

## MONITORING, EVALUATION AND LEARNING

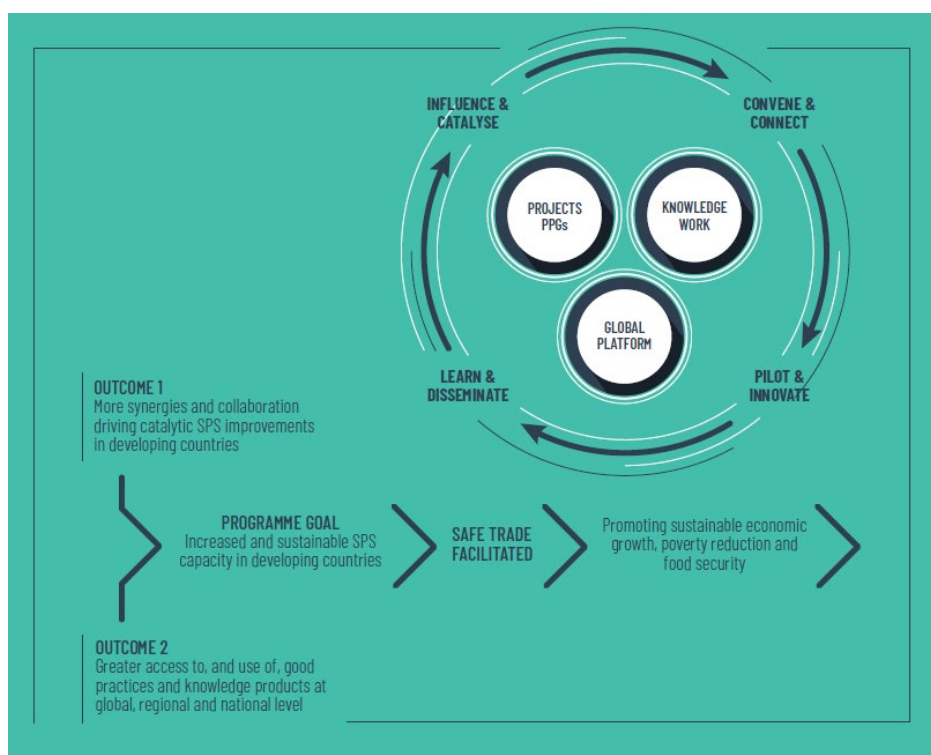
### GUIDANCE FOR STDF PROJECT IMPLEMENTING ORGANIZATIONS

8 NOV. 2022

#### 1 INTRODUCTION

1. This document sets out expectations and processes for Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) within STDF projects. It seeks to help organizations implementing STDF-funded projects to carry out MEL activities in a way that promotes consistency and improvements on MEL across the STDF project portfolio.

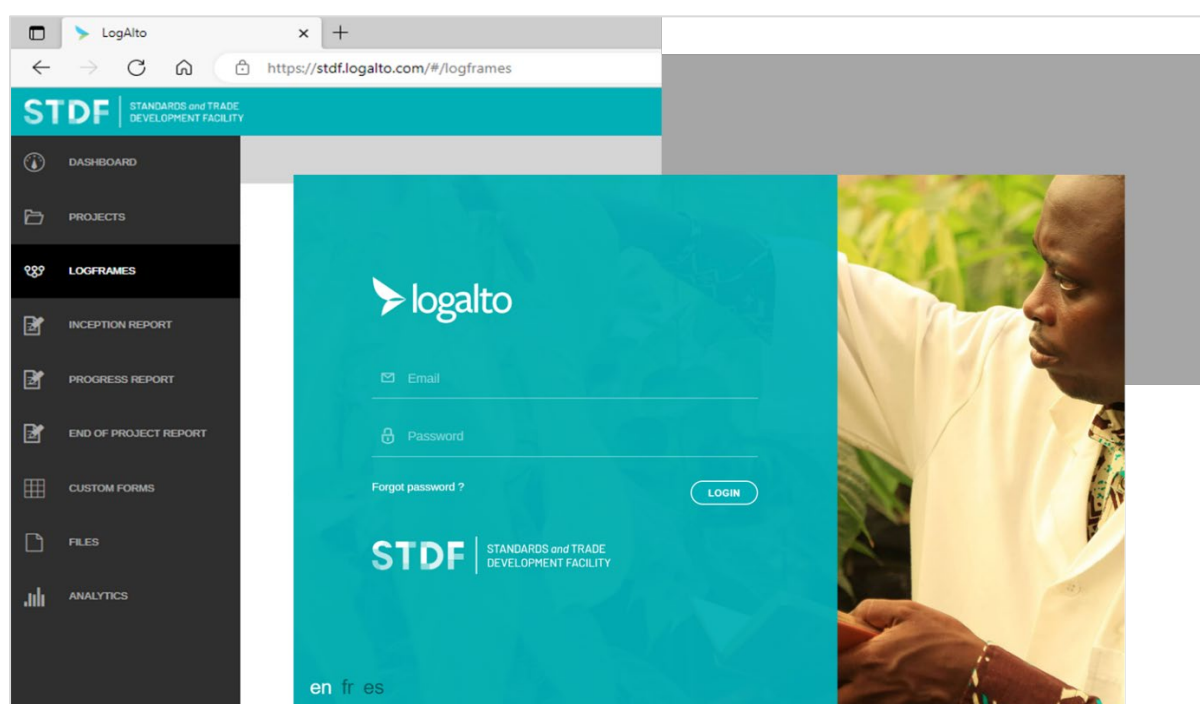
2. Tracking results and promoting learning across projects is an essential part of the [STDF MEL Framework](#). The Framework provides a results-based management approach to better manage STDF's programme over the course of the STDF Strategy 2020-2024. It aims to: i) provide evidence on results and outcomes achieved based on the STDF's Theory of Change to ensure accountability; and ii) foster knowledge and learning about how the STDF's work drives catalytic Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) improvements in developing countries and facilitates safe trade through innovative and cross-cutting approaches.



3. As a key tool for MEL, the project logframe sets out the planned and measurable logic of the project. It identifies the objective of a project, facilitates planning and implementation, and allows to track progress on the achievements of expected results. Annex 1 includes a project logframe template, as well as details on the STDF "corporate" indicators from the STDF programme logframe. To aggregate results at the STDF programme level, indicators for all STDF projects are mapped to STDF "corporate" indicators.

## 2 LOGALTO FOR MEL

1. The STDF uses [LogAlto](#), a collaborative web-based monitoring and evaluation tool to facilitate results-based management. The system allows to collect, store, and manage data and support project implementation. Project dashboards are created (in English, French and/or Spanish) on LogAlto for all ongoing STDF-funded projects. LogAlto allows to input project logframe and activities, as well as project reports and files etc. The STDF Secretariat assigns user rights to relevant staff in project implementing organizations to access, update and make use of their own project pages on LogAlto which also contains features for creating data visualization.



*LogAlto login page and the different modules available in the menu bar.*

2. Implementing organizations are expected to use LogAlto to monitor results (based on project logframes) and submit reports to the STDF Secretariat. The STDF Secretariat provides tailored training and resources to implementing organizations on the use of LogAlto, and ongoing follow-up support as needed. Many LogAlto training resources (Q&A, videos, etc.) are also available on the [LogAlto](#) website.

## 3 REPORTING

1. Implementing organizations are expected to report on progress and results using the STDF's LogAlto platform. Implementing organizations should submit draft reports via LogAlto to the STDF Secretariat for review and comment prior to finalization. For each project, the required reports and the frequency of their submission will be clarified after the contract is signed.

2. Key reports are outlined below. Reporting templates are provided in the annexes.

### Inception Report

**Purpose:** provides an opportunity to review and update the project proposal, since the time it was developed/approved, in consultation with the STDF Secretariat. This includes attention to make any updates related to the project and/or the context, to take into account recommendations of the STDF Working Group, and to plan or complete any additional information needed for project delivery (e.g. on indicators, baselines, cross-cutting issues, etc.).

**Timing:** The inception report is normally submitted within four months of the project's start date.

**Content:** A template for the inception report is included in Annex 2.

**Process:** The draft inception report should be uploaded on the LogAlto platform under the dedicated module.

### **Progress Report**

**Purpose:** To provide an update on progress and results in the reporting period, as well as information on other aspects including challenges, communications, upcoming plans, etc.

**Timing:** Progress reports should be provided to the STDF Secretariat every six months. The reporting periods are as follows:

- January-June (H1) due by 31 July each year
- July-December (H2) due by 31 January each year

**Content:** A template for the narrative progress report is provided in Annex 3. Each time a progress report is submitted on LogAlto, implementing organizations should also review and update information on project activities, indicators and financials under the dedicated modules on LogAlto.

**Process:** Progress reports should be submitted using the LogAlto platform:

- Project implementing organization completes the narrative progress reports and related modules (logframe, workplan, financial) on LogAlto
- STDF Secretariat reviews the progress reports and makes comments (if any)
- Project implementing organization reviews and revises progress reports, based on comments, and submits the final progress reports via LogAlto

### **End of Project Report**

**Purpose:** To provide a complete overview of the project from approval to completion, with detailed information on the results achieved.

**Content:** A template for the end of project report is included in Annex 4.

**Timing:** The final project report should be submitted via the LogAlto platform, normally within three months of the project end date.

**Process:**

- Project implementing organization completes the final project report using the Word template
- STDF Secretariat reviews the final project report and makes comments (if any)
- Project implementing organization submits the final project report via the LogAlto platform

### **Independent end-of-project assessment report**

All STDF-funded projects should undergo an independent end-of-project assessment carried out by an external evaluator. The budget for the end-of-project assessment is included in the project application.

**Purpose:** The end-of-project assessment has two objectives:

- To evaluate the project's results (based on the project logical framework and relevant OECD DAC criteria and Quality Standards for Development Evaluation <sup>1</sup>). This includes assessing the contribution of the project to the STDF's outcomes and programme goal (increased and sustainable SPS capacity in developing countries).
- To identify key lessons (including relevant knowledge) from the project that can be applied to future interventions.

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<sup>1</sup> See: [www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/qualitystandards.pdf](http://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/qualitystandards.pdf)

**Content:** The assessment should address the OECD DAC evaluation criteria (relevance, coherence, efficiency, effectiveness, impact, sustainability) as far as possible. Implementing organizations are encouraged to use the STDF template (see Annex 5).

**Process:**

- The end-of-project assessment is contracted by the project implementing organization. The TORs should be shared with the STDF Secretariat prior to contracting.
- Implementing organizations may request the STDF Secretariat to share sample TORs for end-of-project assessments.
- The end-of-project assessment should be carried out within three months of the project end date.
- The STDF reviews the end-of-project assessment and makes comments (if any).
- The implementing organization submits the final end-of-progress assessment report on LogAlto under the End of project report module

### **Independent ex-post project impact evaluations**

A limited number of STDF projects undergo an external ex-post impact evaluation, two to three years after completion. These evaluations are contracted by the STDF Secretariat, in accordance with the STDF [Project Evaluation Guidelines](#).

**Purpose:** To assess the impact of the project beyond the immediate project outputs, addressing improved market access, reductions in rejections, improvements in the effectiveness and efficiency of regulatory processes, improvements in national food safety, plant or animal health, possible avenues for contribution to broader SDGs, etc.

**Content:** See template in the [Project Evaluation Guidelines](#)

**Process:**

- The STDF Working Group Chairperson selects STDF projects for ex-post evaluation. This selection is normally made randomly, once a year.
- An external consultant is selected by the STDF Working Group Chairperson and STDF Secretariat to carry out the ex-post evaluation.
- The STDF Secretariat contracts the evaluation and oversees delivery of evaluation.
- Project implementing partners are expected to contribute to and facilitate the conduct of the evaluation, including interviews with relevant stakeholders.
- The STDF Secretariat shares the findings of completed ex-post evaluations with relevant stakeholders, including via the STDF website and targeted dissemination events.

## **4 LEARNING**

1. Learning about STDF-funded projects is important to improve implementation, future performance and results based on evidence of what works (or does not work) and inform SPS capacity development more broadly. Learning is used to generate new knowledge, including about innovative approaches to support SPS capacity development.

2. Implementing organizations are expected to identify, reflect on, and learn from experiences and results achieved under the project so that they can be shared and disseminated widely via the STDF partnership, website and other channels. For instance, lessons can be derived and formulated from discussions held during events and webinars organized by implementing organizations who are encouraged to document and share learnings from STDF projects.

3. The STDF Secretariat will use learning from STDF projects to develop new knowledge products (e.g. briefings, results stories, short films, e-news and other stories/articles, etc.) so that other relevant stakeholders (e.g. regional organizations and economic communities, competent authorities, policy-makers and the private sector in developing countries) can use and benefit from it.

4. A "learning session" will be scheduled at the end of the project to enable the implementing organization, other key project stakeholders and the STDF Secretariat to reflect on project learning in the context of SPS capacity development in the country/region, and beyond. The following questions may be used to reflect on project learning.

#### **Key learning questions for STDF projects**

- What innovative approaches (technological, institutional, policy, other, etc.) were piloted or used under the project? What have been the experiences and learnings?
- What synergies and collaboration (public-public, public-private) were developed and/or emerged organically under the project? What have been the experiences and learnings?
- How did the project contribute to unintended positive or negative impacts (spillovers) for domestic food safety, animal and/or plant health (including environmental impacts)? What have been the experiences and learnings?
- What can we learn about sustainability (financial, institutional) linked to work carried out under the project?
- How might the experiences and learnings from the project be relevant for SPS stakeholders in other places?
- What other experiences and lessons can be drawn from the project (e.g. implementation strategy and issues face, MEL, challenges and risk mitigation, attention to cross-cutting issues on gender equality and the environment, etc.)?

## ANNEX 1: PROJECT LOGFRAME AND STDF CORPORATE INDICATORS

Result	Project description	Measurable indicators	Target	Sources of verification	Assumptions and risks	STDF corporate indicators relevant to projects <sup>2</sup>
<b>Goal</b>	<b>What is the longer-term goal (impact) to which the project contributes?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This defines the overall longer-term change to which the project will contribute.</li> <li>The project cannot on its own be totally responsible for this change (i.e. there is no attribution).</li> <li>There should be only one goal but there may be several impacts.</li> </ul>	How will progress towards this goal be measured?	What is the desired and realistic target the project intends to achieve on the goal?	What are the sources of information (and methods to collect and report it) for these indicators?	What are the external factors and conditions that could prevent reaching the goal and what is necessary to sustain overall objectives in the long run?	Indicators related to safe trade facilitated: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>US\$ value of exports for target HS code products and target markets</li> <li>markets accessed</li> <li>firms with an increase in exports</li> <li># of SPS non-compliance alerts/notifications</li> <li>Evidence of market access and imports/exports directly facilitated through STDF support</li> </ul>

<sup>2</sup> STDF projects should include relevant STDF corporate indicators to enable results from diverse projects to be aggregated at the level of the STDF programme. This column outlines STDF corporate indicators that may be relevant for STDF project logframes. Not all of these corporate indicators need to be incorporated into the project logframe. The STDF Secretariat and project implementing organization will review the project logframe together to select the most relevant corporate indicators to be included.

Result	Project description	Measurable indicators	Target	Sources of verification	Assumptions and risks	STDF corporate indicators relevant to projects <sup>2</sup>
<b>Immediate objective (purpose)</b>	<b>What is the specific purpose of the project?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The purpose describes the expected medium-term benefits of the project for particular stakeholders.</li> </ul>	How will progress towards the project purpose be measured (quantity, quality and time)?	What is the desired and realistic target the project intends to achieve on the immediate objective?	What are the sources of information (and methods to collect and report it) for these indicators?	What are the external factors and conditions necessary to achieve objectives? Which risks should be taken into consideration?	Indicators related to STDF programme goal (increased and sustainable SPS capacity in developing countries): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project contribution to changes in SPS legislation, regulations, policies, strategies, structures and/or processes</li> <li>Evidence of improved implementation and enforcement of food safety, animal and plant health measures for trade</li> </ul>
<b>Outcome(s)</b>	<b>What tangible outcomes are expected from the project?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The project may have more than one outcome.</li> <li>The outcomes describe the desirable future situation or change in behaviour of the target groups,</li> </ul>	In which ways has the project led to a change in the situation, practices or behaviour of the target group?	What is the desired and realistic target the project intends to achieve on the outcome (s)?	What are the sources of information (and methods to collect and report it) for these indicators?	What are the factors and conditions necessary to achieve outcomes? Which risks should be taken into consideration? (e.g. could be linked to delays linked to outputs)	Indicators related to STDF's programme outcomes Indicators for Outcome 1: More synergies and collaboration driving catalytic SPS improvements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Value (US\$) of new investments leveraged</li> <li>#, type of collaborative networks, relationships, initiatives at global, regional and/or national level that</li> </ul>

Result	Project description	Measurable indicators	Target	Sources of verification	Assumptions and risks	STDF corporate indicators relevant to projects <sup>2</sup>
	after they use the potentials described in the outputs					<p>support the delivery of change in SPS systems</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evidence of adaptation, replication, scaling of STDF approaches</li> </ul> <p>Outcome 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li># of people reached (disaggregated by women/men and geography/region) with STDF good practices, knowledge products</li> <li>% of people reached (disaggregated by women/men and geography/region) reporting minimum satisfaction threshold with STDF good practices and knowledge products</li> <li># of downloads of different types of knowledge products from website, disaggregated by geography</li> <li>Evidence of uptake and application of good practices and knowledge products produced by STDF</li> </ul>



Result	Project description	Measurable indicators	Target	Sources of verification	Assumptions and risks	STDF corporate indicators relevant to projects <sup>2</sup>
						to inform and support SPS capacity development led by global / regional / national bodies
<b>Outputs<sup>3</sup></b>	<b>What tangible outputs (e.g. trainings and/or other services delivered, knowledge produced and shared) will the project deliver to achieve the expected outcomes?</b>	How are results to be measured (quantity, quality and time)?	What is the desired and realistic target the project intends to achieve on the output(s)?	What are the sources of information (and methods to collect and report it) for these indicators?	What external factors and conditions outside project control must be met to obtain the expected results on schedule?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• # of participants (quantity) in online or physical STDF events, disaggregated by location, gender and type of participants</li> <li>• # and type of STDF knowledge products completed/published</li> <li>• # knowledge products that address climate change, environment, inclusion or gender equality</li> </ul>

<sup>3</sup> Implementing organizations should monitor participation in events and trainings organized under the project (i.e. number of persons reached, trained). Data should be disaggregated as far as possible to show participation by gender (male/female), type of participant (public/private sector), etc. In addition, implementing organizations should also try to capture information on the level of satisfaction with project events and/or trainings, as well as any change in the level of knowledge of participants.

## ANNEX 2: INCEPTION REPORT TEMPLATE

<p><b>COVER PAGE</b></p> <p>This should include the report title, as well as STDF project title and number (STDF/PG/XXX) and report date</p>
<p>List of acronyms Table of contents, etc.</p>
<p><b>1. KEY DEVELOPMENTS</b> Explain any relevant developments, issues or challenges in the country/region since the project was approved, their implications for the project and how they are being (or will be) addressed.</p>
<p><b>2. WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS</b> Explain how comments and recommendations made by Working Group members at the time of project approval (if any) have been addressed.</p>
<p><b>3. PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION &amp; MANAGEMENT</b> Outline the project implementation and management arrangements. Attach a list with the members of the Project Steering Committee.</p>
<p><b>4. UPDATED PROJECT LOGFRAME</b> The project logframe should be reviewed, completed and attached to the inception report. This should include more detailed and updated indicators, baselines and targets for the project, as well as mapping of project indicators to the STDF programme indicators.</p>
<p><b>5. MONITORING, EVALUATION &amp; LEARNING</b> Outline the project's plan for MEL, including plans for information and data collection, monitoring, reporting dates, etc.</p>
<p><b>6. BUDGET</b> Review and update the project budget as needed, within the total STDF project budget approved by the Working Group.</p>
<p><b>7. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES</b> Explain how cross-cutting issues related to gender and the environment (including climate change) will be addressed in the project.</p>
<p><b>8. COMMUNICATIONS &amp; OUTREACH</b></p>

<p>Outline the project's plan for communications and outreach, based on STDF's project communications guidelines.</p>
<p><b>9. OTHER PROGRESS IN INCEPTION PHASE</b> Provide an overview of any other progress in the inception period. Include information on inception workshops and meetings, signature of any sub-contracts or Letters of Agreements for project delivery, etc.</p>
<p><b>10. ATTACHMENTS</b> Attach additional relevant information/documents (attached to the end of your Word document, or uploaded as a .zip file), including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Updated LogFrame</li><li>2. Updated Budget table (in Excel)</li><li>3. Updated workplan</li><li>4. List of Project Steering Committee members</li><li>5. Any other documents</li></ol>

### ANNEX 3: TEMPLATE FOR STDF PROJECT PROGRESS REPORT ON LOGALTO

<p><b>1. PROGRESS IN THIS REPORTING PERIOD</b> Briefly describe progress and results during this reporting period, including outputs and outcomes achieved, as relevant. Also provide information on any unexpected (not planned) results.</p>
<p><b>2. BUDGET</b> In this reporting period, were project expenditures made as planned? Explain any differences. Are there sufficient funds in the project account for activities planned in the next reporting period?</p>
<p><b>3. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES</b> Include any information on cross-cutting issues (gender and the environment) during this reporting period, as relevant.</p>
<p><b>4. CHALLENGES, RISKS &amp; MITIGATION</b> Describe any challenges/risks faced during this reporting period, how they are being addressed, how they have impacted implementation, and the implications for the next reporting period, if relevant.</p>
<p><b>5. MONITORING, EVALUATION, LEARNING (MEL)</b> Provide an update on the MEL in the reporting period, including any lessons learned to date. Explain whether any revisions have been made to the project's logframe in this reporting period.</p>
<p><b>6. COMMUNICATIONS AND OUTREACH:</b> Provide an update on communications and outreach activities in the reporting period, including: any new information materials (e.g., brochures, websites, films) produced, media coverage (with web links, as relevant), quotes and/or short case stories of how people are benefitting from the project.</p>
<p><b>7. LOOKING FORWARD</b> Tell us about any significant project activities, missions, events, meetings (Steering Committee), etc. for the next reporting period.</p>
<p><b>8. PROJECT DOCUMENTS</b> Attach any relevant documents (e.g., mission reports, training materials, meeting/workshop reports including agenda and participant list, etc.) produced during this reporting period, as well as any evidence of project results (e.g. news items, training manuals, codes of good practice, etc.).</p> <p>Add link to files and/or upload documents in zip format (ideally organized by category, e.g. training materials, communications materials, Steering Committee meetings, etc.).</p>

## ANNEX 4: TEMPLATE FOR STDF END OF PROJECT REPORT

<p><b>COVER PAGE</b></p> <p>This should include the report title, as well as STDF project title and number (STDF/PG/XXX) and report date</p>
<p>Acknowledgements List of acronyms Table of contents, etc.</p>
<p><b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY (2 pages)</b></p> <p>Summary of the project addressing the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>date of project approval and implementation (start/end dates, extensions if any)</li> <li>STDF contribution to the project and total project budget</li> <li>main stakeholders involved in project implementation and delivery</li> <li>problem to be addressed by the project and the key results and achievements</li> <li>key challenges, experiences and lessons</li> <li>post-project sustainability plan</li> <li>actionable recommendations targeted at relevant stakeholders</li> </ul>
<p><b>RELEVANCE</b></p> <p>Problem to be addressed by the project Approach taken by the project to address the problem (theory of change)</p>
<p><b>PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION</b></p> <p>Project timeframe including approval, contracting, implementation dates, extension(s) if any Roles and responsibilities for project implementation (including any agreements/sub-contracts with service providers) Project budget including amount of approved STDF contribution, total project budget (including detail on any financial or other in-kind contributions provided) Project management, including details on any Steering Committees, etc.</p>
<p><b>ACHIEVEMENT OF RESULTS</b></p> <p>Detailed description and analysis of the project's specific outcomes and outputs (based on the project's logical framework)</p> <p>Summary and analysis about how the project contributed to gender equality</p> <p>Summary and analysis about how the project contributed to environmental sustainability</p>
<p><b>CHALLENGES, RISKS &amp; MITIGATION</b></p> <p>Overview of the key challenges and risks faced during the project, and risk mitigation measures taken.</p>
<p><b>LESSONS LEARNED</b></p> <p>Lessons learned related to what worked well, elements of success</p>

Lessons learned related to what did not work so well, constraints faced
<p><b>COMMUNICATIONS &amp; OUTREACH</b></p> <p>Overview of communications and outreach activities carried out to make the project visible to different stakeholders, results achieved, communications products produced (e.g., brochures, websites, films) produced, media coverage (with web links, as relevant), quotes and/or short case stories of how people are benefitting from the project</p>
<p><b>RECOMMENDATIONS, SUSTAINABILITY &amp; FOLLOWUP ACTIONS</b></p> <p>Actionable recommendations targeted at relevant organizations, including partners and stakeholders involved in and/or benefitting from the project, including opportunities and specific follow-up actions to sustain, scaleup and/or replicate the project's results</p>
<p><b>ANNEXES</b></p> <p>Logical framework matrix</p> <p>List of key documents produced under the project (e.g. training manuals, codes of good practice, etc.).</p> <p>List of key training workshops, outreach events, study tours, etc. organized under the project (including dates, location, number of persons (M/F) benefitting</p> <p>List of key persons (including names and contact details) involved in the project from the implementing organization, other partners, beneficiary organizations, etc.</p>

## ANNEX 5: TEMPLATE FOR END-OF-PROJECT ASSESSMENT REPORT

### 1. Executive summary

- Overview of the report highlighting the main findings and recommendations of the end-of-project assessment, and key lessons learned.

### 2. Introduction

- Purpose of the end-of-project assessment
- Introduction to the project
- Timing and delivery of the evaluation (including travel, if any)

### 3. Methodology

- Methods for data and information collection and analysis, addressing their reliability and limitations.
- Main sources of information (key stakeholders, project documents, administrative data, other literature, etc.).
- Limitations or challenges faced, including their effects (if any) on the evaluation (scope, impartiality, etc.).

### 4. Findings and analysis

- Description of the project's intervention logic and theory of change, including an analysis of the rationale for the project (problem faced), and any key assumptions made.
- The findings should respond to key evaluation questions related to the project's relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability, based on the evidence available. Where it is not possible to answer some questions, explanations should be provided.
  - **Relevance** to needs and overall context, including the extent to which the project: (i) met the needs, priorities and policies of the target groups, and continues to do so if circumstances changed; and (ii) was aligned to the STDF's goal to facilitate safe trade.
  - **Coherence** in terms of the fit and compatibility of the project with other interventions in the country/region, sector or institution.
  - **Effectiveness** in terms of the extent to which the project achieved its expected objectives and results, including any differential results across groups.
  - **Efficiency** in terms of the extent to which the project delivered results in an economic and timely way, including how the available resources (funding, staff, regulatory, administrative, time, other resources, etc.) contributed to or hindered the achievement of results.
  - **Impact** in terms of the extent to which the project already generated (or is expected to generate) higher-level results (positive or negative, intended or unintended), including results related to the STDF's programme goal (increased and sustainable SPS capacity in developing countries) and facilitation of safe trade.
  - **Sustainability** of the project results after the end of STDF funding with attention to the "exit strategy" for sustainability and necessary capacities (e.g. financial, economic, human, institutional), as well as any risks and potential trade-offs.
- **Cross-cutting issues:** Explanation and analysis of how the project addressed cross-cutting issues on gender equality and the environment.
- **Risk management:** Overview of risks faced during project implementation and their management.

### 5. Conclusions and recommendations

- Key conclusions based on the findings and analysis of the end-of-project assessment.

- Overall analysis and judgement about the project's contribution and/or attribution to results and impacts achieved. These should also address how the project contributed to the two outcomes and programme goal in STDF's theory of change.
- Clear and actionable recommendations targeted at relevant stakeholders in the specific country/region (including government authorities, the private sector, regional economic communities, etc.), the project implementing organization, any other project stakeholders, members of the STDF's global partnership, and/or the wider community of donors and development partners.

## **6. Lessons learned**

- Key lessons learned which are of relevance for wider use and future programme development, both on process and substance.