

STDF PROJECT PREPARATION GRANT (PPG)

APPLICATION FORM

The Standards and Trade Development Facility (STDF) provides Project Preparation Grants (PPGs), up to a maximum of US\$50,000, for the following purposes (or a combination thereof):

- application of SPS-related capacity evaluation and prioritization tools;
- preparation of feasibility studies that may precede project development to assess the potential impact and economic viability of proposals in terms of their expected costs and benefits; and/or
- preparation of projects proposals that promote compliance with international SPS requirements, for funding by the STDF or other donors.

Applications that meet the STDF's eligibility criteria are considered by the STDF Working Group, which makes the final decision on funding requests. Complete details on eligibility criteria and other requirements are available in the *Guidance Note for Applicants* on the STDF website (www.standardsfacility.org). Please read the *Guidance Note* before completing this form. Completed applications should be sent by email (as Word documents) to STDFSecretariat@wto.org.

PPG Title	Food Safety Risk Analysis Capacity building program in Latin America
Budget requested from STDF	\$49.501,00 USD
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<p>Full name and contact details of contact person for follow-up</p>	<p>Marisa Caipo Food Safety and Quality Officer FAO Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean 3241 Dag Hammarskjold, Vitacura, Santiago, Chile Email: Marisa.Caipo@fao.org Tel: (56-2) 2923 2162 Mobile: (56-9) 4247 6624</p> <p>Margarita Corrales Laboratory Management Specialist - Food Safety Pan American Health Organisation/World Health Organisation Pan American Foot-and-Mouth Disease Center (PANAFTOSA) Av. Governador Leonel de Moura Brizola, 7778 CEP 25045-002 Duque de Caxias, Rio de Janeiro, Brasil Email: corralesm@paho.org Tel.: + 55 21 3661 9034</p> <p>Fernando Sampedro Associate Professor</p>

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I. BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

1. What is the purpose of this PPG? Explain whether it is requested to: (i) apply an SPS-related capacity evaluation or prioritization tool; (ii) prepare a feasibility study (prior to project development) to assess the potential impact and economic viability of proposals in terms of their expected costs and benefits; and/or (iii) prepare a project proposal for consideration by the STDF or other donors?

The purpose of this PPG is to develop a capacity building program in food safety risk analysis for Latin America based on South-South cooperation and an e-learning hybrid model that we believe is highly innovative and can serve as an example for other regions in the world.

This PPG has the support of the Food Safety Risk Analysis Network (FSRisk). The FSRisk (Appendix 4) network was created in 2016 and endorsed by the countries of the Americas at the RIMSAs 17th and COPAIA 7th meeting in Paraguay with the objectives to HARMONIZE, DEVELOP, TRAIN AND IMPLEMENT food safety risk analysis in Latin America and the Caribbean region (LAC). FSRisk is an international network of universities (U. of Minnesota, U. of Nebraska, Texas Tech, U. of Maryland, U. of Laval in Canada and Universidad para la Cooperación Internacional in Costa Rica), and international organizations (PAHO, FAO, IICA and OIRSA) (See letters of support in Appendix 3). Recently, food safety institutions from LAC countries such as the *Red de Seguridad Alimentaria del Conicet* (RSA) in **Argentina**, *Agencia Chilena para la Inocuidad Alimentaria* (ACHIPIA) in **Chile**, *Grupo de Evaluación de Riesgos en Inocuidad de Alimentos* (ERIA) y *Plaguicidas* in **Colombia**, *Servicio Nacional de Salud Animal* (SENASA) in **Costa Rica**, *Servicio Nacional de Sanidad e Inocuidad Agroalimentaria* (SENASA) in **Honduras** and *Dirección General de Control de la Inocuidad Alimentaria* (UCPIA) in **Uruguay** requested their inclusion in the Network to strengthen capacities to protect their national food safety systems and increase competitiveness for trade (See letters in Appendix 1 and 2). Four more institutions: *Secretaria de Defesa Agropecuária do Ministério da Agricultura Pecuária e Abastecimento* (SDA/MAPA) in **Brazil**, *Instituto de Protección y Sanidad Agropecuaria* (IPSA) in **Nicaragua**, *Servicio Nacional de Sanidad Agraria* (SENASA) in **Peru** and *Servicio Nacional de Calidad y*

Salud Animal (SENACSA) in **Paraguay** have put forward their support and commitment to the PPG recognizing the relevance of food safety risk analysis capacity development (See letters in Appendix 1 and 2).

The PPG funding will be used to: (1) Hold the first annual inception meeting of the FSRisk network together with LAC countries interested in Food Safety Risk Analysis (RA) (Appendix 1-3) to prepare a STDF project proposal; (2) seek additional funding sources by inviting potential donors to the meeting and/or organizing meetings with the Global Food Safety Partnership (GFSP) of the World Bank, the Agencia Chilena de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo (AGCID), the Agencia Uruguaya de Cooperación Internacional (AUCI), the Agencia Brasileira de Cooperacao (ABC) and US institutions such as USAID, USDA FAS and the FDA. In addition, the network will discuss the process to secure internal funding from FSRisk organizations (FAO, PAHO, IICA and OIRSA).

This inception meeting will bring together countries with different levels of RA expertise to share their experiences emphasizing achievements, challenges, and possibilities for South-South cooperation. Focal point individuals from LAC countries will be invited (Appendix 1 and 2). During the preparation of the STDF proposal, the network will reach out to other LAC countries such as El Salvador, Ecuador and Guatemala.

At the end of the meeting, a plan will be drafted to prepare the submission of a STDF project. During the Project Preparation Grant implementation, identification of links to specific SPS measures that could potentially have an impact on trade will be prioritized.

The STDF project proposal will be focused on the following areas:

- South-South cooperation to transfer knowledge and expertise in RA from more advanced to less developed countries, thereby developing a harmonized and cohesive network of food safety regulatory agencies and research networks in the region.
- Virtual and in-person training in risk analysis tailored to country needs (hybrid learning model).
- In agreement with requested country needs, implementation of risk analysis projects to modernize food inspection systems, conduct risk

assessment studies in high-priority food safety areas and advance risk communication.

Fundamentally, the project proposal will provide guidance to strengthening Food Safety Risk Analysis (FSRA) capabilities and harmonising the FSRA systems, in accordance with the Codex FSRA Framework.

The STDF project proposal, resulting from the meeting, will be based on South-South cooperation principles. For this purpose, prior to the meeting, countries will be requested to: 1) identify key RA areas (preliminary risk management activities such as risk prioritization and risk profiling, risk assessment, risk-based inspection and risk communication) that have been successfully implemented in the country; 2) identify key RA areas that are deficient or need more progress; and 3) identify key data needs to inform risk-based decision making. With this information, the FSRisk network will identify the country leads for each key area that will take the initiative on the development of the proposal and future transfer of knowledge and expertise to other countries with the support of the network. For certain areas where no expertise exists in the region, the FSRisk will take the lead.

The STDF project proposal will also focus on the development of a hybrid learning training program for the key RA areas identified during the meeting. The structure of the hybrid learning model will be such that the RA technical concepts will be delivered remotely by using an online platform (see section below and Appendix 6 as one example already developed by the University of Minnesota) and subsequently, in-person trainings will be conducted regionally in the form of hands-on practical workshops where countries will identify specific food safety projects to be developed with the support of the FSRisk network.

During this PPG, South-South cooperation with Brazil, Chile, and Uruguay will showcase to government agencies how the linkage with private sector has provided positive results, such as increased collaboration on policy/regulatory issues, highlighting emerging issues in food safety at national level, providing experts on specific topics, improving difficult trade issues, etc.

The FSRisk network is well aware of the driving force that the private sector represents in food safety, particularly risk assessment. A first stage considered in this PPG is to update/build capacity in government agencies on FSRA topics (with inclusion of the private sector, as participants or

lecturers – knowledge transfer for RA). A second stage to be addressed by the project is to create useful linkages with the private sector, improving relationships and creating trust, in order to secure data for decision making.

2. Explain the key SPS problems and/or opportunities to be addressed. Clarify why these issues are important, with attention to market access and poverty reduction. Describe, if relevant, how these issues relate to SPS priorities in the Enhanced Integrated Framework's Diagnostic Trade Integration Studies (DTIS), the findings of SPS-related capacity evaluations, national poverty reduction strategies, sector development strategies or policies, etc. See Qn. 7. (b) – (d) of the Guidance Note.

Risk analysis is recognized by the WTO through the SPS agreement as a scientific tool to protect human, animal and plant health while ensuring fair trading practices. The food safety risk analysis framework, developed by the Codex Alimentarius Commission, has been adopted by many countries as a framework to ensure food safety by scientifically assessing, managing and communicating the risks. While there is a growing demand in the region to strengthen country capacity to use risk-based approaches to reduce domestic food safety hazards, the level of RA implementation varies widely in LAC.

One issue identified by the network is the lack of South-South capacity building programs developed in the region. Traditional programs conducted in LAC in the past have focused on the knowledge transfer and "North-South" expertise where advanced Northern countries show successful models to southern less-developed countries. This framework created some challenges as LAC countries have not been able to implement these models due to the lack of resources (human, economic) and information/data available. Thus, reducing RA implementation as countries perceived these models as impractical and unrealistic for their needs. The presence of an existing network of LAC organizations and countries that could benefit from strengthening their RA capabilities is an opportunity to increase the impact of this initiative. In such collaborative schemes, country agencies with well-established risk assessment, monitoring, and communication systems share expertise in the form of e.g. teaching materials, shared capacity building events and facilities, analytical models, and/or data management protocols. Countries in need of capacity building or system strengthening will receive support, while diminishing regional knowledge gaps and increasing their contribution to regional food safety initiatives. Together, these knowledge sharing efforts will lead to increased South-South communication, harmonization of methods and information management

systems, and avoidance of duplicate efforts, overall facilitating international trade of safe food. The support of a larger network of RA experts helps by providing capacity building and consulting services, thus using the time and resources for countries more efficiently to focus on implementation efforts. Sharing models and successful practices that are representative of the regional reality will increase the adoption, buy-in and ownership of RA initiatives within the region. The inclusion of LAC national food safety institutions in the FSRisk network will foster this knowledge sharing.

Another issue identified by the network is the type of training programs developed in the region. Traditionally, participants from different countries join for an intense one-week RA course. This creates the first concern, as country representatives will have different levels of expertise and RA experience. Also, most of the training is focused on technical concepts, leaving very little time for hands-on and regional case-studies for participants to practice the concepts learned. In addition, the programs rarely plan for a follow-up after the training, so countries are left alone and rarely apply/implement the concepts learned and thus the impact is minimal. A hybrid e-learning model consisting of three different stages will be designed: 1) A first stage of online courses where RA technical concepts are developed; 2) A second stage of in-person trainings focused on practical case-studies applicable to the LAC context; 3) A third stage involving a mentoring program where participants choose relevant RA in-country projects to fulfil a real policy or research gap with follow-up actions from a cohort of mentors to assure adequate implementation and impact in the region. An example of this is a recent hybrid learning model developed by the University of Minnesota (PROGRESSVET, <http://progressvet.umn.edu/>) for professionals working in veterinary services in LAC countries that is focused on the OIE veterinary advanced competencies. The model includes an initial in-person meeting where participants from countries identify a suitable project and a mentor, a middle phase of online content and a final in-person meeting where participants share their projects. Another model of extended training and mentoring is University of Maryland's extended risk analysis training program, where professionals from Ministries of Health and Agriculture come for training and are further mentored to develop risk assessments addressing specific food safety concerns in their countries (<https://risk.jifsan.umd.edu/summer-fellowship/sk.jifsan.umd.edu//>). In many cases, these initial models developed through the mentoring program have become the backbone of

analysis supporting regulatory decisions in their own countries. Similar programs will be developed by the FSRisk network for food safety RA.

The last issue identified by the network through initial exploratory virtual meetings with countries is the urgent need to modernize the food inspection programs and risk communication plans to be risk-based, proactive, efficient and science-based (Appendix 7). Adoption and harmonization of the risk analysis framework and risk-based inspection programs within the region will help countries to recognize each other's inspection systems (reducing the burden of point of entry and in-country inspections); provide robust scientific support for policy development and risk management decisions, and consequently, the ability to reach other international markets that demand a risk-based approach.

Risk communication plans at a national level are also lacking or deficient in key areas. Currently, many of these countries lack of a comprehensive risk communication framework to effectively prepare and respond to domestic food safety incidents. A common approach/ framework could help improve the coordination and response among the different government agencies, improve the consumer and local communities understanding of safe food handling practices and reduce their concerns and lack of trust when food safety incidents happen.

3. Which government agencies, private sector, academic or other organizations support this PPG request? Letters of support from each of these organizations would be advantageous (Appendix 1). See Qn. 7. (e) of the Guidance Note.

International organizations supporting this initiative include (see Appendix 3 for letters of support):

- FAO (Marisa Caipo)
- PAHO (Simone Raszl and Margarita Corrales)
- IICA (Robert Ahern)

Academic institutions supporting this initiative (see Appendix 3 for letters of support):

- University of Minnesota (Fernando Sampedro)
- University of Nebraska (Bing Wang)

- University of Maryland (Clare Narrod)
- Universidad para la Cooperación Internacional (Félix Canet)

Government agencies (see Appendix 2 for letters of support):

- Dirección General para la Inocuidad Alimentaria, Uruguay (Norman Bennett)
- ACHIPIA, Chile (Constanza Vergara and Gustavo Sotomayor)
- SENACSA, Paraguay (Jessica Duarte)
- SDA/MAPA, Brazil (Claudia Valeria Goncalves)
- A strategic visit to the Chilean International Cooperation Agency (AGCI) in Santiago and Uruguayan Cooperation Agency (AUCI) in Montevideo and USAID, USDA and FDA in Washington DC, among others, is planned to discuss this project.

Research networks (see Appendix 2 and 3 for letters of support):

- Red de Seguridad Alimentaria (CONYCET), Argentina (Gerardo Leotta)
- Red de Expertos en Evaluación de Riesgos (BIOQURA), Spain (Pablo Fernández)

Additional individual experts and organizations may be added as needed to increase the effectiveness of the initiative.

4. How does this PPG complement and/or build on past, ongoing and/or planned national programmes and/or donor-supported projects? See Qn. 7. (f) of the Guidance Note.

This PPG proposal builds on an already existing network (FSRisk) that was created in 2016 and endorsed by the countries of the Americas at the RIMSA 17th and COPAIA 7th meeting in Paraguay with the objectives to HARMONIZE, DEVELOP, TRAIN AND IMPLEMENT food safety risk analysis in Latin America and the Caribbean region (See appendix 4).

The network has functioned through in-kind contributions from University experts. Among the achievements, the network is in the process of

releasing a “Microbial Risk Assessment Manual for the Americas” in Spanish that will serve as a guidance for government agencies and academia to conduct microbial risk assessments. The network is also planning to release a “Risk-based Inspection Manual” that will serve as a guidance document for government agencies to implement a robust and modern inspection program. The network is looking for funding to develop country-specific projects and an e-learning curricula in risk analysis.

This project preparation grant will build on the work of a previous STDF grant (STDF/PG/319) awarded to the risk analysis unit in Colombia (UERIA) to conduct food safety risk assessment studies that supported food safety regulations in the country. The USDA Foreign Agricultural Service has supported further training in Colombia in risk analysis, risk ranking, and risk-based inspections. Current funding of this proposal will allow Colombia to share the progress achieved and challenges identified, experiences that will benefit other countries. It will also allow FSRisk to conduct resource mobilization activities to support additional work in risk analysis in the LAC region.

5. Have you discussed this PPG request – or funding for the project proposal which would result from it – with any potential donors (bilateral, multilateral, Enhanced Integrated Framework, etc.)? If so, provide details below and indicate potential sources of funding for the resulting project. See Qn. 7. (g) of the Guidance Note.

This PPG will be shared with the Global Food Safety Partnership (GFSP) of the World Bank, Agencia Chilena de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo (AGCID), Agencia Uruguaya de Cooperación Internacional (AUCI), Agencia Brasileira de Cooperacao (ABC) and US institutions such as USAID, USDA FAS and FDA. These institutions will be either invited to the meeting or virtual/in-person meetings will be organized to share the goals of this project.

6. Briefly explain how cross-cutting issues (e.g. related to gender, the environment) are relevant for this PPG and, if appropriate, how they will be addressed.

Environmental Sustainability

During the design and implementation of training activities, attention will be paid to include environmental quality and sustainable development criteria, as well as natural resources constraints in the participating countries. Food safety is closely linked to the food-environment system continuum, and can be guaranteed only in conjunction with environmental

quality and functioning ecosystem services. We are aware that there are many environmental factors affecting food safety such as soil, air and water pollution, or energy and resources required for food processing. Food-environmental cross-contamination can occur during primary production, storage, processing, distribution, commercialization, handling and consumption.

At the same time, the implementation of sustainable practices along the farm to fork continuum is key to maintain ecosystem quality. A better understanding and application of food safety risk analysis can help protect consumers not only from direct food safety risks, but also from the environmental impacts associated with microbiological and chemical contamination (e.g. cumulative exposure from food, water, workplace, etc.). FSRisk network experts take a broad systems perspective to the long-term sustainability of safe food production, including the correct use and disposal of agrochemicals, animal waste, or processing water, aiming to protect the environment under a One Health approach. In addition, we include key components of the Sustainable Development Goals framework, since food safety is connected with prosperity, dignity and justice as well as planetary health (One Health) emphasizing Goals 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 12, 6, 13, 14, 15, 16 and 17 on poverty reduction, quality education, sustainable economic growth, responsible consumption and production, peace, justice and strong institutions, food security and environmental protection and partnership for the goals.

Gender Equality

Gender equality will be mainstreamed by ensuring equality of inclusion in all project activities. Positive gender impacts may also accrue from the project, emphasizing women's empowerment since they play a crucial role in food and nutrition security at household level. The risk communication strategy under the Risk Analysis framework will emphasize those population groups who are more vulnerable to food safety risks (e.g. pregnant women, children and those with weakened immune systems), and ensure that information about food safety risks and benefits is available to all stakeholders independent of their gender and/or social status.

The main beneficiaries of this project will be the government officials (both men and women) responsible for risk analysis. Other stakeholders that would indirectly benefit from the project are local agri-business, private

sector organizations, food producers, processors, exporters, technical staff of laboratories and policy makers. The final beneficiaries of this project will be the consumers.

II. IMPLEMENTATION & BUDGET

1. Who will take the lead in implementing this PPG? If particular national experts and/or international consultants are proposed, attach a copy of their Curriculum Vitae and record of achievements (Appendix 2). If no names are provided, the STDF will provide a shortlist of consultants if the PPG request is approved.

The FSRisk network will lead the technical side of the meeting (create the agenda, seek input from countries, facilitate the meeting and summarize the main discussion points), FAO and PAHO with the support of ACHIPIA will lead the logistics of the meeting.

An expert from each organization that is part of the FSRisk (see item 3 of this proposal) will attend the meeting. See Appendix 5 for their brief CV.

A focal person identified by each country will be invited to the meeting (Norman Bennett-Uruguay, Gerardo Leotta-Argentina, Claudia Valeria Goncalves and Ligia Lindner Schreiner-Brasil, Constanza Vergara and Gustavo Sotomayor-Chile, Iván Camilo Sánchez-Colombia, Mirian Bueno-Honduras, Luis Matamoros-Costa Rica, Miguel Portocarrero-Perú, Karen Carrillo-Nicaragua, Jessyca Duarte-Paraguay). In addition, the chair of BIOQURA (Dr Pablo Fernández) a risk analysis network in Spain that has shown support to this consortium will be invited to the meeting.

2. In the table below, briefly describe the main activities to be carried out under this PPG and specify who would be responsible. Provide an estimate of the budget required (e.g. for national/international expertise, travel and DSA of consultants, stakeholder meetings or workshops, general operating expenses, etc.).

Activity 1: Review of current risk analysis frameworks in beneficiary countries.

The aim of this activity is to identify the RA strengths and capacity building needs in the region for S-S cooperation. For that, two FSRisk experts will design a baseline survey to identify key RA areas (risk management, risk profiling, risk assessment, risk-based inspection and risk communication) that: 1) have been successfully implemented in supporting countries and 2) are still in need at country level. Data collected from the survey will be assessed against a SPS context and regional policies by FSRisk experts that will shape preliminary in-country interventions. This will be discussed at the

planning meeting and will ultimately constitute the workplan for the STDF project proposal.

Activity 2: Partnership activities

The aim of this activity is to seek additional funding/support for the STDF project proposal from international cooperation agencies, governmental agencies and private sector. The FSRisk technical coordinator and 2 representatives of the network executive board will travel (tentatively in May 2020) to Washington DC to meet with USAID, USDA FAS, FDA international cooperation office and other specific aid cooperation agencies to advocate for the STDF project. In addition, in-person and virtual meetings will be organized with international cooperation agencies from supporting countries such as the Brazilian Cooperation Agency, Chilean Cooperation Agency and the Uruguayan Cooperation Agency.

Activity 3: Food Risk Analysis Inception Meeting

An inception workshop will be organized in Chile (dates TBD) to discuss and agree on countries RA capacity building needs and key country interventions. Based on this information, main project objectives and start-up activities will be defined. Additionally, the FSRisk members will have the opportunity to meet face-to-face and set the operational and structural pillars of the FSRisk Network to thrive and sustain in time. The project grant will cover the travel expenses of one representative (focal point) from each of the beneficiary countries (Argentina, Honduras, Colombia, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Paraguay and Peru) (7). FSRisk experts (5-6) and one representative of each international organization (2-4). Representatives from supporting countries such as Chile, Uruguay and Brazil and national aid cooperation agencies are expected to attend the workshop at their own expenses.

Activity 4: Meeting notes and development of STDF Proposal

Two FSRisk experts will prepare information dossiers containing country data, notes and comments that will be used to draft the project proposal. The proposal is expected to be written in 3 months with a view to starting the project next October 2020.

Activity	Responsibility	Budget (\$)	FSRisk in-kind contribution (\$)
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1. Review of current risk analysis frameworks in beneficiary countries - Application of the baseline survey 2 FSRisk experts x 3 days x 250\$ day	FSRisk Target countries		1.500,00
2. Partnership activities * - Travel costs of 3 FSRisk Network members to W.DC Flights (3p x 1000\$) DSA (3p x 3 days x 389\$)	FSRisk	3.000,00 3.501,00	
3. Evaluation of additional capacity and training needs - Assessment of survey results 2 FSRisk experts x 4 days x 250\$ day - Printing and graphic costs of microbiological risk assessment manual for the Americas and risk-based inspection manual	FSRisk	4.000,00	2.000,00
4. Four days Food Risk Analysis Network inception meeting * - Travel costs for 16 representatives Flights (16p x 1000\$) DSA (16p x 4 days x 250\$) - Hotel meeting room x 4 days - Audio-visual x 4 days - Coffee/breaks (25p) x 4 days - Simultaneous translation Spanish-English	FAO/PAHO	16.000,00 16.000,00 1.400,00 400,00 1.200,00 4.000,00	
5. Development of the STDF project proposal - 2 experts x 25 days x 250\$ day	FSRisk		12.500,00
Total costs		49.501,00	16.000,00

* Reimbursed based on receipts and actual expenses

Appendixes

Appendix 1: Letters from requesting countries.

Appendix 2: Letters of support from countries supporting this proposal.

Appendix 3: Letters of support from FSRisk organizations.

Appendix 4: Informational brochure of the FSRisk consortium.

Appendix 5: Curriculum Vitae and record of achievements for consultants proposed to implement this PPG.

Appendix 6: PROGRESSVET program.

Appendix 7: Virtual meeting notes with LAC countries.