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Organización de las  
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منظمة  
الأغذية والزراعة  
للأمم المتحدة

# COMMISSION ON PHYTOSANITARY MEASURES

**Fifteenth Session**

**Virtual Meeting, 16, 18 March and 1 April 2021**

**Written reports from international organizations - The Standards and  
Trade Development Facility (STDF) Overview**

**Agenda item 15.2**

**Prepared by the STDF**

***English, French and Spanish***

## STDF OVERVIEW FOR CPM-15

### 1 OVERVIEW

1.1. The Standards and Trade Development Facility (STDF) is a global partnership to facilitate safe trade, contributing to sustainable economic growth, poverty reduction and food security. The STDF promotes improved sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) capacity in developing countries and helps imports and exports to meet SPS requirements for trade, based on international standards.

1.2. The partners of the STDF are the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE), the World Bank Group (WBG), the World Health Organization (WHO) and the World Trade Organization (WTO), and the Codex and IPPC Secretariats. The partnership convenes and connects diverse public and private sector stakeholders from agriculture, health, trade and development, including founding partner organizations, donors and developing country experts, across its knowledge and project workstreams.

1.3. This document provides a brief update on STDF's activities and projects since CPM-14 in April 2019. Table 1 provides an overview of on-going STDF projects in the plant health area, many of which benefit from the involvement and technical guidance provided by FAO and the IPPC Secretariat.

1.4. Delegates are encouraged to visit the STDF website to view and learn from STDF activities and projects, download STDF briefing notes and other publications, and subscribe to STDF's mailing list (at the bottom of the STDF homepage) to receive regular updates on STDF work (see: <http://www.standardsfacility.org>).

### 2 IMPLEMENTING STDF'S NEW STRATEGY (2020-2024)

2.1. In January 2020, the STDF launched a new five-year Strategy entitled "*Safe and Inclusive Trade Horizons for Developing Countries*".<sup>1</sup> Building on the recommendations of the 2019 STDF external evaluation, the Strategy consolidates and builds on STDF's strengths and performance, and aims to further develop the partnership and expand its reach and resources. In the coming years, the STDF will further strengthen its role as a global knowledge platform for dialogue and learning on SPS capacity development. The STDF will also continue to finance the development and implementation of collaborative and innovative SPS projects, with the potential to influence and catalyse SPS improvements.

2.2. In 2020, the STDF updated its Communications (COMMS) Plan and adopted a new Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) Framework to track progress in achieving results under the Strategy and provide feedback on the management of the Facility. The MEL Framework will strengthen planning, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and reporting, and will also help to identify and integrate key experiences and lessons into new STDF work. Both the new COMMS Plan and MEL Framework are available on the STDF website.<sup>2</sup>

#### a) COVID-19 pandemic

2.3. The STDF Secretariat has put in place a range of actions, in close cooperation with the IPPC Secretariat and other STDF partners and members of the partnership, to mitigate and manage the impact of COVID-19 on STDF's operations. Meetings of the STDF Working Group in April and October 2020 were held virtually. Members also continued to convene virtual practitioner groups to identify and discuss new opportunities for collaboration and synergies on selected knowledge topics (see Section 3 below). The STDF organized several webinars to discuss the challenges posed by the pandemic for SPS capacity development. More information on STDF's response to COVID-19, guidance materials and other resources available across the partnership (including by the IPPC Secretariat) can be accessed on a dedicated STDF webpage.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See: [https://standardsfacility.org/sites/default/files/STDF\\_Strategy\\_2020-2024.pdf](https://standardsfacility.org/sites/default/files/STDF_Strategy_2020-2024.pdf).

<sup>2</sup> See: <https://www.standardsfacility.org/key-documents>.

<sup>3</sup> See: <https://www.standardsfacility.org/stdf-partnership-updates-covid-19>.

2.4. The pandemic caused challenges in particular to the overall context in which STDF projects operate in countries and regions, provoking shocks to agricultural production, distribution and trade, as well as SPS management functions such as inspection and surveillance. Throughout the year, the organizations implementing STDF projects, including the IPPC Secretariat, demonstrated flexibility and commitment to respond to the situation. Field activities adapted to social distancing, meetings moved online, and new video-conferenced trainings were carried out. This proactive response enabled projects to continue, and also innovate in response to new opportunities.

#### **b) New STDF film**

2.5. The pandemic provides a clear reminder of the ease and speed at which pests and diseases can spread worldwide and the inter-connectedness of global supply chains, underscoring the importance of building food safety and plant and animal health as a global public good. A new STDF film "Shaping a safer world" will be issued in February 2021 and highlight the importance of investing in SPS capacity for developing countries to protect health and access markets. The film encourages using the Phytosanitary Capacity Evaluation (PCE) tool as a basis for phytosanitary capacity development.<sup>4</sup>

### **3 STDF KNOWLEDGE PLATFORM**

3.1. The STDF works on selected cross-cutting thematic topics described below, aiming to identify and promote good practices and improve SPS capacity development outcomes. This work takes place in virtual practitioner groups, which convene interested STDF founding and other partners, donors and SPS experts from developing countries. Each topic has its own dedicated STDF webpage.

#### **a) Prioritizing SPS Investments for Market Access: P-IMA**

3.2. The P-IMA framework is an evidence-based approach to help inform and improve SPS planning and decision making, and mobilize public, private and/or donor resources for SPS investments. The framework has been applied in several developing countries through project and project preparation grants (PPGs). It involves plant health authorities and often the data collected from the conduct of a PCE is used to support this work, if the country decides to release the PCE findings. The Secretariat is currently finalizing a review and update of the P-IMA user guide to improve its practicality and user-friendliness and allow virtual training on the P-IMA framework.

3.3. Delegates who would like to know more about - or benefit from - application of the P-IMA tool can visit the STDF website<sup>5</sup> or contact Mrs Roshan Khan in the STDF Secretariat ([roshan.khan@wto.org](mailto:roshan.khan@wto.org)).

#### **b) Public Private Partnership (PPP)**

3.4. In many countries, government authorities and the private sector are working together to address SPS challenges and improve outcomes. Building on previous STDF work on PPPs, the STDF is currently identifying, collecting and compiling new examples of PPPs in the area of SPS capacity (across food safety, animal health and/or plant health) to facilitate safe trade.<sup>6</sup> The objective is to raise awareness about the potential value and role of PPPs in enhancing SPS capacity, provide practical guidance to facilitate and promote PPPs, and identify lessons learned.

3.5. The Secretariat encourages CPM delegates and NPPOs to share PPPs examples in the plant health area, including situations where NPPOs authorize third party entities to perform specific phytosanitary actions (treatments, diagnostics, surveillance, inspection etc.). In 2020, the STDF issued a survey, in cooperation with IICA and UNIDO, to increase understanding on existing and/or planned regulatory frameworks and practices related to voluntary third-party assurance (vTPA) programmes (including quality management systems, assurance schemes or certification programmes) in food safety. A data story was produced to highlight the survey's key findings.<sup>7</sup> The survey's full report will be available shortly on the STDF website.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> See: <https://www.youtube.com/c/STDFvideos>.

<sup>5</sup> See: <https://www.standardsfacility.org/prioritizing-sps-investments-market-access-p-ima>.

<sup>6</sup> See: <https://www.standardsfacility.org/public-private-partnerships>.

<sup>7</sup> See: <https://stdf-vtpa-survey.wto.org/>.

<sup>8</sup> See: <https://www.standardsfacility.org/public-private-partnerships>.

3.6. Delegates who would like to know more about STDF's PPP work can visit the STDF website or contact Mrs Marlynne Hopper ([marlynne.hopper@wto.org](mailto:marlynne.hopper@wto.org)) and/or Mrs Angelica Grisuk ([angelica.grisuk@wto.org](mailto:angelica.grisuk@wto.org)) in the STDF Secretariat.

### c) Good Regulatory Practice

3.7. STDF's ongoing work on the use of Good Regulatory Practice (GRP) aims to provide guidance and develop a practical checklist for developing countries to ensure that SPS measures are "fit for purpose" and avoid creating non-tariff barriers. This work seeks to identify good practices and recommendations to enhance the development and implementation of SPS measures in order to: (i) strengthen the effectiveness of regulatory interventions; (ii) improve compliance with international standards and the SPS Agreement; and (iii) ensure health protection while facilitating trade. The STDF Secretariat plans to present the guide and checklist on the margins of an SPS Committee meeting in 2021.

3.8. Delegates who would like to know more about STDF's GRP work can visit the STDF website<sup>9</sup> or contact Mrs Marlynne Hopper in the STDF Secretariat ([marlynne.hopper@wto.org](mailto:marlynne.hopper@wto.org)).

### d) Electronic SPS certification

3.9. In 2020, the STDF continued its work on promoting and supporting the transition in developing countries to paperless SPS systems to improve traceability throughout SPS supply chains, lower food waste, cut trade times and costs, and help to build trust among trading partners. Particularly, STDF's work on electronic SPS certification (SPS e-cert), including through innovative and collaborative projects with the IPPC Secretariat, OIE and other partners, gained a lot of interest during the COVID pandemic.<sup>10</sup> In September 2020, the STDF Secretariat organized a webinar, attended by 260 participants, to present the results of the STDF-funded ePhyto project<sup>11</sup> and discuss next steps in scaling up the ePhyto solution.<sup>12</sup> The Secretariat also created an eCert Advisory Committee (ECAC), which saw keynote presentations from the European Commission (on the connection established between the ePhyto system and the EU Trade Control and Expert System, TRACES) and from UN/CEFACT on new implementation guidelines for electronic certificates.<sup>13</sup>

3.10. Delegates who would like to know more about STDF's work on SPS eCert can visit the STDF website or contact Mr Simon Padilla in the STDF Secretariat ([simon.padilla@wto.org](mailto:simon.padilla@wto.org)).

## 4 PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

4.1. The STDF provides advice and support to applicants on issues related to SPS project development and finances project preparation grants (PPGs). PPGs, generally up to US\$50,000, are available to help applicants articulate their SPS needs and develop technically sound and sustainable project proposals. PPGs can be requested to: (i) apply SPS capacity evaluation and prioritization tools; (ii) prepare feasibility studies before project development to assess the potential impact and economic viability of proposals in terms of costs and benefits; and (iii) develop project proposals for funding by donors and/or the STDF.

4.2. A total of **108 PPGs** was approved for STDF funding since its inception. In 2020, the STDF Working Group approved two PPGs related to phytosanitary issues: (i) STDF/PPG/753, which aims to address the use of biopesticides to reduce pesticide residues and facilitate trade in Latin America; and (ii) STDF/PPG/755, which will enhance seed trade in the Asia-Pacific region through phytosanitary compliance and public-private partnerships. Information on on-going and completed PPGs is available on the STDF website.

## 5 PROJECT FUNDING

5.1. Project Grant (PG) financing for projects is also available from the STDF. Favourable consideration is given to projects that: (i) identify, develop and disseminate good practice in SPS-related technical cooperation, including the development and application of innovative and replicable

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<sup>9</sup> See: <https://www.standardsfacility.org/good-regulatory-practice>.

<sup>10</sup> See: <https://www.standardsfacility.org/SPS-eCert>.

<sup>11</sup> See: <https://www.standardsfacility.org/PG-504>

<sup>12</sup> See: <https://standardsfacility.org/ephyto-webinar>.

<sup>13</sup> See: <https://www.standardsfacility.org/sps-ecac>.

approaches; (ii) apply regional approaches to address SPS constraints; and/or (iii) implement collaborative approaches across food safety, animal and plant health and trade. Beneficiaries must contribute to the project from their own resources, either in the form of financial or in-kind contributions (such as staff time, use of premises, vehicles or other existing assets).

5.2. A total of **102 projects** was approved for STDF funding since its inception. The STDF continues to meet its target to devote at least 40% of its project and PPG resources to LDCs and other low-income countries (OLICs). It has dedicated 66% of its project and PPG resources to LDCs and OLICs since its inception. In particular, the allocation of PPG resources to LDCs and OLICs remains high (i.e. 68% of the overall budget for PPGs). In addition, 43% of the number of STDF projects and PPGs has gone to Africa, 27% to Asia-Pacific, 19% to Latin America-Caribbean, and 0.9% to other regions (Middle East and Europe). Lastly, 9% of the STDF projects and PPGs are classified as global.

5.3. Since the inception of the STDF, **26%** of the projects and PPGs have addressed plant health issues. Table 1 provides an overview of ongoing plant health-related STDF projects. Information on completed projects is available on the STDF website.

## 6 PROJECT EVALUATION

6.1. The systematic and independent evaluation of STDF projects is one way in which information can be gathered and lessons can be learned about the relative effectiveness of different approaches to SPS capacity building. All STDF projects are subject to an independent end-of-project assessment, carried out at the completion of the project, by an external evaluator. In addition, each year, the STDF Working Group selects a number of projects for independent ex-post impact evaluations, which are normally carried out two to three years after their completion.

6.2. In 2019, an impact evaluation was carried out of STDF/PG/350 ("IPPC Manuals"), which developed technical guidance and resource documents to improve the implementation of selected ISPMs in developing countries. These resources covered the core areas of national plant health systems such as import verification, export certification, pest surveillance and diagnostics and pest risk analysis. The project was implemented by the IPPC Secretariat. The Implementation and Capacity Development Committee (IC) acted as the project's Steering Committee. The evaluation highlighted the innovative method to help build a suite of technically sound manuals. It also pointed out that countries and other stakeholders were not always aware of these manuals and suggested more efforts should be made to publicize the outputs of this project. The full evaluation report is available on the STDF website.<sup>14</sup>

6.3. In 2020, the STDF contracted a consultant to carry out an ex-post evaluation of project STDF/PG/401 entitled "Developing a Network of PCE Facilitators". The project, also implemented by the IPPC Secretariat, aimed to select and train experts on the PCE, develop a pool of validated PCE facilitators, and enhance capacity to evaluate national phytosanitary capacity. The IC acted as the project's Steering Committee. The report will be finalized shortly and published on the STDF website.<sup>15</sup> A presentation on the project's results, outcome and wider impact is envisaged for the next STDF Working Group meeting on 30-31 March and 1 April 2021.

## 7 HOW TO APPLY FOR FUNDING?

7.1. Applications for STDF funding can be made at any point in the year but should be received at least 60 working days in advance of each Working Group meeting to be considered at that meeting. The next deadline for the submission of applications is **23 July 2021**.

7.2. In 2020, the STDF launched a new online application system which replaced the traditional form of receiving grant proposals via email. Further information on the system, eligibility criteria, etc. is available on the STDF website.

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<sup>14</sup> See: <https://www.standardsfacility.org/PG-350>

<sup>15</sup> See: <https://www.standardsfacility.org/PG-401>.

**RECOMMENDED STEPS TO FOLLOW WHEN SEEKING PG OR PPG FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES WITH THE STDF:**

**1. Browse the webpages for information (aims, eligibility criteria, etc.) on:**

- PPGs: <http://www.standardsfacility.org/project-preparation-grants>
- PGs: <http://www.standardsfacility.org/project-grants>

**2. View examples of previous projects:**

- a. PPGs: <http://www.standardsfacility.org/projectpreparationgrants>
- b. PGs: <http://www.standardsfacility.org/projectgrants>

**3. Carefully read the guidance note for applicants:**

<https://www.standardsfacility.org/sites/default/files/STDFGuidanceNote2020.docx>

**4. Consult relevant stakeholders in the country/region.**

**5. Send a brief concept note of your potential project for feedback on eligibility and likelihood of funding ([STDFSecretariat@wto.org](mailto:STDFSecretariat@wto.org)).**

**6. Fill out an application form and submit it electronically before the deadline:**

**a. PPGs:**

[http://standardsfacility.org/sites/default/files/PPGApplicationForm\\_English\\_FINAL\\_2015.doc](http://standardsfacility.org/sites/default/files/PPGApplicationForm_English_FINAL_2015.doc)

**b. PGs:**

[http://standardsfacility.org/sites/default/files/PGApplicationForm\\_English\\_FINAL\\_2015.doc](http://standardsfacility.org/sites/default/files/PGApplicationForm_English_FINAL_2015.doc)

**8 TABLE 1: ONGOING RELEVANT STDF PROJECTS**

Project Title	Objective and Status	STDF Contribution (US\$)	Total Project Value (US\$)
STDF/PG/432: Strengthening information systems for pest surveillance and reporting in <u>Asia Pacific</u>	<p>Enhance and promote good practice in the efficient capture, management and reporting of information from pest surveillance in the Asia/Pacific region. Implementation of the project by Australia's Department of Agriculture began in December 2016. The project was granted a 12-month no-cost extension in October 2019</p> <p>Cambodia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Thailand and Viet Nam are participating in the project through STDF support. Singapore and Myanmar are participating with external resources.</p> <p>More information available at: <a href="http://www.standardsfacility.org/PG-432">http://www.standardsfacility.org/PG-432</a></p>	997,595	1,705,455
STDF/PG/481: Strengthening phytosanitary capacity for plant exports in <u>Zambia</u>	<p>Improve Zambia's phytosanitary capacity and increase its trading partners' trust, especially SADC Member States, concerning compliance with phytosanitary requirements. This will contribute to the growth of plant and plant-product exports as well as strengthening the phytosanitary regulatory system. Implementation of the project by the EIF National Implementation Unit (NIU) started in November 2018.</p> <p>More information available at: <a href="https://www.standardsfacility.org/PG-481">https://www.standardsfacility.org/PG-481</a></p>	254,675	629,697
STDF/PG/498: Strengthening of the phytosanitary system in <u>Guinea</u>	<p>Build phytosanitary capacity in Guinea, based on recommendations arising from a PCE and consultations held with national stakeholders. The project aims to improve the: (i) legislative and regulatory framework for phytosanitary controls; (ii) technical and operational capacity of the NPPO to implement a risk-based phytosanitary inspection and certification system; and (iii) capacity of operators in priority sectors to apply good practice. Implementation of the project by COLEACP began in October 2019.</p> <p>More information available at: <a href="https://www.standardsfacility.org/PG-498">https://www.standardsfacility.org/PG-498</a></p>	559,491	847,959
STDF/PG/503: Rolling out a systems approach globally in <u>developing countries</u>	<p>Expand opportunities for developing countries to participate fully in plant products' trade by enhancing competency and confidence in applying Systems Approach through the use of innovative decision support tools (ISPM 14). Implementation of the project by the IPPC Secretariat started in July 2018.</p> <p>More information available at: <a href="http://www.standardsfacility.org/PG-503">http://www.standardsfacility.org/PG-503</a></p>	568,966	771,186

<p>STDF/PG/543: Enhancing the capacity of the fruit and vegetables sector to comply with phytosanitary requirements in <u>Uganda</u></p>	<p>Improve Uganda's compliance with international phytosanitary standards to produce and export fresh fruits and vegetables (FFV). This will increase Uganda's market access to the EU, other high-end and regional markets. Sustained incomes to FFV producers and their employees will contribute to economic growth, poverty reduction and food security in line with Uganda's development policy. Implementation of the project by the Centre for Agricultural Bioscience International (CABI) started in January 2019.</p> <p>More information available at: <a href="https://www.standardsfacility.org/PG-543">https://www.standardsfacility.org/PG-543</a></p>	<p>484,788</p>	<p>882,726</p>
<p>STDF/PG/567: Establishment and maintenance of fruit production areas free and under low prevalence of fruit fly pests in <u>Southern Africa</u></p>	<p>Establish and develop a framework for the maintenance of areas free and under low prevalence of fruit fly pests in South Africa and Mozambique. The project will maintain/improve market access, revenues and employment in these countries concerning export fruit markets where targeted fruit fly pests constitute risks. Implementation of the project by the Agricultural Research Council (ARC) started in September 2020.</p> <p>More information available at: <a href="https://www.standardsfacility.org/PG-567">https://www.standardsfacility.org/PG-567</a></p>	<p>721,584</p>	<p>2,925,941</p>
<p>STDF/PG/634: <u>Asia</u> pesticide residue mitigation through the promotion of biopesticides</p>	<p>Increase awareness on how pesticide residues impact trade and help mitigate conventional pesticide's residues by incorporating biopesticides into national Integrated Pest Management Programs (IPM) and Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) for specific crops. This will improve market access for Asian specialty crops. Implementation of the project by the Asia-Pacific Association of Agricultural Research Institutions (APAARI) started in February 2020.</p> <p>More information available at: <a href="https://www.standardsfacility.org/PG-634">https://www.standardsfacility.org/PG-634</a></p>	<p>899,586</p>	<p>1,269,603</p>
<p>STDF/PG/694: Regulatory harmonization and pesticide residue mitigation through the promotion of biopesticides in the <u>SADC region</u></p>	<p>Promote the use of biopesticides to help reduce the reliance on synthetic chemical pesticides, decrease residue levels, and increase SPS compliance in the SADC region to facilitate safe trade. The project will also promote regional harmonisation of biopesticide regulation to ensure that countries develop common standards to benefit from reciprocal acceptance of data generated. The project will start at the beginning of 2020 and will be implemented by the International Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology (ICGEB).</p> <p>More information on the project will be available at the STDF website in the coming weeks.</p>	<p>798,492</p>	<p>1,193,218</p>