from the STDF-ITC project’s technical trainings.

### To what extent are gender-specific indicators used to measure the progress and results of STDF projects? How has this evolved since 2015? To what extent are the indicators used appropriately to measure gender equality?

**Finding 10.** The STDF is beginning to take positive steps toward collecting evidence about its targeted beneficiaries. Yet, a better understanding and definition of the concepts remains a necessary condition to excel in this effort.

From the project analysis, some specific patterns emerge: gender statistics reflecting greater gender inequalities in a specific context are rarely considered; and sex-disaggregated data is the preferred quantitative method, mainly used to set targets and consequently report on the number of women who have participated in a specific training session. For instance “At least 100 farmers from each state (North Kordofan and Al Qatari) will form farmer cooperatives, among which at least 30% should be women and 50% should be youth”.

It should be noted that, although the collection of data disaggregated by sex as a primary classification is important, the disaggregation of information by race/ethnicity, income generation, and educational level, among others, better reflects the different realities and inequalities of the situation of women and men. While some disaggregation may be politically sensitive, exploring – wherever possible – the intersection of gender with other social groups, is preferred as it provides more complete evidence.

Although the MEL Framework indicators reflect an effort to include statistics beyond the collection of sex-disaggregated data, it is less likely that a project or knowledge work will be formulated in a gender-sensitive way because the indicators are ambiguous as to what exactly they are intended to measure. A total of four indicators measure sex-disaggregated data (both “gender” and “men/women” are used interchangeably), while six aim to quantify evidence of gender equality.

In the absence of a gender strategy or similar, current indicators are conceptually unclear, which limits the monitoring of progress over time. For example, there is no agreed definition of what “attention to gender” means. In addition, gender is asked alongside other cross-cutting issues, which undermines the importance of gender as a stand-alone indicator (see Table #2).

**Table #2 Results Matrix Indicators**

INDICATORS IN THE RESULTS MATRIX	CONSIDERATIONS
X firms with an increase in exports, disaggregated by gender and size of firm	Lack of available data at the local level. Differences between women-owned businesses and women-led businesses?
Evidence of market access and exports/imports directly facilitated through STDF support, with particular attention to climate change, environment, gender, and inclusion	Unclear meaning of 'particular attention to gender and inclusion': in terms of women's needs? Capacity building training?
# of STDF initiatives and PPGs/PGs contributing to changes in SPS legislation, regulation, policies, strategies, structures and/ or processes, including attention to cross-cutting issues (climate change, environment, gender, inclusion)	Unclear meaning of 'particular attention to gender and inclusion': in terms of gender-sensitive trade-related policies?
Evidence of improved implementation and enforcement of food safety, animal and/or plant health measures for trade, with attention to climate change, environment, gender and inclusion	Unclear meaning of 'particular attention to gender and inclusion': at what level, institutional?
# type of collaborative networks, relationships, initiatives at global, regional, and/or national level that support the delivery of change in SPS systems, including attention to partnerships addressing climate change, environment, gender, and inclusion	Unclear meaning of 'particular attention to gender and inclusion': in terms of # of women-led or women-focused NGOs or associations? In terms of attendance at meetings hosted by International and/or regional bodies/committees on gender equality?
# of people reached (disaggregated by women/men and geography/region) with STDF good practices, knowledge products	Gender data depending on availability?
% of people reached (disaggregated by women/men and geography/region) reporting minimum satisfaction threshold with STDF good practices and knowledge products	Only in terms of sex-disaggregated data? Occupation?
# of participants (quantity) in online or physical STDF events, disaggregated by location, gender and type of participants	Risk of predetermined categories to be exclusionary. Other self-identification (Non-binary / gender diverse)?
# knowledge products that address cross-cutting issues (climate change, environment, inclusion or gender equality)	Unclear meaning of 'addressing cross-cutting issues': in terms of gender equality being explicitly addressed? Solely women-focused?
% of PGs that mainstream cross-cutting issues (climate change, environment, inclusion or gender equality)	Unclear meaning of 'addressing cross-cutting issues'. Understood in terms of % of PGs where a gender analysis has been conducted? % of PGs reporting gender results?

For instance, a total of 6 STDF initiatives contributed to changes in SPS legislation, regulation, policies, strategies, structures, and/or processes in 2020. From the Results Table, it is not possible to differentiate which one of the PGs listed included attention to gender, environment, climate change, or inclusion. Also not clear, to what extent 'gender' is being counted or considered.

Overall, the prevalence of indicators to measure gender equality remains limited. It is too early to assess the results of the recently agreed MEL indicators. It is expected that further dissemination and fine-tuning of these indicators will increase the gender responsiveness of STDF projects. It is important to note, however, that the MEL Framework is dependent on the limited resources available within the Secretariat, which will be complemented by the forthcoming development of an online data management tool. This is expected to improve the quality of MEL activities, "in turn supporting the achievement of accountability and learning objectives. This will also foster improved reporting and transparency, identification of innovations, and support better decision making."

### To what extent guidance, tools, etc. are available (if any) to support gender mainstreaming in STDF work?

**Finding 11.** Although some STDF Working Group members recognize the importance of paying attention to gender equality, the lack of a clear mandate has resulted in inconsistent support for the STDF Secretariat.

Tools, such as guidelines to integrate gender through a project's life cycle, are not available in print or online. In addition, there is no guidance when reviewing project applications, which often leads to a focus on technical issues, leaving aside gender and other cross-cutting issues.

An idea shared among STDF partners is to consider developing gender markers to help that minimum requirements concerning gender are considered. For example, "We have some type of coding, from 0 to 2, that looks at different parameters. You cannot get 0, as then the project will never be approved. Maybe this is something the STDF could think about if they want to also give more attention to projects that have a stronger gender focus"

Based on evidence from interview data, there is strong interest from the STDF Secretariat in receiving more guidance to better incorporate gender-sensitive considerations into project design. "We need guidance, but ideally manageable for both project managers and applicants. It shouldn't be a checkbox, but also not too onerous". According to another interviewee "Much depends on the type of the project, being necessary more guidance on those policies or institutional related".

There have been some efforts to develop gender equality competence via sensitization training<sup>13</sup>. An "Enhanced gender awareness/ sensitization of STDF team" training was offered as a one-off opportunity in 2021. The workshop, divided into two sessions, provided basic information about what gender is and its relevance in SPS processes and projects; as well on STDF's internal workstreams and organisational capacity for gender mainstreaming. The Secretariat will be able to benefit more from the results by following up on the main takeaways of the training.

As argued by one STDF partner, "training and raising awareness are fundamental to advance gender equality, however, there is a need of setting a clear framework and tools for implementation". It is advised to understand training on gender equality or similar "not as a goal in itself, or as a single tool to implement gender mainstreaming" (EIGE, 2022), but as part of a wider plan or strategy that allows for these efforts to be continuous and sustainable in the future.

Without a clear understanding and mandate on how to improve gender mainstreaming in all major work streams of the STDF, efforts to apply a gender perspective at both operational and project levels will be in vain unless specific actions are put in place to address gender equality and SPS challenges. For example, one donor was in favor of the idea of moving towards this goal, albeit hesitantly. "I think the STDF should be a little more sensitive to this and I think they should go beyond what is currently in the proposal, which is to write about it in a general way. But I am also hesitant about how deep they could go if they don't do a thorough analysis".

<sup>13</sup> Carried out by the Sida Gender Helpdesk managed by Nordic Consulting Group Sweden.

In addition, the STDF Policy Committee, consisting of high-level representatives of STDF partners and donors, as well as selected experts from developing countries, is responsible for the overall direction of the Facility. It will therefore be necessary for the Committee to instruct and guide the Working Group on changes in this regard.

#### **To what extent internal and external communications are gender sensitive (e.g. language, photos, events organization)?**

##### **Finding 12.** STDF's communication efforts toward gender mainstreaming are often sporadic rather than strategic.

The Communications Plan, updated in 2020, includes explicit references to support gender equality by the way of profiling interventions and "experiences of women, as well as men, working across agri-food value chains" in different regions. Still, there is no detailed checklist, examples, or suggested actions, in the Plan or in any other supplementary document, on how to integrate a gender lens in communications, including when citing, selecting images, press releases, or panel discussions.

The STDF has no social media channels, besides a YouTube [account](#). News and other relevant information are promoted through the STDF's Website and WTO's and external partners' platforms. A communications officer joined in 2021. Communications efforts nevertheless have remained focused on sharing STDF's work and available results, including those pertaining to women, without explicit gender considerations or targets.

STDF's briefings, newsletters, films produced, and other visual materials, frequently use gender-neutral terms, and women in images are portrayed in diverse roles, which prevents communications from reinforcing existing gender stereotypes. The STDF Secretariat follows WTO Guidelines on gender representation at events. The selection of speakers is based on expertise, and availability, while ensuring a gender balance, when possible. At least 2 webinars hosted during 2022 have had equal representation of men and women in their respective panels.

#### **How does attention to gender in STDF's work to strengthen SPS capacity and facilitate safe trade compare to the work led by organizations involved in STDF's global partnership? Are there synergy opportunities between STDF and its partners?**

##### **Finding 13.** STDF's attention to gender is part of a larger effort to build gender mainstreaming capacity in the SPS context.

From the consultations with donors and other partner organizations, there is a disposition and interest to routinely bring gender considerations into the SPS context. Standard-setting organisations, such as the WOAHA have begun a process to first understand the importance of applying a gender approach in their work, and based on those results begin to define what mechanisms they can adopt to achieve this. However, while none of the interviewees reported having specific approaches to gender mainstreaming in SPS capacity building and/or programming, many have been working on and responding to gender action plans, or similar.

In addition, some of the implementing agencies with which the STDF has partnered over the years have developed training activities specifically targeting women, which offer a great opportunity for information sharing. For example, CABI has trained women from Uganda's fruit and vegetable sector to help with compliance with phytosanitary requirements, and in agricultural pest management techniques in Pakistan.

The need to further promote the exchange of information between partners was widely recognized. One interviewee suggested "facilitating conversations within departments (i.e. members) to understand the types of issues that are on STDF's radar". Another interviewee proposed "to share insights on how to make gender mainstreaming work in practice and the particularity of how to merge the technical area (SPS information) with gender. We need to discuss more and understand more".



Lastly, another interviewee argued that “the STDF is supposed to be trying to promote good practices, but there is very little about it. They have written a two-pager, but what is the real impact that it has had? This should be a major work stream in the future. What does gender mainstreaming in SPS capacity building really mean? what are the commitments? And it is not about a woman running a laboratory, but the whole reasoning behind this topic”.

Some interviewees draw attention to the fact that the professional expertise of their teams is largely focused on the technical aspects of food safety, plant or animal health, and/or trade, and not necessarily on gender. Still, organizations such as FAO and WBG, the European Union, Sida, and ITC, among others, have successfully operationalized gender mainstreaming at different levels, offering good examples and practices for the STDF to consider in the future, including consultations with members on best practices, awareness raising and training for staff members, availability of checklists, gender-responsive budgeting, the use of gender markers, among others (See Table #3).

The applicability of some of these practices is subject to the availability of budget and support of the Working Group members. However, if supported, a clear mandate for gender mainstreaming is recommended.

**Table #3 Gender Mainstreaming Best Practices**

Gender Mainstreaming Best Practices	
Management Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adoption of Do Not Harm Approach<sup>14</sup></li> <li>• Gender-sensitive grant management</li> <li>• Gender equality and/or diversity Strategy (internal and external)</li> <li>• Gender mainstreaming mandate</li> <li>• Standard reporting element at high-level meetings</li> <li>• Mandatory gender sensitization training</li> <li>• Gender-sensitive ToRs</li> <li>• Gender Performance Evaluation and Management</li> <li>• Gender experts / Focal Point network / Thematic gender experts</li> </ul>
Gender responsive analysis, programming, and implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mandatory Gender risk analysis or Gender assessments</li> <li>• Sector-specific examples and questions</li> <li>• Network development</li> <li>• Stakeholders consultations with women's groups</li> <li>• Gender markers</li> <li>• Gender responsive Value for Money (VfM)</li> <li>• Gender sectoral guidance</li> <li>• Targeted support action</li> <li>• Collaboration with countries that are gender champions</li> <li>• Tracking results and impact against SDG5</li> <li>• Gender action plans</li> <li>• Gender-sensitive value chains analysis</li> </ul>

<sup>14</sup> Recognition of the potential negative effects of interventions

The assessment identified good practices in gender mainstreaming from some STDF donors, partners, and other relevant stakeholders. The examples were identified based on consultations and a review of relevant documentation. It has no ambition to be all-encompassing, but merely to indicate practices that can be applied to strengthen SPS capacity and STDF's overall approach to gender mainstreaming. See pages 46 to 49.

## Effectiveness

### To what extent is the STDF's gender mainstreaming approach producing results?

The following section explores how STDF's gender mainstreaming approach is producing results, including STDF projects and knowledge work. It also assesses the extent to which STDF provided effective support in gender equality to partners and implementing organizations.

### How and to what extent are STDF projects effectively supporting gender equality at the country level? What are the factors that determined the achievement or non-achievement of this objective?

**Finding 14.** Gaps in the operationalization of gender mainstreaming at the country level have limited its effectiveness, but it might be avoided by an appropriate application of gender mainstreaming practices.

The assessment identified that the lack of or inadequate consideration of gender issues at the inception phase limits the overall gender responsiveness of the project. When gender needs are overlooked, project components risk becoming gender blind, undermining the validity of the results.

The assessment also noted the different levels of understanding of what it means to operationalize gender in a project. Among the PGs reviewed, 55% did not integrate gender into the project's programmatic goals and objectives. This meant that gender equality was addressed, if at all, as contextual information, rather than in the formulation of outcomes, outputs, related indicators, and activities. For example, "In Guinea, women represent more than 52% of the population, with this proportion being higher in rural areas. Women account for more than 70% of agricultural labor and participate at different levels of the value chain depending on the sector."

It is important to recognize that one of the shortcomings of the project analysis was that 65% of the sample corresponds to ongoing projects, making it difficult to assess the extent to which STDF projects are effectively supporting gender equality at the national level. However, as noted above, these preliminary results can be explained by the different perceptions of applicants and implementing organizations on how gender mainstreaming should be implemented in projects. Even among projects that integrated gender considerations to a greater extent, support for gender equality was understood exclusively in terms of training women.

To better support gender equality at the country level and for gender mainstreaming to be streamlined throughout the project cycle, PPGs and PGs applicants should be encouraged to examine the different social and economic circumstances, roles, needs, and challenges faced by women and men in a specific sector or country. This was supported by one of STDF partners who argued "conducting a gender analysis is essential, in the beginning, not halfway through, as a way to identify how to support women in these value chains, which is sometimes not visible. Women are the ones harvesting, doing the drying of seed, so you need to find a way to identify what their role is and bring it to the surface".

Complementing, another partner noted, "if the analysis is not conducted at the onset, this should not be an impediment to conducting it while the project is ongoing". Relying on existing literature was suggested for the purpose of better design, "even if ideally primary data collection should be conducted at project site level".

A more detailed analysis could include if appropriate: (i) the determinants of female labor participation by sector or value chain; (ii) patterns of a gendered division of labour and other gendered power dynamics, (iii) the extent to which both women and men have been represented in the consultative process; (iv) how the expected results will be equitably distributed among the targeted stakeholder groups.

A good example is the “Enhancing trade through regulatory harmonization and mitigation of biopesticide-based residues in the SADC region” project ([STDF/PG/694](#)). This ongoing project will design and implement a survey to assess the specific constraints faced by women concerning pesticide use. This approach goes beyond the disaggregation of data by sex and better captures women’s needs and challenges. Specifically, the questionnaire aims to identify the views and experiences of women farmers to increase their compliance with Codex Maximum Residue Limits (MRLs).

However, there does not seem to be a level of agreement among donors and partners on the best mechanism for supporting gender equality. One interviewee mentioned “Getting gender right from the start is a good idea, but you have to find a balance in terms of the resources that applicants have, to avoid it being too onerous.” According to another interviewee, “Being a criterion for the project proposal makes recipient countries reflect on it, on what has been done. Rather than just ticking the boxes.”

Another interviewee shared that “when we are deciding how to go about building capacity gender should be at the forefront of considerations. Does it make it more difficult? Of course. Does it make planning more difficult? Absolutely. To me, the whole point of the STDF partnerships is to bring about better ways of doing things, and promote good practices”.

Similarly, another partner argued that “having a background system to evaluate what is put in there and whether it meets certain standards to really be a gender project. Adding the word ‘gender’ is not enough, and it will most likely get lost in the application”.

#### **How and to what extent is STDF knowledge work effectively supporting gender equality? What are the factors that determined the achievement or non-achievement of this objective?**

Aligned with the evidence introduced under Finding 8 of this assessment, STDF knowledge work has been limited in number and scope when it comes to addressing gender issues. Subsequently, it is not possible to fully assess to what extent it has supported gender equality.

The challenges noted above regarding the lack of a clear mandate have impacted the application of a gender lens to research and knowledge production. While the 2016 Briefing “Inclusive Trade Solutions: women in SPS capacity building” addresses women’s role in agriculture and the difficulties faced by informal cross-border women traders, more detailed research on these issues has not yet been carried out.

The STDF has the potential to provide a sound evidence base of the needs of both men and women in meeting sanitary and phytosanitary requirements. While the Briefing will benefit from an update taking into account the latest available data, these findings also have implications for all knowledge work products, including the sharing of tools and good practices from their global network.

#### **How and to what extent has the STDF Secretariat provided effective support in gender equality to partners and implementing organizations?**

**Finding 15.** The STDF Secretariat does not benefit from having a coherent mandate from the Working Group for its gender mainstreaming work, which limits the support provided to partners and implementing organizations in this area.

The Secretariat works with applicants and implementing organizations in identifying, developing, and monitoring projects funded by the STDF or another source. Interactions and support on gender issues vary depending on the nature of the project and who the implementing organizations and partners are. No specific resources are available for this.

In addition, it is not clear what the Secretariat's capacity and experience is concerning gender equality and women's empowerment, as no stocktaking or study has been conducted.

Members of the STDF Secretariat expressed a certain level of flexibility when it comes to project implementing organizations that already have a gender strategy, and/or experts reviewing the progress of a specific project. "There is an assumption that they will focus on gender issues", argued one interviewee. However, from the sample of PPGs and PGs, having an implementing agency or an experienced partner does not necessarily translate into a higher degree of gender mainstreaming in the project.

Based on consultations with implementing organizations, support by the STDF Secretariat varies. One interviewee argued that "it is not really mentioned a lot. It does not come as a topic as such. When information is missing in the progress report they do ask for it, but more in terms if we have achieved those objectives or not, not in terms of how". Another interviewee also noted that "Include gender is a requirement. However, we might not have given it a lot of focused attention. For example, let's say in a discussion, in how to look for gender issues and how can we deal with them".

An important factor here is to understand the limited scope of the Secretariat's actions. The small full-time team is responsible for a considerable amount of work distributed between reviewing funding applications and implementing SPS-related projects and knowledge work, as well as participating in outreach activities and supporting the Policy Committee and the Working Group.

Any further improvements are conditional on the leadership, indications, and decisions taken by the Working Group, and the priority given to them. Any new responsibility must be weighed against this background.

### **How and to what extent can the STDF Secretariat be more responsive to partners needs and maintain an effective partnership to lobby for gender equality?**

**Finding 16.** Providing practical guidance on gender mainstreaming is welcome by implementing organizations and partners, and has the potential to make gender mainstreaming more effective.

When asked about what kind of practical support, if any, they would be interested in receiving from the STDF, the implementing organizations provided several suggestions:

- "Having a toolkit will help, especially to conduct a gender risk analysis".
- "A clear guidance document to fill the requirements on gender on the application forms, and a contact to be reached in the case of questions".
- "Having some kind of documentation, a checklist on what is expected on gender, highlighting the specific areas that during the project cycle we need to identify, such as women's needs and how to address them".
- "If any support should be done at the beginning and maybe suggest an assessment of gender barriers regarding the value chain, to give an example".
- "Know exactly what type of information they seek to be reported in the progress reports and final evaluation project".
- "Having gender-specific capacities, and resources within the STDF will be very useful for the partners' organization to draw on that".



- “Look into those agencies that have a strategy or manual, or those projects that are going to be cleared by a gender officer, to avoid duplicating and slowing the process (...) Think also how to streamline processes for those that already have procedures on this regard, and ensure they are reevaluated on a continuing basis”.
- “There is resistance in the communities regarding gender mainstreaming in the implementation process (...) sensitize other stakeholders to have a better idea how to integrate gender perspectives”.
- “Receiving support, especially from a gender specialist expert who can support regularly to monitor these activities, and review it from a gender lens and build the capacity. Regular monitoring, then it will see the results”.

**How and to what extent are STDF systems, strategies, and processes (e.g. MEL Framework, analytical tools) effectively supporting gender equality at the organizational level? To what extent are they achieving results?**

**Finding 17.** STDF has made considerable strides towards ensuring its systems, strategies, and processes support gender equality, but not in a systematic manner.

Statements on the importance of addressing gender equality in projects and knowledge work are found in most of the STDF key documents. However, monitoring and reporting on these aspects are not consistent. The recently approved Monitoring and Evaluation Framework clearly states that the STDF's contribution to higher order impacts, including the selected SDGs, will be monitored and reported on. However, while gender-sensitive indicators are included, independent external evaluations of STDF projects are expected to predominantly consider contributions to SDGs 1, 2, 3, 8, and 17, reflecting the higher priority assigned to these SDGs in the STDF Strategy for 2020-2024. This notable exception prevents a more in-depth analysis of the potential gender equality outcomes of projects.

Gender equality results are difficult to assess from ex-post evaluation reports. It is asked for information to be shared on the extent to which horizontal issues (in particular gender and environment) were adequately addressed in the project. However, in the evaluations reviewed, the results are limited and presented in terms of sex-disaggregated data, without any further gender analysis.

Some of the evaluations included a reference to the lack of gender indicators in the log frame. For instance, “gender was not an aspect considered specifically in the project at the time when it was approved, and for that reason, it did not incorporate specific activities or operating criteria that sought greater equality of opportunities by gender”. Similarly, “women and youth inclusion were not explicitly catered for in the project document and there was no specific indicator on women or youth participation in activities in the log frame”.

Overall, the lack of attention to gender issues in the initial phase of projects makes monitoring and data collection difficult. Additionally, the fact that the available ex-post evaluations are from PGs that predate the 2015 cross-cutting issues requirement. However, for future monitoring of results, evaluation ToRs should differentiate between monitoring targets (data) and evaluation targets (the comprehensive analysis of the results obtained).

Based on future clarity on the STDF's mandate concerning gender, another strategy towards ensuring its systems, strategies, and processes support gender equality is for the Working Group to request the STDF Secretariat to clarify how gender mainstreaming support will be provided to project stakeholders.

One option may be to designate a member of the STDF Secretariat as a “gender focal point” (similar to gender focal point roles in STDF partners and donors, who normally dedicate a share of their time (e.g. 20%) to gender-related work. This role could be linked to the existing divisional Gender Focal Point role in WTO (currently held by a member of the STDF Secretariat for the Agriculture Division).

One interviewee shared that “each of the teams has a gender focal point. It is sort of the entry point for gender issues (...) we all work on gender but it helps to coordinate all the colleagues and ensure we apply a gender lens across our operations”. Another partner argued that “it is not that the Gender Team or the Gender Focal Points are responsible for this, but the whole management and all the divisions, teams, and countries have this responsibility”.

Donors and partners were less divided on the importance of strengthening the role of the gender focal point or bringing in an expert to help effectively support gender mainstreaming efforts. One interviewee suggested that “food security and gender analysis requires technical expertise. It depends on the projects, but the whole team (the Secretariat) has to be aware of gender equality, and having someone who can guide them, have a say in preparing tools, capacity building, will be very good”.

This view was supported by another interviewee who argued that “you need to have a person with gender expertise at the time of evaluation and later on you need to have someone with gender expertise to follow up with the team when the project is implemented”. When asked about the importance of tools and checklists for gender mainstreaming in STDF's work, one of the interviewees responded that “yes, you can have tools, but I think they should be tools that are complemented with expertise”.

## Efficiency

### Does STDF's gender mainstreaming approach employ time and resources efficiently?

This section reviews the efficiency of STDF resources and budget, as well as how efficient are STDF's structures, analytical tools, and projects in targeting women's needs.

#### To what extent are dedicated resources and budgets committed to gender equality in STDF workstreams?

**Finding 18.** Gender considerations have not been systematically embedded throughout the budget cycle.

The STDF does not apply a gender-based resource allocations approach (where funding takes into account the impact on gender equality), nor has it conducted a needs-based assessment for budget decisions. Detailed information on budget expenditure concerning gender is not found in STDFs' annual reports. This is mainly explained by WTO's own budgeting process and procedures.

Securing specific funding for targeted projects for women is not necessarily welcome by donors and partners. According to one interviewee, “we are really trying to move away from having specific money for gender programmes, or trying to move away from having that check box, and done, cause if you have money for gender programming, then the rest of the money means that there will be no gender programming”. Similarly, another interviewee argued “Is it really a question of resources? Perhaps one way to start is internal, reviewing our processes, among the STDF Working Groups and Secretariat”.

#### How efficient are STDF's structures, analytical tools, and projects in targeting women's needs?

Similarly, since there are no budget set aside for gender-related activities and/or projects, the evaluation was not able to assess the efficiency of the use of economic resources. Although according to the OECD DAC evaluation criteria the economic cost includes human, environmental, financial, and time costs, the lack of available data on all these issues does not allow for descriptive analysis. From the selected PGs, there was no available information on the request to hire a gender expert.

At the Secretariat level, the prioritization of other tasks, explained by the limited number of staff, has been detrimental to the lack of gender-focused work. One interviewee argued that succeeding on this aspect “would really depend on how the STDF would define gender and their work on gender. There are a lot of times when women's issues come in. However, is this a gender issue or a programme issue? The STDF should address it, either under the gender heading or under the programme heading”.

## Impact

### Has STDF's gender mainstreaming approach delivered higher-level outcomes?

The following sections analyze the extent to which STDF's approach has been impactful and to what extent STDF influenced and/or scaled up good gender equality practices or results.

### Have there been unintended, positive, or negative effects of STDF workstreams on gender equality?

**Finding 19.** Overall, evidence of impact is positive but limited. Because gender mainstreaming is not yet sufficiently institutionalized, the availability of results is not consistent.

Defining the expected long-term impact in terms of gender equality, the right approaches, and accountability systems that best suit STDF's specific workstreams and existing processes will improve results tracking. However, aligned with the above findings, there is no clear understanding of what support for gender equality means in an SPS context and for the STDF's mandate.

Even so, there are some excellent examples of some positive effects achieved through the projects. As reported in the STDF Annual Reports and Results Book, positive impacts can be identified in the form of the organization of women in cooperatives to further develop the capacities of women farmers, processors, and traders.

Increased incomes, the establishment of processing facilities benefiting women, reduced post-harvest losses, increased decision-making power, and improved pest and disease control techniques are some of the main positive effects reported as a result of STDF projects. However, information on how these actions have influenced other practices is still unknown. This supports the need to further improve gender mainstreaming in STDF work, such as the introduction of improved monitoring systems that can be used to analyze the potential impacts of both knowledge and project work.

This assessment, one of the first of its kind, was widely welcomed by STDF donors and partners. According to consultations, there is renewed interest in sharing views, collaborating on identifying speakers, and organizing joint events to further explore the results of this assessment. One interviewee mentioned that "maybe a starting point is the sharing of experiences, where donors can provide examples and lessons learned of projects they have been involved in". Another interviewee reported, "I welcome that other partners are starting to work on this, as it is better, we have a collective thinking now".

### To what extent have STDFs influenced and/or scaled up good gender equality practices or results?

**Finding 20:** STDF's influence remains moderate but holds great potential in playing a significant role in the sharing of best practices among partners and other stakeholders.

As already argued in this assessment, research on the impact that SPS measures can have on women remains open for further development. However, the STDF has already been recognized as a reference on the subject, as can be read in Spencer Henson's study. "Over time, many lessons have been learned regarding the impacts of SPS-related technical assistance and efforts made to promote "good practice", perhaps most notably by the Standards and Trade Development Facility (Henson, 2018).

The author even encourages the STDF to actively share with partners some of the lessons learned and examples of good practice from the projects they have funded. Experiences donors and partners are enthusiastic to tap into. "There is a large interest in collaborating with the STDF on all levels. (...) We might have a good opportunity when we get to the technical implementation. If we have complementary projects in the same countries, there is something we can build upon. If there is a good gender component on an

STDF-led project, we can link that, and then the mainstream can reach further” argued one partner. Similarly one donor manifested its “interest in knowing from the STDF lessons learned instead of coming up with a recipe on our own”.

## Sustainability

### Is it likely that efforts to gender mainstream into STDF workstreams will continue?

This section explores to what extent STDF's approach towards gender mainstreaming is likely to be sustainable and for efforts to continue in the upcoming years.

### What factors have influenced the achievement or non-achievement of sustainability of gender mainstreaming in STDF workstreams and operations?

**Finding 21.** There is no clear plan to sustain current efforts of gender mainstreaming.

The assessment identified that one of the main challenges in gender mainstreaming is the absence of a comprehensive gender action plan. This is reinforced by the lack of awareness of the challenges women face when complying with SPS requirements, the lack of internal agreement within the Working Group on how much importance should be given to gender issues, the limited monitoring, evaluation, and analysis of the impact projects are having on women, as well as the limited human resources at the Secretariat level.

The STDF's forward-looking interest in taking gender issues into account has set in motion different efforts to integrate the gender perspective into its different lines of work. Still, the assessment found that overall there is a low level of appropriation of gender issues at the Secretariat level, which can potentially undermine the sustainability of efforts in this area.

Gender mainstreaming requires an understanding of gender equality and – in this case – what it means to the respective workstreams. Based on the analysis, the STDF Working Group has not made sufficiently clear where it stands in relation to its own mandate and gender equality, and which actions are necessary to support this in the medium to long term.

As seen in STDF's 2020-2024 Strategy, the theory of change “stems from the conviction that more synergies and collaboration, and greater access to, and use of good practices and knowledge products at the global, regional and national level” are key to achieve improvement in SPS capacity and facilitate safe trade. The achievement of STDF's twofold outcomes depends on the coordination of a wide range of actors and stakeholders. The established mechanisms of change offer the STDF Working Group to include a discussion of gender issues, and a critical reflection on some assumptions of change that impact women.

The lack of a rationale, a gender action plan, as well as of a process to identify priorities, or what are the expected results in this area, undoubtedly diminishes the continuity of the efforts made to date. One of the interviewees argued in favor of adjusting the current approach. “Maybe in the early years of trying to connect these types of issues there is a certain amount of forcing them to confront each other, but when it doesn't come naturally to all parties, it's the only way to build up that awareness, and the linkages become more a reflective process further down the line”.

Adding gender issues as a specific agenda item will be beneficial to support gender mainstreaming efforts. However, evidence shows that gender is rarely addressed in Policy Committee or Working Group meetings. After reviewing the summary reports, gender is mentioned anecdotally during those reunions, rather than as a standalone topic. When asked about it one interviewee shared that “we create these groups (e.g. the MEL Group) so it does not take time off the main agenda. (...) We have already a very packed agenda we go through, I wouldn't add it as a fixed topic”.

Ensuring sustainability of efforts will depend on setting clear expectations for the Secretariat and implementing organizations, promoting gender-sensitive training to meet those expectations; strengthening accountability mechanisms to monitor and evaluate gender progress; and supporting gender-sensitive research and knowledge work, among other factors. In light of the global nature of STDF partnership support and active participation of partners and other relevant stakeholders will be strategic to guarantee gender is addressed more systematically.

**How and to what extent is a commitment to gender mainstreaming among members of the STDF partnership (including implementing organizations) likely to continue?**

**Finding 22.** Commitment to gender mainstreaming among members of the STDF partnership is very likely to continue, as it is a topic of growing interest among partners.

Despite that consensus is not consistent on all possible areas of improvement (as seen in the Findings), from the interviews with founding partners, donors, and observers to the WG meetings and implementing organizations, there is an agreement to move forward in identifying ways to support work on gender issues, such as collaborating with gender champion countries on issues such as gender analysis and/or gender-responsive programming.

“We have people that really know the topic and are passionate about it. At the same time, we are also constantly convincing others that never have thought about gender. It is a process to hammer the concept into everyone’s head. Donors are asking us, so don’t underestimate the importance of having a champion on this matter”. Similarly, another interviewee urged “the STDF not to be cautious to go down this road, because they don’t have the data yet. We want to hear those stories, we want to hear where our aid is being spent”.



## Selected good practices in gender mainstreaming from some STDF donors, partners, and other relevant stakeholders

### Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)

FAO's [Policy on Gender Equality](#) (2020-2030) focuses on four objectives, which "highlight key dimensions to be addressed for promoting gender equality in agriculture, rural development, and natural resource management for attaining food security and nutrition for all". In promoting gender equality FAO considers other social dimensions that intersect with gender, such as age, marital status, disability status, religion, race, ethnicity, socio-economic status, etc.

FAO refers to two gender mainstreaming approaches: (i) the gender-sensitive/responsive approach, consisting of recognising and addressing the specific needs and priorities of men and women, based on the social construction of gender roles, and (ii) the transformative approach, seeking to transform gender roles and promote gender-equitable relationships between men and women.

In FAO there is a dedicated Gender Team that oversees the implementation of the policy and provides assistance to all staff in different technical areas of work. Each FAO Regional Office also has a Gender Officer. There is also the figure of Gender Focal Points in all divisions and groups in Headquarters and FAO decentralized offices, who devote 20% of their time to gender-related work.

As seen in FAO's Guide to mainstreaming gender in project cycle, project applicants are asked to assign a gender marker based on the results of a gender analysis:

- GM0: (Promoting gender equality is not relevant to the project because this has no human or social component);
- GM1: Promoting gender equality is relevant. Gender dimensions are systematically integrated into the project, even if the promotion of gender equality is not the main objective of the intervention.
- GM2: The project's main objective is to promote gender equality and women's empowerment.

FAO also has developed a list of Guiding questions when conducting a gender analysis at the local level and when reviewing viewing the quality of gender mainstreaming of projects. (See Box #2 for more examples).

FAO has joined efforts with ITC and is currently implementing a joint pilot project on "Empowering women and boosting livelihoods through agricultural trade: Leveraging the AfCFTA" (See ITC gender programme She Trades). The capacity-building component focuses on SPS non-tariff barriers, trade facilitation, and financial services.

### Box # 2 Best Practices: FAO Integrated Production and Pest Management (IPPM) Programme in Africa

- Established in 2001 seeks to "improve farming skills and raise smallholder farmers awareness of risks from and alternatives to toxic chemicals".
- The programme work at three levels: developing local farming capacity, improving food security and livelihoods, and raising awareness.
- The IPPM mainstreams a gender perspective into all stages of its projects. "Doing so brings to the fore current gender relations and constraints faced by women in agriculture, which in turn helps to inform decision-making"
- Activities are also gender-inclusive and balanced.
- Women are equally represented at Farmer Field Schools (FFS).
- The IPPM collects quantitative and qualitative data on women's access to products and services.
- A strategy for mainstreaming gender in the FFS "is being developed for distribution to IPPM programme countries, targeting farmers, community leaders, fieldworkers, FFS facilitators, local government and coordination units".

### Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida)

Gender equality is one of Sida's main thematic areas and a high priority in Sweden's development cooperation. Of the total support provided by Sida in 2020, 87% had either gender equality as a primary goal (19%) or as an intermediate goal (68%).

As part of their Gender Tool Box, which provides knowledge, tools and inspiration on how to operationalize gender equality Sida published a [brief](#) on gender and trade in 2019. The material discusses the linkages between gender and trade, its relevance to the agriculture, manufacturing, and services sectors, and some recommendations for further dialogue, including on trade facilitation and standards, such as:

- Who is/should be consulted in the development and implementation of standards and trade procedures (in government, CSO, or the private sector?)
- How can equal access to information and capacity building, including trade opportunities, among men and women be ensured?
- How does cross-border trade affect migration flow? Family compositions and unpaid care work? How does a lower price affect business on each side of the border?

### The European Union Commission (EU)

The EU follows a [Gender Strategy](#) (2020-2025), a [Gender Action Plan](#) (GAP) for their external action, and an Operational Framework, which provides comprehensive guidance for implementing gender mainstreaming with specific targeted actions to achieve gender equality.

The EU Commission employs the OECD Gender Marker to rate their work. They have set a target for all their external assistance, in which they aim for 85% of all new actions across external relations to contribute to gender equality and women's empowerment by 2025. Their Gender Action Plan III defines strategic objectives and indicators and presents for each objective a set of actions, indicators, baselines and targets, which are monitored on an annual basis. When it comes to thematic areas of engagement, the GAP presents objectives to be selected and used in different processes. For each objective, a set of 'key thematic outcome indicators' is highlighted.

In collaboration with ITC, the EU launched a pilot survey in 2019 to assess women's participation in extra-EU trade, to identify the barriers faced by women participating in extra-EU trade. Trade and gender considerations are to be included in the context of the modernization exercise of the EU-Chile FTA and EU-NZ FTA.

### International Trade Center (ITC)

From a trade and development perspective, the ITC seeks to address gender inequalities and increase economic opportunities for women. Every project is rated against pre-defined gender markers (as well as environmental and social sustainability). In 2019 the ITC launched the [Mainstreaming sustainable and inclusive trade Guidelines](#) to offer guidance to project managers to consistently embed these objectives into ITC projects. The Guidelines offer concrete guiding questions to define project interventions for gender equality, youth engagement, green growth, and social responsibility, as well as recommendations for capturing relevant data for each one.

The document suggests taking a Five-step approach (including tasks and expected results) to mainstream gender, as well as the other focus area, which involves: (i) Prioritizing, (ii) Defining, (iii) Designing, (iv) Rating, and (v) Reviewing. Guiding questions to define project interventions for gender equality, touch upon topics such as: export strategy, market access, subsidies, services, non-conforming, measures, government, procurement, export processing zones, regulatory environment, institutional capacity and services, choice of sector, access to market and information, among others.

ITC also has a dedicated gender programme, [She Trades](#), that was designed to “improve women’s livelihood through trade by scaling up platforms and partnerships for gender equality, expanding support to women in trade and delivering interventions to make value chains more inclusive”.

### The World Bank Group (WBG)

The World Bank Group follows a [Gender Equality Strategy](#) that emphasizes measurable results based on data and evidence of what works, and captures gender mainstreaming efforts through a methodology that encourages discussions at the design stage to identify “gaps between males and females in endowment, economic opportunity, and voice and agency biases in policies and regulations that are relevant to the operations” (the pillars). In 2016, the WBG introduced a new “Gender Tag” to track the implementation of the strategy and measure the quality and results of Bank operations across the mentioned pillars.

Teams are required to present the specific gaps using official data and demonstrate exactly how the project’s activities will contribute to closing the aforementioned gaps. Indicators must be selected to track and report progress.

Gender tag specialists at regional and global levels advise the project teams from the design stage on how the gender tag can be achieved. Evaluations done at the completion stage by a team of gender specialists assess the project’s performance in closing targeted gender gaps in connection with Board approval of the overall project. Gender tagging applies to the Bank operations, linked to the main pillar of the Gender Equality Strategy: (i) analysis – identify gender gaps in outcomes between men and women in a given project or sector; (ii) design – devise interventions to address gaps between women and men, and; (iii) indicators in the results framework that measure closure of a gender gap.

The gender tags (and gender flags for IFC) “assess the results chains of projects by identifying whether their design has analyzed a gender gap, developed an activity to respond to the gap, and put gender gap indicators in results frameworks”.

The WBG has recognized that further efforts are needed to ensure a proper gender mainstreaming approach, including providing “clearer, more detailed and consistent guidelines to ensure that all concerned stakeholders (...) fully understand the methodology for the correct use of the gender tag”. See Box #3 for more examples. Furthermore, the Gender Tag only applies to projects that require Board approval and not trust-funded projects.

### Box #3 Best Practices: Guidelines for integrating gender into WBG – Agribusiness projects

- Designed to assist World Bank Task Team Leaders in applying a gender lens at each stage of an agribusiness project cycle.
- Consist of open-ended prompts, questions, analytical and process tools, and recommendations to integrate gender at various stages in the life of a project.
- The guidelines, divided into 4 sections, include (i) a tag reminder, (ii) a practice checklist “organized under the three major roles that women and men play in agribusinesses: market support, entrepreneurship, and employment”, (iii) a list of do’s and don’ts, and (iv) a summary of tested tools which describes different types of approaches in support of gender mainstreaming.

### The Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (Norad)

Norad follows the National [Action Plan](#) for Women's Rights and Gender Equality (under review). Women and gender equality are also one of Norwegian's trade-related assistance priorities, as seen in its Action Plan for Aid for Trade (2007). The improvement of knowledge and analysis on the relation between women, trade, and development is highly ranked.

Projects are asked to adopt a 'Do no harm approach' to identify the potential unintended consequences on gender equality and to conduct a gender assessment, when applicable. Results and impacts are reported based on the SDGs.

### The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE)

UNECE has developed the [Gender Responsive Standards Initiative](#) (GRSI). Among the tools for continuous engagement under GRSI, each one of the 83 signatories has designed a focal point that participates – every quarter – in GRSI meetings.

In 2020 three new expert working groups were established: (i) training and best practices, (ii) GRS methodology, and (iii) network development.

The GRSI [Guidelines on Developing gender responsive standards](#) offer guidance to standards development organizations when implementing the declaration, including information on:

- Who needs to act to improve gender-responsiveness in standardization.
- How can standards developers ensure standards are gender-responsive.
- Series of questions for standards developers to consider about the impact of standards on men, women, boys, and girls.
- How to take action, even "in cases where gender differences were not identified, or where the evidence was inconclusive".

### Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC)

AAFC follows a yearly [Departmental Plan on Gender based Analysis Plus](#) (GBA+) which guided decision-making processes, accountability mechanisms, and monitoring and reporting.

The [AgriRisk Initiative](#) collects data at the application stage to examine the impact of the programme on specific underrepresented and marginalized groups. The following information is requested, though voluntary:

- 1) Does the project focus on addressing the needs of any of the following groups? (Options include: Indigenous Peoples, women, youth, persons with disabilities, not applicable, unsure, decline to identify), and
- 2) If so, how does it address them?





## 5. CONCLUSIONS



**Conclusion 1: The level of awareness of the gendered impacts of SPS measures remains low among STDF members and partners, limiting the integration of gender mainstreaming into processes and project development.**

This conclusion is mainly based on findings 1, 2, 7, 8 and 16. The evaluation highlighted the lack of evidence in academic literature on the extent to which women are negatively affected by trade-related sanitary and phytosanitary measures. The oversight of gender considerations at the project level is partly explained by the lack of clarity of what is expected to be addressed in terms of gender, but also because there are no examples to help the applicants conceptually connect objectives with gender-specific goals and outcomes.

However, it is important to note that improved awareness can be complemented by having guidance materials at the implementing agent's disposal. While not all SPS measures may be subject to a gender lens, a simple list of guiding questions can improve the project's effectiveness on this matter.

**Conclusion 2: STDF's Leadership has not consistently supported the implementation of gender mainstreaming efforts.**

This conclusion is mainly based on findings 6, 7, 11, 12, 15 and 17. A key challenge for gender mainstreaming is the lack of a shared understanding that gender equality is fundamental in all areas of work. A successful approach to gender mainstreaming goes beyond 'including women' to an existing effort, activity, or identifying them as a target. The aim is to incorporate the gender perspective in all processes and at all levels.

This assessment found that the Working Group, after welcoming recommendations in 2015 to add gender as a criterion in the revised PPG and PG application forms, has not been consistent in supporting further steps to advance the implementation of gender mainstreaming in all STDF work streams. Nor has been instructed by the Policy Committee to advance on this issue, evaluating how gender can be applied to the STDF's mandate, jeopardizing the achievement of greater gender equality results.

Based on the results of the consultations, the perceived level of importance of gender equality for SPS measures, among donors and partners, is mixed. It should be noted that the 2019 external evaluation raised concerns from some Working Group representatives about how excessive focus on cross-cutting issues "may dilute the STDF's attention to SPS issues." While the limited evidence on the gendered impact of such measures is a contributing factor, further efforts need to be underpinned by strong leadership.

**Conclusion 3: Accountability for gender mainstreaming remains ambiguous at all levels.**

This conclusion is mainly based on findings 4, 9, 10, 14, 18 and 21. The lack of leadership and understanding of the potential gendered impact of SPS measures, combined with the lack of concrete guidance, has led to gender issues being perceived as a "tick box" exercise. Even when gender considerations are integrated into the project design phase, gender considerations do not usually advance to the implementation and monitoring phases. Evidence is collected and reported on a limited basis and, when available, it is mainly in the form of sex-disaggregated data.

Although the positive impact that some projects have had on women has sometimes been documented, overall reporting in this regard is informal and fragmented. There also appear to be different levels of understanding among the STDF Secretariat and implementing organizations on how to apply a gender perspective in their specific area of work or project.

A well-defined Gender Action Plan – agreed upon by Working Group members – will allow monitoring the progress of STDF's workstreams against gender-specific targets and adjust their approach as required. It will also equip the STDF Secretariat with better tools and a proper work plan to implement and assist project-implementing organizations in gender mainstreaming efforts.

**Conclusion 4: The STDF is not sufficiently exercising its convening power to assess and exchange views on the situation of other partners in bringing gender considerations into an SPS context.**

This conclusion is mainly based on findings 1, 3, 5, 13, 19, 20 and 22. Coordination, cooperation, and dissemination of good practices in SPS measures lie at the core of STDF's work. In addition to presenting Spencer Henson's study back in 2018, the STDF Working Group has not facilitated the exchange of opinions, practices, and research on issues related to the gendered nature of SPS measures. There is a potential, yet to be explored by the Working Group, on how to become a resource – or more resourceful – for all partners interested in this issue.

Since the availability of data is sparse, and other STDF Working Group members – including standard-setting organizations – are just beginning to explore the relationship between gender and SPS in more detail, the STDF can play a crucial convening and leadership role on these issues. For example, by consulting with other partners on how they have integrated gender into SPS capacity-building projects and programmes.



## 6. RECOMMENDATIONS

Overall, recommendations will require a strong commitment and follow-through by the Working Group to further mainstream gender in STDF operations, process, and work. This entails not looking at women in isolation or as homogenous groups, “but looking at men and women and the relationship between them—both as actors in the process and as beneficiaries”(UNDOC, 2013), focusing – wherever possible – on the intersecting factors that can exacerbate inequalities.

It also implies going beyond including the term “gender equality” or “women” in existing documents and templates, but rather integrating a gender perspective directly and clearly, linked to the STDF mandate. To sustain these efforts, the Working Group should reach a common understanding of the type of approach and strategy they seek to implement and to communicate progress with the STDF partnership at large, to raise awareness among partners of the importance of doing so.

It is advisable to implement the following recommendations by first identifying which are STDF's priorities and needs on this matter, and, secondly, taking small steps to further the introduction of gender mainstreaming in all STDF workstreams.

**Recommendation 1: The STDF Working Group should consider developing a Gender Action Plan, based on priorities and needs, to enable a permanent support structure that embraces a vision of gender equality, backed by the necessary resources and accountability systems, while taking into account the size and nature of the STDF partnership.**

In implementing this recommendation, the following actions could be considered:

- Conduct an anonymous survey to measure the knowledge and needs of the STDF Secretariat and Working Group members with different approaches to gender mainstreaming, as a way of taking stock of individual capacity and building a baseline against which progress, including training needs and preferences, can be measured.
- Use these findings to guide consultations with STDF Working Group members to capture their views and opinions on why gender is relevant for the delivery of its current mandate.
- For the WG to discuss and agree on objectives, targets, responsibilities, gender mainstreaming approaches, and accountability mechanisms – among others, that will be part of a potential Gender Action Plan, including;
  - a. Changes to the PPGs and PGs, application, review, approval, and implementation process.
  - b. Gender analysis for approved projects, on an as-needed basis.
  - c. Allocation of resources, wherever possible.

**Recommendation 2: The STDF Working Group to adopt a leadership role in promoting the exchange of views, practices, and information through a range of platforms, to build momentum around the potential gendered impact of SPS measures.**

In implementing this recommendation, the following actions could be considered:

- For the WG to evaluate adding ‘gender issues’ as a standard topic in the Working Group meeting agenda.
- For the WG to facilitate multi-stakeholder dialogues to share experiences and promote peer learning exchange.
- For the WG to support research on gender issues and SPS measures, linked to STDF's knowledge work priorities.
- To request the Policy Committee to share its views and strategic guidance on gender mainstreaming in the context of the STDF mandate.

**Recommendation 3: The STDF Partnership should consider reviewing its operational documents (e.g. including PPG and PGs application forms, Guidelines for evaluation, and report templates) to allow for a more coherent approach to gender mainstreaming and thus respond more effectively to the real and specific needs of women and men.**



In implementing this recommendation, the following actions could be considered:

- For the Secretariat to collect detailed feedback from implementing organizations and partners on the usefulness of the application and reporting forms to clarify their interests, expectations, and information needs. See suggested changes in Table 4:
- For the Secretariat to review requesting information and/or data disaggregated by sex and other social dimensions, subject to availability and capacity of implementing agencies and partners.
- To develop (with the assistance of a donor or done through external hiring) a list of guiding questions (see Table #5) to help implementing agencies and partners better assess the project's potential for integrating gender considerations.

**Table #4 Suggested Changes for PPGs and PG Application Forms**

PPG Application Form	<p>Explain how gender-related issues (e.g. women's socio-economic roles, access to and control over resources, division of labour, interests, and needs) are relevant for this PPG and, if appropriate, how women's needs will be addressed throughout the project cycle (i.e. planning, analysis, design, implementation, monitoring, and reporting).</p> <p>If you do not consider gender to be relevant in your project, please justify.</p>
PG Application Form	<p>Identify and explain how gender-related issues (e.g. women's socio-economic status, access to and control over resources, division of labour, interests, and needs) and opportunities are relevant to the project.</p> <p>This should be supported by a preliminary gender analysis (on an as-needed basis) to identify the potential positive/negative effects of the project on gender equality and other gender-based constraints. For instance, how women's different economic roles (e.g. as producers, traders, consumers, and decision-makers) are represented in particular value chains of relevance to the project. What constraints (if any) do they face and how could they be addressed to take advantage of the project's outcomes? If possible, specify how data collection and analysis will integrate gender issues and how monitoring and reporting will be gender-responsive including systematic collection and analysis of sex-disaggregated data.</p>

**Table #5 Suggested Guiding Questions**

Examples of suggested guiding questions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do men and women have equal access to resources to benefit from the project?</li> <li>• How was the project informed by a gender analysis?</li> <li>• Have gender issues been integrated into the project logical framework?</li> <li>• Have women been involved/ consulted in the development of the project?</li> <li>• Does the project include a specific objective related to gender issues or has it been mainstreamed in other objectives?</li> <li>• What practical steps can be taken to avoid reinforcing stereotypes when implementing the project?</li> <li>• Do indicators measure the gender aspects of each outcome?</li> <li>• In the case of gender-specific objectives, to what extent were they achieved?</li> <li>• How women's reproductive role and care functions may affect the quality and level of participation in economic opportunities?</li> </ul>

**Recommendation 4: The Working Group should review and assess potential future changes to ensure monitoring and evaluation systems are accountable for gender equality, particularly MEL indicators.**

In implementing this recommendation, the following actions could be considered:

- For the WG to ask the MEL Group to review how to incorporate gender-responsive methodologies to ensure the current Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Framework continues to be gender-responsive, including new indicators to better measure the impact of projects on women's economic empowerment and its contribution to gender equality.
- For the Secretariat to ensure that periodic reviews with implementing organizations include gender equality as specific criteria, encouraging to capture good practices and lessons learned by considering open questions as part of monitoring efforts (e.g. If applicable, to what extent the non-reference to gender issues can be seen as a missed opportunity?).

**Recommendation 5: To raise awareness and build knowledge on gender mainstreaming (including gender concepts and equality issues) across members of the STDF partnership as a means to strengthen the results of SPS capacity development.**

In implementing this recommendation, the following actions could be considered:

- For the WG to consider offering gender sensitivity training to the STDF Secretariat (and implementing organizations when applicable) on a regular basis, including more focused modules, such as gender mainstreaming in project management and/or in results-oriented monitoring
- For the WG to promote among the Secretariat existing training courses offered by the WTO and other organizations, for example, on trade and gender, gender and GVCs, Gender-Responsive Monitoring & Evaluation, among others.

**Recommendation 6: To make gender issues more visible in STDF's current Website and communications.**

In implementing this recommendation, the following actions could be considered:

- Bringing cross-cutting issues to the forefront of the Site under 'Topics', including a brief description of the importance of gender for the efficient implementation of SPS measures and SPS capacity development, along with success stories, publications, among other gender-related content.
- To develop a brief note to promote gender equality in STDF's communications, to ensure visual materials, articles, social media posts, and activities are gender sensitive.

The cost to implement the recommendations will vary, as some of the actions can be done without incurring additional costs, while some will require the allocation of specific funds. Still, effective implementation of any of the above suggestions will require commitment, human resources, and time which are limited, considering the relatively small number of STDF Secretariat personnel. Support from donor organizations (in the shape of financial and/or human resources), in addition to their contribution to the trust fund, can help provide longer assistance to implement these recommendations.





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[STDF/PPG/567](#) Maintenance of fruit production areas free and under low prevalence of fruit fly pests in Southern Africa

[STDF/PPG/481](#) Strengthening phytosanitary capacity

[STDF/PPG/432](#) Information systems for surveillance and pest reporting

[STDF/PPG/329](#) Addressing public and private sector SPS needs

[STDF/PPG/665](#) Piloting the use of TPA Programmes to improve food safety outcomes for public health and trade in Africa

[STDF/PG/155](#) Market oriented training on standards

[STDF/PG/242](#) Strengthening SPS system

[STDF/PG/489](#) Improving market access for small scale fisheries in West Africa

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## Annex #1 Terminology and Concepts

### Gender

Gender refers to the roles, behaviours, activities, and attributes that a given society at a given time considers appropriate for men and women. In addition to the social attributes and opportunities associated with being male and female and the relationships between women and men and girls and boys, gender also refers to the relations between women and those between men. These attributes, opportunities and relationships are socially constructed and are learned through socialization processes.

*Source: UN Women Gender Equality Glossary*

### Gender blindness

This term refers to the failure to recognize that the roles and responsibilities of men/boys and women/girls are assigned to them in specific social, cultural, economic, and political contexts and backgrounds. Projects, programs, policies and attitudes which are gender blind do not take into account these different roles and diverse needs. They maintain the status quo and will not help transform the unequal structure of gender relations.

*Source: UN Women Gender Equality Glossary*

### Gender equality

This refers to the equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women and men and girls and boys. Equality does not mean that women and men will become the same but that women's and men's rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female. Gender equality implies that the interests, needs and priorities of both women and men are taken into consideration, recognizing the diversity of different groups of women and men. Gender equality is not a women's issue but should concern and fully engage men as well as women. Equality between women and men is seen both as a human rights issue and as a precondition for, and indicator of, sustainable people-centered development.

*Source: UN Women Gender Equality Glossary*

### Gender mainstreaming

Gender mainstreaming is the chosen approach of the United Nations system and international community toward realizing progress on women's and girl's rights, as a sub-set of human rights to which the United Nations dedicates itself. It is not a goal or objective on its own. It is a strategy for implementing greater equality for women and girls in relation to men and boys. Mainstreaming a gender perspective is the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programs, in all areas and at all levels.

*Source: UN Women Gender Equality Glossary*

### Gender responsive

Means understanding and taking account of the differences in characteristics and life experiences that women and men bring to the criminal justice system, and adjusting strategies and practices in ways that appropriately respond to those conditions.

*Source: Bloom, Owen, and Covington (2003)*

### Gender sensitive

Policies and programmes that take into account the particularities pertaining to the lives of both women and men, while aiming to eliminate inequalities and promote gender equality, including an equal distribution of resources, therefore addressing and taking into account the gender dimension.

*Source: European Commission (1998). 100 Words for Equality: A Glossary of Terms on Equality between Women and Men.*

**Gender transformative**

Gender transformative programming refers to integrating the gender transformative approach into project and programme design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

It promotes gender transformative change at the individual and systemic level and across informal and formal spheres of life. At the core of gender transformative programming lie interventions that aim at addressing practical gender needs (e.g. knowledge, skills, access to productive resources) and strategic gender interests (e.g. decision-making power, position/status in society) by triggering changes in agency, social relations and social structures.

*Source: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. Joint Programme on Gender Transformative Approaches for Food Security and Nutrition*

**Gender roles**

Gender roles refer to social and behavioural norms that, within a specific culture, are widely considered to be socially appropriate for individuals of a specific sex.

*Source: UN Women Gender Equality Glossary*

**Gender Dynamics**

Gender dynamics include the relationships and interactions between and among boys, girls, women, and men. Gender dynamics are informed by socio-cultural ideas about gender and the power relationships that define them. Depending upon how they are manifested, gender dynamics can reinforce or challenge existing norms.

*Source: USAID – Office of Women in Development. Glossary of Gender Terms and Concepts*

**Intersectionality**

Intersectionality refers to overlapping social identities and the related systems of oppression, domination and/or discrimination. The idea is that multiple identities intersect to create a whole that is different from the component identities.

*Source: UNICEF Glossary of Terms and Concepts*



## Annex #2 Evaluation Questions Framework

EVALUATION FRAMEWORK			
	QUESTIONS	INDICATOR	DATA SOURCES
RELEVANCE	<p><b>1. How relevant is STDF's work to advancing gender equality?</b></p> <p>1.1 How relevant is gender equality in the efficient implementation of SPS measures and SPS capacity development?</p> <p>1.2 How and to what extent is STDF's work relevant to the promotion of SDG 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls?</p> <p>1.3 To what extent has cooperation with other institutions dealing with gender issues been undertaken?</p> <p>1.4 How relevant are STDF's objectives and workstreams to the needs of women?</p> <p>1.5 How and to what extent has STDF's work adapted to emerging priorities (Covid-19 and other contextual changes) and its potential impact on women's needs?</p>	Summary of documentation	<p>Literature review</p> <p>Semi-structured interviews</p> <p>Document Analysis</p>
	<p><b>2. How coherent is STDF's approach to gender mainstreaming?</b></p> <p>2.1 To what extent is gender mainstreaming addressed clearly and in an actionable way throughout STDF's project cycle and knowledge work?</p> <p>2.2 To what extent do STDF documents support gender mainstreaming and gender equality in a clear and action-oriented way?</p> <p>2.2.1 How and to what extent gender equality issues have been integrated into PPGs and PGs application forms?</p> <p>2.2.2 How and to what extent gender equality issues have been identified and supported by STDF's Knowledge Work?</p> <p>2.3 How and to what extent are PGs aligned to gender equality national policies and programs?</p> <p>2.4 To what extent are gender-specific indicators used to measure the progress and results of STDF projects? How has this evolved since 2015? To what extent are the indicators used appropriately to measure gender equality?</p> <p>2.5 To what extent guidance, tools, etc. are available (if any) to support gender mainstreaming in STDF work?</p> <p>2.6 To what extent internal and external communications are gender sensitive (e.g. language, photos, events organization)?</p> <p>2.7 How does attention to gender in STDF's work to strengthen SPS capacity and facilitate safe trade compare to the work led by organizations involved in STDF's global partnership? Are there synergy opportunities between STDF and its partners?</p>	<p>Gender mainstreaming is systematically applied during the project cycle and clear gender analysis are applied</p> <p>Gender has been incorporated in key planning documents</p> <p>Number of documents available</p> <p>Number of publications reflecting gender emerging issues</p> <p>Communications Plan includes a gender perspective</p>	<p>Projects Analysis</p> <p>Document Analysis</p> <p>Semi-structured interviews</p>



EVALUATION FRAMEWORK			
	QUESTIONS	INDICATOR	DATA SOURCES
<b>EFFECTIVENESS</b>	<p><b>3. To what extent is STDF's gender mainstreaming approach producing results?</b></p> <p>3.1 How and to what extent are STDF projects effectively supporting gender equality at the country level? What are the factors that determined the achievement or non-achievement of this objective?</p> <p>3.2 How and to what extent is STDF knowledge work effectively supporting gender equality? What are the factors that determined the achievement or non-achievement of this objective?</p> <p>3.3 How and to what extent has the STDF Secretariat provided effective support in gender equality to partners and implementing organizations?</p> <p>3.3.1 How and to what extent can the STDF Secretariat be more responsive to partners needs and maintaining an effective partnership to lobby for gender equality?</p> <p>3.4 How and to what extent are STDF systems, strategies, and processes (e.g. MEL Framework, analytical tools) effectively supporting gender equality at the organizational level? To what extent are they achieving results?</p>	<p>STDF has supported partnerships capacity development</p> <p>Gender policy and vision in place, gender focal point</p> <p>Collection of sex-disaggregated data</p> <p>Results summary</p>	<p>Project Analysis</p> <p>Document Analysis</p> <p>Semi-structured interviews</p>
<b>EFFECTENCY</b>	<p><b>4. Does STDF's gender mainstreaming approach employ time and resources efficiently?</b></p> <p>4.1 To what extent are dedicated resources and budgets committed to gender equality in STDF workstreams?</p> <p>4.2 How efficient are STDF's structures, analytical tools, and projects in targeting women's needs?</p>	<p>Dedicated financial resources</p> <p>Ex-ante and ex-post gender budgeting</p>	<p>Document Analysis</p> <p>Semi-structured interview</p>
<b>IMPACT</b>	<p><b>5. Has STDF's gender mainstreaming approach delivered higher-level outcomes?</b></p> <p>5.1 Have there been unintended, positive, or negative effects of STDF workstreams on gender equality?</p> <p>5.2 To what extent have STDFs influenced and/or scaled up good gender equality practices or results?</p>	<p>Summary of good practices and examples</p> <p>Number of STDF publications on the topic</p>	<p>Project Analysis</p> <p>Document Analysis</p> <p>Semi-structured interviews</p>
<b>SUSTAINABILITY</b>	<p><b>6. Are STDF's efforts and approach towards gender mainstreaming likely to be sustainable?</b></p> <p>6.1 What factors have influenced the achievement or non-achievement of sustainability of gender mainstreaming in STDF workstreams and operations?</p> <p>6.2 How and to what extent is a commitment to gender mainstreaming among members of the STDF partnership (including implementing organizations) likely to continue?</p>	<p>Policies and procedures are gender sensitive</p> <p>Periodic revision mechanisms</p>	<p>Project Analysis</p> <p>Document Analysis</p> <p>Semi-structured interviews</p>

## Annex #3 Stakeholder's Analysis Semi-Structured Interviews

### STDF GENDER ASSESSMENT – DONOR AND PARTNERS

- Q. How relevant is gender equality in the efficient implementation of SPS measures and SPS capacity development?
- Q. How relevant is gender to the mandate of your [organization/government department/agency]? [Alternatively] Is gender relevant to the work of your division/unit?
- Q. [STDF is not a gender program] How can focusing on gender issues, and the needs of women, help deliver STDF's mandate?
- Q. In your opinion, how is the STDF currently addressing gender issues?
- Q. In what way the [organization/government department/agency] considers the different needs and priorities of women and men? Is there a gender equality objective?
- Q. Has the [organization/government department/agency] changed its attitude towards incorporating gender issues into their work? Could you provide an example.
- Q. To what extent has gender been mainstreamed in your interventions/projects/funding decisions, and which factors have promoted or hindered gender mainstreaming?
- Q. What results have been achieved and which approaches have been particularly effective or ineffective?
- Q. In your view, what benefits come with paying attention to gender issues? Are there any disadvantages?
- Q. What could the STDF do better to take gender issues into consideration?
- Q. Does your [organization/government department/agency] have a gender unit or gender focal point? If yes, what responsibilities are linked to the unit or role? Do documents mention the different needs of various genders?
- Q. What do you understand by gender mainstreaming?
- Q. What can be done to ensure capacity-building is more gender-responsive? Any best practices?
- Q. What is your view on the development of a rapid gender assessment tool to be employed by non-gender specialists [as suggested by Henson]?
- Q. From a policy perspective, moving forward, what needs to be done to integrate gender into the SPS context?
- Q. In your work, have you identified/track/measure the gendered nature of SPS measures and their impact on women's trade capacity? What related efforts have you implemented to reduce or offset it?
- Q. What actions should SPS authorities take/commit to minimize the potential impact that compliance with SPS measures has on women?
- Q. What can be improved to better understand/measure the potential gendered impact of SPS measures? [mention scarce literature and evidence]
- Q. What can the members of the STDF partnership do to further its ability to influence & advocate to include gender equality in the SPS context? Any joint opportunities to consider with its partners?
- Q. What is the attitude of your beneficiaries towards gender mainstreaming/applying a gender lens to the work? What do you think it will take to institutionalize it?
- Q. What importance should gender considerations play in STDF PGs eligibility criteria? What can be done to further improve project applications?
- Q. To what extent has Covid affected/made more urgent the need to integrate gender considerations into the SPS context?

### STDF GENDER ASSESSMENT – IMPLEMENTING ORGANIZATIONS

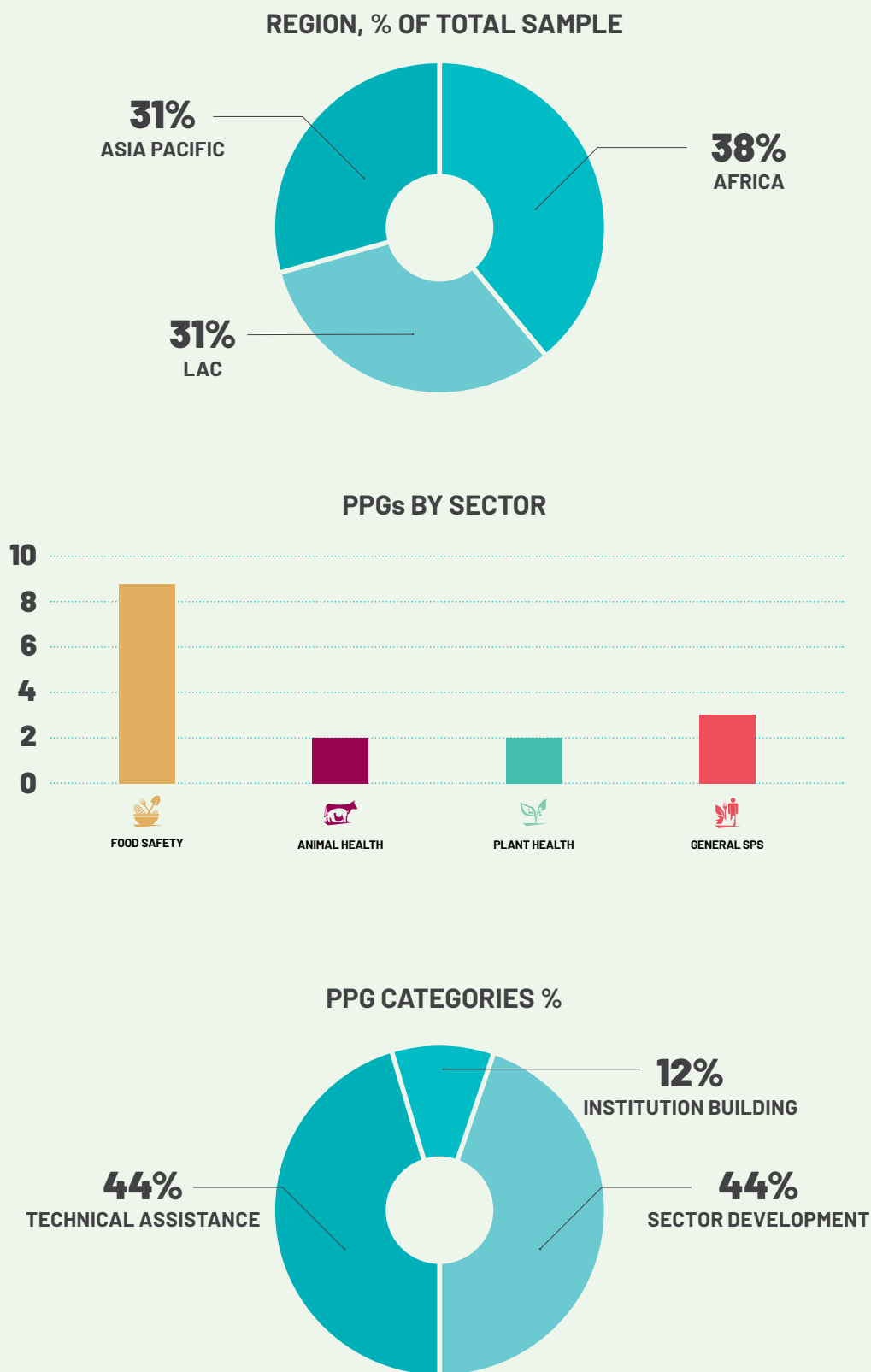
- Q. To what extent are the Guidelines and Project Applications forms responsive to identify specific interests and needs of women and men related to the project?
- Q. What do you understand by gender mainstreaming?
- Q. During the implementation of the project do you employ any gender-inclusive participatory processes that engage both women and men?
- Q. Do you consider gender-specific risks associated with the project?
- Q. To what extent attention to integrating gender equality issues and concerns advanced during your time working with the STDF?
- Q. What does success in a project translate into in terms of gender?
- Q. What type, if any, of practical support would you be interested in receiving from the STDF, when it comes to gender issues at the project level?

## Annex #4 PPGs and PGs selection

### Project Preparation Grants (PPGs)

Ref #	Title	Beneficiaries	Region	Sector	Project Category	Status	Budget (US\$)	Implementing Agency
STDF/PPG/435	Improving SPS capacity in sesame to meet market requirements	Sudan	Africa	Food Safety	Sector Development	Completed	56.000	UNIDO
STDF/PPG/534	Livestock identification and registration	Mongolia	Asia-Pacific	Animal Health	Sector Development	Completed	49.750	Hans Schild
STDF/PPG/553	Improving agricultural practices for cocoa and coffee farmers	Papua New Guinea	Asia-Pacific	Food Safety	Sector Development	Completed	50.000	Andrew Graffham, Department of Agriculture and Livestock, Papua New Guinea
STDF/PPG/694	Overcoming Barriers to Trade through Regulatory Harmonization and Related Research on Biopesticides in the SADC Region	SADC member states	Asia-Pacific	Food Safety	Technical Assistance	Completed	41.295	ICGEB
STDF/PPG/539	Laboratory biosecurity classification system and registration	Guatemala	Latin America and Caribbean	Food Safety	Technical Assistance	Completed	49.812	AGEXPORT
STDF/PPG/561	Shaping market access by building phytosanitary capacity	Tajikistan	Asia-Pacific	Plant Health	Institution Building	Completed	50.000	FAO
STDF/PPG/569	Supporting SPS compliance to boost regional trade	Kyrgyz Republic	Asia-Pacific	Food Safety	Sector Development	Completed	44.790	AFVE
STDF/PPG/375	Developing a national SPS strategy	Togo	Africa	General SPS	Technical Assistance	Completed	38.000	COLEACP
STDF/PPG/566	Reducing aflatoxins and producing safe maize	Burkina Faso	Africa	Food Safety	Sector Development	Completed	47.500	Benoit Gnonlonfin
STDF/PPG/498	Building phytosanitary capacity to facilitate trade	Guinea	Africa	Plant Health	Institution Building	On-going	45.250	Babacar Samb
STDF/PPG/789	Building Phytosanitary Capacity for Small Scale Cross Border Traders	Zambia	Africa	General SPS	Technical Assistance	On-going	22.850	WBG
STDF/PPG/767	Feasibility study on implementation of zoning as means to control infectious diseases in aquaculture in Peru	Peru	Latin America and Caribbean	Animal Health	Sector Development	On-going	36.082	Universidad de Zaragoza
STDF/PPG/709	Applying the P-IMA tool in Ecuador	Ecuador	Latin America and Caribbean	General SPS	Technical Assistance	On-going	48.591	IICA
STDF/PPG/716	Food Safety Risk Analysis Capacity Building Program in Latin America	Argentina, Colombia, Costa Rica, Honduras, Nicaragua, Paraguay	Latin America and Caribbean	Food Safety	Technical Assistance	On-going	49.501	FAO, WHO, School of Public Health, University of Minnesota
STDF/PPG/770	Assessing the use of digital and IT tools for food trade facilitation in West Africa	Benin, Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Niger, Mali, Senegal, Togo	Africa	Food Safety	Technical Assistance	On-going	40.312	International Consultants
STDF/PPG/577	Developing safe production practices for cocoa beans	Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Trinidad and Tobago	Latin America and Caribbean	Food Safety	Sector Development	On-going	85.626	International Cocoa Organization (ICCO)

## Project Preparation Grants in sample by region, sector and categories

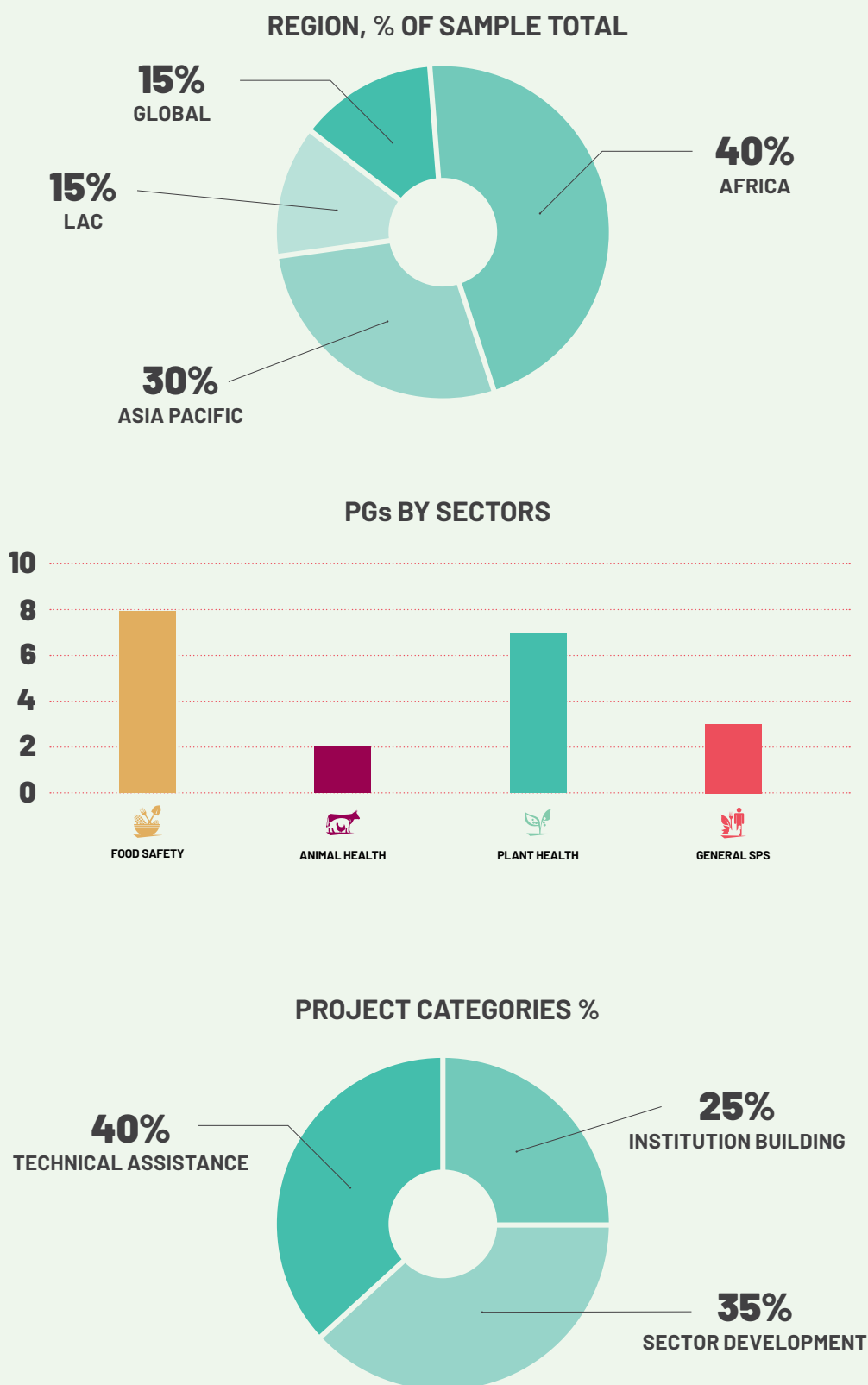


## Project Grants (PGs)

Ref #	Title	Beneficiaries	Region	Sector	Project Category	Status	Budget (US\$)	Implementing Agency
STDF/PG/515	Honey chain traceability	Guatemala	Latin America and Caribbean	Food Safety	Sector Development	Completed	105,244	MAGA
STDF/PG/609	Facilitating e-veterinary certification based on single window system	Developing countries	Global	Animal Health	Technical Assistance	Completed	200,748	OIE
STDF/PG/503	Rolling out a systems approach globally	Developing countries	Global	Plant Health	Technical Assistance	Completed	771,186	IPPC
STDF/PG/486	Improving compliance with SPS measures to boost oilseed exports	Myanmar	Asia-Pacific	Plant Health	Sector Development	Completed	977,658	ITC
STDF/PG/489	Improving market access for small scale fisheries in West Africa	Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Mauritania, Senegal	Africa	Food Safety	Sector Development	Completed	1,335,000	UNIDO
STDF/PG/504	An ePhyto Solution: Enhancing safe trade in plants and plant products	Developing countries	Global	Plant Health	Technical Assistance	Completed	1,728,000	FAO/IPPC
STDF/PG/502	Rolling out phytosanitary measures to expand market access	Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay	Latin America and Caribbean	Plant Health	Institution Building	Completed	1,796,998	IICA
STDF/PG/432	Promoting IT solutions for surveillance and pest reporting	Cambodia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Thailand, Viet Nam	Asia-Pacific	Plant Health	Technical Assistance	On-going	1,705,455	Australian Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment + CABI
STDF/PG/534	Animal identification and registration system	Mongolia	Asia-Pacific	Animal Health	Institution Building	On-going	522,098	FAO
STDF/PG/435	Upgrading the Sudanese Sesame seeds value chain	Sudan	Africa	General SPS	Sector Development	On-going	1,281,189	UNIDO
STDF/PG/694	Enhancing trade through regulatory harmonization and biopesticide-based residue mitigation in the SADC Region	Botswana, Mozambique, South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Kenya	Africa	Plant Health	Technical Assistance	On-going	1,193,219	ICGEB
STDF/PG/681	Mitigating trade barriers due to high cadmium levels in cacao	Colombia, Ecuador	Latin America and Caribbean	Food Safety	Sector Development	On-going	617,999	KU Leuven
STDF/PG/498	Strengthening of the phytosanitary system in Guinea	Guinea	Africa	Plant Health	Institution Building	On-going	847,959	COLEACP
STDF/PG/606	Mainstreaming SPS investments into CAADP and other frameworks	Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Rwanda, Uganda	Africa	General SPS	Institution Building	On-going	502,425	COMESA
STDF/PG/569	Enhancing capacity for food safety management in the Kyrgyz fruit and vegetable industry	Kyrgyz Republic	Asia-Pacific	Food Safety	Sector Development	On-going	746,210	FAO
STDF/PG/375	Strategy to strengthen Togo's SPS system	Togo	Africa	General SPS	Technical Assistance	On-going	827,294	COLEACP
STDF/PG/517	Strengthening the spice value chain and improving market access	India	Asia-Pacific	Food Safety	Sector Development	On-going	892,030	FAO
STDF/PG/665	Piloting the use of voluntary third party assurances (vTPAs) in West Africa	Mali, Senegal	Africa	Food Safety	Institution Building	On-going	858,065	UNIDO
STDF/PG/611	Promotion of Codex Alimentarius standards and codes of practice particularly in the smoked fish industry in Mali	Mali	Africa	Food Safety	Technical Assistance	On-going	855,825	FAO
STDF/PG/619	Safer spices: food safety and market access for peppercorn	Cambodia, Lao PDR, Viet Nam	Asia-Pacific	Food Safety	Technical Assistance	On-going	906,836	CABI



## Project Grants in sample by region, sector and categories



## Annex #5 List of consulted stakeholders

Name	Last Name	Role	Organization
Rolando	ALCALÁ	Economic Affairs Officer	WTO
Ezinne M.	ANYANWU	MEL Officer	STDF Secretariat
Kaviraj	APPADU	Senior Programme Officer	SIDA
Talumba	BANDA	Program Manager	COMESA
Mary	BARRETT	Deputy Director/Assistant Principal	Department of Foreign Affairs / Irish Aid
Gracia	BRISCO	Food Standards Officer	Codex
Verna	CAROLISSEN	Officer	Codex
Florence	CHEGE	Senior Project Manager	CABI
Catherine	CONSTANT	Head of studies	Ministry of Agriculture and Food, France
Kathrin	CORDES	Advisor	German Corporation for International Cooperation
Ewa	CZERWIEN	Implementation Facilitation Unit Assistant	IPPC
Luz	DE-REGIL	Unit Head, Multisectoral Action in Food Systems	WHO
Anoush	DER BOGHOSSIAN	Head of the Trade and Gender Unit	WTO
Nikita	DHAWAN	Adviser	NORAD
Kathleen	DIVERS	Second Secretary, Development & Trade	UK Mission to the UN & WTO
Aileen	DOUNG YANG	Consultant	WBG
Eleonora	DUPOUY	Food Safety and quality Officer	FAO
Natalia	FERNANDEZ	Project Coordinator	UNIDO
Judith	FESSEHAIE	Policy and Data Lead, SheTrades	ITC
Sonia	FÈVRE	Programme Manager	WOAH
Camille	FLÉCHET	Dispute Settlement Lawyer	WTO
Noelia	GARCIA NEBRA	Head   sustainability	ISO
Mumbi	GICHURI	Coordinator	AGRA
Lydia	GREVE	Project Officer	WOAH
Spencer	HENSON	Academic	University of Guelph
Michael	HINSCH	Administrator	Codex Trust Fund
Marlynne	HOPPER	Deputy Head	STDF Secretariat
Jo	HØVIK	Senior Adviser	NORAD
Juan	HOYOS	Advisor Sustainable and Inclusive Value Chains	ITC
Ragnhild	HØYVIK	Senior Adviser	NORAD
Nozomi	IDE	Consultant	FAO
Pablo	JENKINS	Project Manager	STDF Secretariat
Joanna	KAHILUOTO	Policy Officer	EU
Roshan	KHAN	Project Manager	STDF Secretariat
Ravi	KHETARPAL	Executive Secretary	APAARI
Hyun Jin	KIM	Officer	WHO
Brenda	KISINGIRI	Agricultural inspector	CABI
Lourdes	MARTINEZ	Senior Program Officer	USAID

Name	Last Name	Role	Organization
Kelly	MCCORMICK	International Policy Analyst	FDA
Gabor	MOLNAR	Development Expert	UNIDO
Adriana	MOREIRA	Standards Setting Officer	IPPC
Mukayi	MUSARURWA	Quality infrastructure expert	COMESA
Margaux	MUYLE	Senior Project Manager	COLEACP
Hortense	NESSELER	Sustainable Trade Advisor	Permanent Delegation of France to the WTO
Cassandra	NONQUE	Deputy Head	International Trade and Investment Rules Unit Ministry of the Economy and Finance France
Norah	OMOT	Policy Coordinator	APAARI
Simon	PADILLA	Project Manager	STDF Secretariat
Susanna	PAK	Communications officer	STDF Secretariat
Alice	PINEAU	Project Officer	WOAH
Catalina	PULIDO	Project Manager	STDF Secretariat
Mariyam	RAZIYEVA	Consultant	WBG
Olivia	RIERA	Economic Analyst	EU
Alejandra	SAFA	Gender consultant	FAO
Vinay	SINGH	Project Manager-Food Safety and Security	FAO India
Melvin	SPREIJ	Head	STDF Secretariat
Heidi	STENSLAND	Senior Private Sector Specialist	WBG
Anja	TAARUP NORDLUND	Sida Gender Helpdesk	SIDA
Maya	TASELAAR	Trade Policy Officer	Ministry of Foreign Affairs The Netherlands
Marianna	THEYSE	International consultant	PHYTO SOLUTIONS
Peter	VAN DIJK	Senior Policy Manager, Trade Policy and Economic Governance	Ministry of Foreign Affairs The Netherlands
Sabrina	VARMA	Aid for Trade/Economic Advisor	Australia, Dept of Foreign Affairs and Trade
Naomi	VICCARS	Senior Official	Australia, Dept of Foreign Affairs and Trade
Laura	WAUTERS	Expert Vocational Training	COLEACP
Morag	WEBB	Head of Science and Policy	COLEACP
Shannon	WHITE	Director, Trade and Development Section	Australia, Dept of Foreign Affairs and Trade
Brent	WILSON	Deputy Director	Technical Trade Policy Division / Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada
Christiane	WOLFF	Counsellor. Agriculture and Commodities Division	WTO
Salome	YESUDAS	Consultant	FAO India
Victoria	ZHAO	Trade Policy Analyst	Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada

## Annex #6 Gender mainstreaming evaluation for PPGs and PGs

Scale score	Definition
<b>Not at all:</b>	Applies when none of the element under the criteria are met.
<b>To a limited extent:</b>	Applies when some minimal elements are met but further progress is needed and remedial actions to meet the standard is required.
<b>To a moderate extent:</b>	Applies when a satisfactory level has been reached and many of the elements are met but still improvement could be done.
<b>To a significant extent:</b>	Applies when all of the element under a criteria are met, used and fully integrated in the project and no remedial actions are required.

### Project Preparation Grants

Criteria	Scale score				
	Not at all	To a limited extent	To a moderate extent	To a significant extent	Not applicable
Is a gender perspective appropriately addressed in the ToR and Logframe?					
Do the ToRs have explicit gender equality objectives?					
Do the ToRs call for the inclusion of a gender expert in the project preparation team?					
Have sex-disaggregated data and qualitative information on gender issues been used?					
Have a gender analysis been included/considered?					
Have strategic gender needs been identified?					
Does the project specify how gender issues are addressed in the methodology?					
Was gender integrated into programmatic goals and objectives?					
Are gender performance indicators included in the system for monitoring and evaluation?					
Have gender issues been analyzed appropriately, using gender-disaggregated data?					
Are relevant stakeholders for gender issues been included in the design/implementation of the project?					
To what extent is the project aligned with gender related frameworks?					

## Project Grants

Criteria	Scale score				
	Not at all	To a limited extent	To a moderate extent	To a significant extent	Not applicable
Has the project been planned based on a gender analysis?					
Does the project explicitly address a gender issue or issues? Have strategic gender needs been identified?					
Was gender integrated into programmatic goals and objectives?					
To what extent have gender considerations been integrated into the design, planning and implementation of the project?					
Have sex-disaggregated data and qualitative information on gender issues been used?					
Were the results achieved equitably distributed among targeted stakeholder groups?					
Does the evaluation report provide specific recommendations addressing gender equality issues or future initiatives in this area?					
Are there any long-term impact of the project in regard to gender equality?					
In the case of gender specific objectives, to what extent and how were they achieved?					
Does the project specify how gender issues are addressed in the methodology?					
Was gender integrated into programmatic goals and objectives?					
Are gender performance indicators included in the system for monitoring and evaluation?					
Have relevant stakeholders for gender issues been included in the design/implementation of the project?					
To what extent is the project aligned with gender related frameworks or instruments?					
To what extent the project has identified assumption and risks with respect to gender equality?					
To what extent both women and men have been represented in the consultative process?					
To what extent is the project aligned to national policy commitments and/or gender equality policies?					
Do the ToRs call for the inclusion of a gender expert or gender expertise?					
What is the likelihood of increased gender equality beyond project end?					
To what extent was the non-reference to gender issues a missed opportunity?					



## Annex #7 Additional Resources

[Buvinic, Mayra, Megan O'Donnell, James C. Knowles, and Shelby Bourgault. 2020.](#) Measuring Women's Economic Empowerment: A Compendium of Selected Tools. Data2x and the Center for Global Development.

[CRIDF. 2019.](#) GESI toolkit for project preparation

[Fairtrade Foundation. 2015.](#) Equal Harvest: Removing the barriers to women's participation in smallholder agriculture.

[Gender and Development Network. 2015.](#) Untangling Gender Mainstreaming: A Theory of Change based on experience and reflection. GADN. Briefings.

[Global Alliance for Trade Facilitation. 2020.](#) Gender Sensitising Trade Facilitation Reform. Lessons Learned. Paper LL-02: September

[International Finance Corporation. 2019.](#) Seeds of Success: Stories of IFC's Work to Improve the Lives of Women in Agribusiness Value Chains. Washington, DC. International Finance Corporation.

[Njuki, J., Eissler, S., Malapit, H., Meinzen-Dick, R., Bryan, E., & Quisumbing, A. 2022.](#) A review of evidence on gender equality, women's empowerment, and food systems. *Global Food Security*, 33, 100622.

[OXFAM. 2017.](#) A 'How To' Guide To Measuring Women's Empowerment: Sharing experience from Oxfam's impact evaluations.

Richardson, R. A. 2018. Measuring women's empowerment: A critical review of current practices and recommendations for researchers. *Social indicators research*, 137(2), 539-557.

[Seema Jayachandran, 2021.](#) Social Norms as a Barrier to Women's Employment in Developing Countries. *IMF Economic Review*, Palgrave Macmillan; International Monetary Fund, vol. 69(3), pages 576-595, September.

[SIDA.](#) Gender Toolbox.

[UN Women. 2020.](#) Gender Mainstreaming: A global strategy for achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. Briefings.

[World Bank. 2022.](#) Closing Gaps, Increasing Opportunities: A Diagnostic on Women's Economic Empowerment in Nigeria.

[WOW. 2021.](#) Hidden in plain sight: Why we need more data about women in global value chains. *Work and Opportunities for Women*.



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