

STANDARDS AND TRADE DEVELOPMENT FACILITY
OPERATING PLAN 2009

A joint initiative of the Food and Agriculture Organization, the World Organization for Animal Health, the World Bank, the World Health Organization and the World Trade Organization



1. This document is an addendum to the Operating Plan 2008-2009 (STDF 198 rev.2, as approved by the Policy Committee on 9 November 2007). It updates the Operating Plan for 2009 - the third year of the five year STDF Medium Term Strategy (STDF 154). It also incorporates recommendations of the STDF evaluation report (STDF 248). The updated Operating Plan for 2009 is based on a budget with a target level of donor funding of US\$ 5 million – as agreed in the STDF Medium Term Strategy.

2. The plan follows the same structure as the Operating Plan for 2008-09. It is set out according to the four thematic areas: co-ordination, project development, project implementation and information dissemination.

I. CO-ORDINATION ACTIVITIES

A. OVERVIEW

3. The Medium Term Strategy places emphasis on the STDF acting as a forum for information sharing and co-ordination among assistance providers and as a reference point for good practice. Table 1 provides an overview of how this co-ordination role will operate in 2009.

Table 1: Overview of STDF coordination activities in 2009

Global	Regional	National
<p>Exchange of information on SPS-related initiatives in the Working Group.</p> <p>STDF advocacy of partner organizations' initiatives.</p> <p>Thematic meetings on SPS risks and climate change and cost benefit analysis.</p> <p>Commission of research on impact and development of indicators.</p> <p>On-going work to identify and report on past, present and future technical assistance flows.</p> <p>Compilation of compendia on SPS technical co-operation.</p> <p>DVD development, update of STDF website, publication of briefing notes and newsletters.</p> <p>Development of contacts with other parallel initiatives, notably the Trade Standards Practitioners Network.</p> <p>Consideration of linkages between SPS and trade facilitation. On the basis of synergies identified between the two areas, a work programme may be developed.</p>	<p>Follow up on the Aid for Trade work in Central America, East Africa and Greater Mekong Delta sub-region in 2007-2008, including an evaluation of their impact.</p> <p>Mobilization of stakeholders behind a regional action plan to control fruit fly in West Africa.</p> <p>Consideration to be given to holding an additional regional consultation in 2009.</p>	<p>Co-ordination with the Enhanced Integrated Framework to increase awareness of SPS-related issues in national processes and mobilize resources for SPS projects.</p> <p>Coordination with Aid for Trade, including participation in national events and preparation of country briefings as requested.</p> <p>Further emphasis on co-ordination with existing and planned donor activities in the development of project preparation grants.</p> <p>Greater effort to ensure synergy with on-going programmes of partners, donors and observers.</p>

B. COORDINATION ACTIVITIES AT GLOBAL LEVEL

4. At the global level, the 2009 Operating Plan envisages:

- More emphasis on the Working Group acting as a forum for the discussion of on-going and future SPS-related technical co-operation initiatives and the overall impact and effectiveness of assistance in this area;
- Organization of meetings on specific thematic topics (i.e. on SPS and climate change and cost benefit analysis) as part of the STDF's role in promoting and disseminating good practice;
- Research on how to measure impact of SPS-related technical co-operation and development of indicators;
- Continued efforts by the Secretariat to collate and report on past, present and future technical assistance flows;
- Completion of a compendia on SPS related technical assistance providers;
- Updating the STDF website to improve its content and publication of briefing notes and newsletters;
- Consider synergies between SPS and trade facilitation and develop a work programme in this area, as appropriate; and
- Developing contacts with other relevant initiatives, notably the Trade Standards Practitioners Network.

Working Group as discussion forum

5. Key to the achievement of STDF's coordination role is making STDF meetings more of a forum for discussion and information dissemination. In 2008, greater emphasis was placed on information sharing during the Working Group meetings, notably through its inclusion as a standing agenda item early in the meeting agenda. These efforts will continue in 2009.

6. One of the recommendations of the evaluator is that partners, donors and observers share information on past, present and planned SPS-related activities well in advance of each Working group meeting for inclusion as working documents for each meeting. In addition, it is suggested by the Secretariat that at each Working Group, one partner and one donor provide in-depth overviews of their SPS-related technical co-operation initiatives.

Workshops and information sessions

7. A key element of the strategy to make the STDF a centre of good practice is the organization of workshops and information sessions on specific thematic topics.¹ In 2008, three such meetings were organized back-to-back with the SPS Committee around the following themes:

- SPS capacity evaluation tools (31 March)²;

¹ In 2007, a first workshop was hosted by the STDF to look at issues surrounding the strengthening of laboratory capacity in assistance programmes. This meeting provided a forum to the World Bank and UNIDO to present joint research on approaches to laboratory strengthening.

² See document G/SPS/GEN/821 for an overview of the various SPS capacity evaluation tools.

- Private/commercial standards (26 June)³; and
- Good practice in the provision and receipt of SPS-related technical co-operation (6 October)⁴.

8. A further product of the workshop on capacity evaluation tools will be a user's manual on the different tools available for SPS practitioners. This manual will be published in early 2009.

9. Two further workshops are programmed for 2009. The topics identified by the Working Group are cost-benefit analysis and SPS risks and climate change. The workshop on cost benefit analysis will be organized in June 2009 back-to-back with the SPS Committee meeting. For this event, the participation of developing countries would be sponsored. For the workshop on climate change, a suitable event outside the WTO is being sought in consultation with partners and donors.

10. Additional topics for thematic sessions in 2010 and beyond will be identified by the Working Group during the course of 2009.

Developing indicators to measure trade impact

11. One of the conclusions of the workshop on good practice in SPS-related technical cooperation held in October 2008 was that it is generally difficult to quantify the impact of SPS-related technical assistance, e.g. on a country's trade performance or its domestic SPS situation. At present, the impact of assistance typically relies on scrutiny of outputs, e.g. the number of persons trained, the workshops delivered, training manuals developed, etc. In practice, linking individual interventions with the achievement of specific higher order objectives (e.g. poverty alleviation or an improved food safety situation) is problematic. Tangible impacts may only start to become visible when the combined effect of SPS-related capacity building is considered over a particular time period. Moreover, the real effect of assistance on trade is little understood, with no systematic use of indicators and methods to measure the impact.

12. Secretariat work in this area in 2009 will focus on two areas:

- Development of indicators which may be used to evaluate the impact of SPS capacity building, either at a specific project or aggregate level; and
- Commission of research on impact at an aggregate level taking one or more countries and evaluating the overall impact of SPS-related assistance over a specific time period.

13. The Secretariat will draft terms of reference for this research work and share them with the Working Group for discussion and approval.

Reporting on technical assistance flows

14. Tracking the supply of SPS-related technical assistance has proven problematic and no satisfactory solution has yet been found which will allow the STDF Secretariat to accurately capture the broad spectrum of activities currently being undertaken in this area. Further efforts will be made by the Secretariat in 2009 to harvest data from various sources including the Trade Capacity Building Database (TCBDB), the OECD's Creditor Reporting System and submissions by Members to the SPS

³ See document G/SPS/R/50 for a summary of the presentations and discussions held. The session was organized in close collaboration with the WTO SPS Secretariat.

⁴ See document G/SPS/GEN875 for an overview of the good practice work and aspects of good practice. The research was carried out in close collaboration with the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). See also STDF Briefings No.1 (December 2008).

Committee. The evaluation report notes that the TCBDB is potentially of great use to the STDF in its coordination activities but this potential has yet to be realized.

15. In light of recent meetings at WTO on co-ordination of trade related technical assistance, further consideration may need to be given to this topic at the Working Group at its first meeting in 2009.

Compendia

16. At the October 2007 meeting of the SPS Committee, the STDF announced its intention to request Members to provide input for a compendium on SPS related technical assistance providers. The work on the compendium has hitherto received low priority but will be taken up in 2009, as recommended by the evaluation report. In a first stage, regional SPS briefings based on the information gathered during the regional consultations in Central America, East Africa and Greater Mekong Delta sub-region will be prepared and circulated for comments to the Working Group.

17. To complement this work, the Secretariat also intends to put parts of the report on SPS needs and assistance of eight LDCs (Benin, Cambodia, Lao PDR, Lesotho, Mozambique, Rwanda, Senegal and Yemen) on the website as individual country briefings (see for the UNIDO report below). If there is still felt to be a need for a global compendium, this work would be undertaken in the second half of 2009.

Improving the website

18. A first update of the website was undertaken in August 2007. A further major overhaul of the website is currently being undertaken - as recommended by the evaluation - to improve its content and functionality as a resource for SPS-related technical assistance. This work will be completed by the next STDF Working Group meeting at the end of February 2009.

Development of DVD

19. In April 2008, the Working Group approved funding for the development of a short film to raise awareness among policy and decision-makers about the importance of SPS issues and promote SPS capacity building as a priority. The film will address the role of technical assistance in responding to SPS constraints and opportunities in three case studies (Belize, Benin and Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza). A draft script outline (STDF 228 Add.1) was shared with members of the STDF Working Group for comments in September 2008. Discussions have been held with concerned government agencies in the three case study countries.

20. A tender notice for the production of the film was issued in May 2008. A limited response to this tender resulted in a second tender notice being issued in August 2008, to which six companies responded. Lucas Duran and José Carlos Alexandre were selected by the WTO Contracts Committee in November 2008 and the Secretariat intends to work closely with this company in the development of the film. Production will begin in 2009 and the film is expected to be finalized by mid-2009.

SPS and trade facilitation

21. Research commissioned by the STDF as part of the Aid for Trade Initiative highlighted synergies between work on SPS issues and trade facilitation. In the Greater Mekong Delta Sub-region, implementation of the Cross-Border Transport Agreement is stimulating debate on how best to facilitate the movement of goods and people between Cambodia, China, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Thailand without also facilitating the entry of animal and plant pests or diseases. Part of the discussion is also to ensure that border SPS controls are appropriate, risk-based checks which do not erect unnecessary barriers to inter-regional trade.

22. The STDF Working Group meeting in February 2009 will discuss possible synergy between the trade facilitation agenda and STDF work on SPS capacity building. On the basis of the outcome of this discussion, the Secretariat will propose, as appropriate, actions which could form the basis of a work programme in this area. It is expected that any work on this topic would commence in the second half of 2009 – if approved by the Working group.

Contacts with other organizations

23. The Secretariat will continue to develop its contacts with other organizations working in the area of SPS-related technical cooperation, as recommended by the evaluation. The Secretariat will participate in a conference on 9-10 December 2008 in Berlin, Germany, organized by the Trade Standards Practitioners Network (TSPN) on "Assessing Costs, Benefits and Impacts of Compliance with Agricultural, Forestry and Food Related Standards". The Secretariat will report back to the Working Group at its first meeting in February 2009. The Secretariat will also seek membership of the TSPN. Other key STDF partners and donors (i.e. FAO, GTZ, UNIDO and the World Bank) are also invited to inform the Working Group on TSPN activities in order ensure that these do not duplicate those on-going or planned by STDF.

24. The Secretariat will follow up on other contacts established in 2008, for instance close collaboration with the African Union Inter-African Bureau on Animal resources (AU-IBAR) under the PAN SPSO project (Participation of African Nations in Sanitary and Phytosanitary Standard-setting Organizations) funded by the European Commission and collaboration with the National Resources Institute (NRI) in relation to a standards project funded by the Department for International Development (DFID).

C. COORDINATION ACTIVITIES AT REGIONAL LEVEL

25. At the regional level, the Operating Plan 2009 envisages:

- Follow up on the regional consultations in Central America, East Africa and Greater Mekong Delta sub-region in 2007-2008, including an evaluation of their impact.
- Based on a positive evaluation of these initial regional consultations, consideration of one further regional consultation in 2009; and
- Mobilization of stakeholders behind a regional action plan to control fruit fly in West Africa.

Follow-up on regional consultations

26. In the first half of 2008, STDF's pilot programme of regional consultations in Central America, the Greater Mekong Delta Sub-region and East Africa under the umbrella of Aid for Trade culminated in three regional workshops bringing together donors, international organizations and beneficiaries.⁵ These events were successful in:

- consolidating existing diffuse evaluations of SPS needs into a single overview accepted by the countries and development partners;
- identifying existing and future planned sources of assistance to address SPS needs and avoid duplications; and
- identifying outstanding SPS priority needs not addressed by on-going or planned assistance.

⁵ A complete overview and set of conclusions from these pilot activities is contained in document G/SPS/GEN/864.

27. In each of the three regions surveyed, more resources are potentially becoming available to address SPS priority needs. For these resources to be utilized, however, two important steps must be taken. On the part of beneficiaries, outstanding needs must be developed into "bankable projects". Furthermore, both beneficiaries and donors must prioritize SPS-related capacity building needs in their future technical co-operation planning. Without this prioritization, it is unlikely that resources will be allocated to address outstanding needs.

28. One step towards meeting needs can be taken through the commissioning of project preparation grants (PPGs). In the 2007 Operating Plan, it was envisaged that each regional consultation would lead to at least one PPG application. From Africa, two such applications were received and approved in 2008.⁶ In addition, funding was approved for the development of an SPS Action Plan for Cambodia (STDF 246). A project grant was also approved for Guatemala (STDF 238). Implementation of these activities will take place in 2009.

29. The full impact of the regional consultation work in terms of mobilizing resources to address outstanding SPS needs will only become clear with time. At its meeting in October 2008, the Working Group agreed in principle to further evaluate the impact of the three events, unless it considered the conclusions of the STDF evaluation report sufficient in this regard. The necessity of a further evaluation and other follow-up work, if any, will be discussed by the Working Group at its first meeting in February 2009.

Additional regional consultation

30. On the basis of a positive evaluation of the first set of regional consultations (see above), the STDF Working Group will be invited to consider one additional regional consultation to be organized during the second half of 2009. Originally, the Operating Plan 2008-2009 foresaw the organization of three additional regional consultations. However, the organization of the first set of three consultations has proven to be extremely resource-intensive and time-consuming. Further regional consultations may be held in 2010 and beyond, as appropriate.

31. Possible regions where this additional consultation may be held as identified in the Operating Plan 2008-2009 include the West African Economic and Monetary Union (UEMOA), the Andean Community and a sub-group of countries within the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC).⁷ Another region suggested in the STDF evaluation was the Southern African Development Community (SADC, or a sub-group thereof).⁸

32. The additional regional consultation would follow the same general format as the first three, although lessons from the previous consultations would be incorporated in the design and terms of reference of the new activities – notably in respect of local donor co-ordination mechanisms. Where possible, the STDF would seek to exploit synergies with further Aid for Trade events in 2009 at a national level. A particular effort would also be made to look at emerging non-traditional donors (e.g. China, Brazil and others) and assistance provided by the private sector. The additional regional consultation would be undertaken in collaboration with STDF partners and other key organizations. Of particular importance for the monitoring of technical assistance and research on good practice is the involvement of the OECD.

⁶ STDF 232 aiming at establishing a phytosanitary capacity building strategy for Africa (Inter-African Phytosanitary Council (IAPSC) and STDF 268 aiming at improving the SPS institutional and legal framework in Tanzania.

⁷ UEMOA (and Mauritania): Benin, Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea Bissau, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal and Togo; Andean Community: Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador; SAARC countries: Peru, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives and Nepal.

⁸ SADC countries include Angola, Botswana, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, Swaziland, United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Multi-stakeholder response to fruit fly in West Africa

33. The STDF is planning a stakeholder workshop in 2009 to ensure a co-ordinated response to the control of fruit fly in West Africa. The basis for this work is a scoping study, commissioned by the European Commission (EC) which was subsequently validated by the Economic Community Of West African States (ECOWAS) in July 2008. The regional action plan includes a set of recommended actions needed at national and regional level to control the pest and limit damage inflicted on fruit. In order to mobilize donor assistance in this area, the regional action plan needs to be budgeted. Until this step is taken, it is not possible to set a firm date for the activity. However, it is likely that it will be undertaken in the second quarter of 2009.

34. The STDF event will aim to ensure that donor actions are aligned with recommendations laid out in the regional action plan and complementary to existing initiatives. It may also provide a useful pathway to build on actions of partner organizations in the region, for example the Agriculture and Food Safety Action Plan for Niger prepared by the World Bank.

35. Other possible thematic issues of particular trade concern identified by the Working Group in 2008 include the phasing out of methyl bromide as a quarantine treatment, mycotoxins and trans-boundary animal disease. Depending on the success of the work on fruit fly in West Africa, more coordination work on these and other thematic issues of trade concern can be envisaged for 2009 and beyond. Where possible, alignment should again be sought with the Aid for Trade calendar of events.

D. COORDINATION ACTIVITIES AT NATIONAL LEVEL

36. At the national level, the following co-ordination activities are envisaged:

- Further emphasis on co-ordination with existing and planned donor activities in the development of project preparation grants and greater effort to ensure synergy with on-going partner programmes;
- Improved co-ordination with the Enhanced Integrated Framework in relation to DTIS elaboration, update and development of actions on the basis of DTIS action matrices; and
- Improved coordination with and participation in national Aid for Trade events, including the preparation of country briefings as requested.

Coordination with donors and partners

37. Much greater emphasis has already been placed on co-ordination with existing and planned donor activities in the development of project preparation grants to avoid duplication of effort and mobilize resources to fund and implement resultant project activities. This has meant a more proactive role for the Secretariat in the elaboration of projects. In 2009, the Secretariat will continue to be actively involved in the development of projects, including accompanying selected consultants (during parts of) their missions, wherever possible.

38. One positive impact of making STDF meetings more of a forum for discussion and information dissemination should be the possibility for greater synergy between STDF operations and those of partners, donors and observers on the ground. It should also encourage greater coherence between partners, donors and observers in their operations.

39. The STDF Secretariat also undertakes to provide senior level representation, as required, at the General Assembly of partner organisations, in order to raise the profile of the STDF role and activities.

Coordination with the EIF

40. Cooperation with other initiatives is essential to STDF's co-ordination role and also to the achievement of the STDF target to devote 40 per cent of Facility project grant resources to LDCs and OLIEs. As mentioned in the STDF evaluation, this figure has been clearly exceeded in the period 2006-2008 (58%). The recent enhancement of the IF has opened a number of opportunities to deepen existing co-operation. These opportunities will be further discussed with the newly established Enhanced IF Secretariat in the first quarter of 2009.

41. In essence, the STDF should be providing expert advice to the EIF on all SPS-related technical co-operation matters, either itself or through the STDF partner organizations. This expert advice role fits well with the Medium Term Strategy objective of developing the STDF into a reference point for good practice in the provision of SPS-related technical co-operation. Table 2 shows countries currently involved and their status in the IF process. Stage 1 refers to countries with a validated DTIS.

42. It is envisaged that the STDF will be able to provide expert advice to the EIF in the following areas:

- Pre-Diagnostic Trade Integration Study (DTIS) support;
- DTIS preparation and validation (Tier 1);
- DTIS update (Tier 1); and
- Project development – either through STDF PPGs or through the use of EIF funds (Tier 2).

Table 2: Status of countries in the Integrated Framework process (December 2009)

Countries that have completed stage 1 of the IF process (32)	Countries that have started/will start stage 1 of the IF process: (12)	Technical reviews under consideration (1)
Angola Benin Burkina Faso Burundi Cambodia Central African Republic Chad Comoros Djibouti Ethiopia Gambia, The Guinea Lao P.D.R Lesotho Liberia Madagascar Malawi	Maldives Mali Mauritania Mozambique Nepal Niger Rwanda Sao Tome and Principe Senegal Sierra Leone Sudan Tanzania Uganda Vanuatu Yemen Zambia	Afghanistan Cape Verde Democratic Republic of Congo Eritrea Guinea-Bissau Haiti Kiribati Samoa Solomon Islands Timor Leste Togo Tuvalu
		Equatorial Guinea

43. The strengthening of Tier 2 of the EIF provides an avenue for funding of projects developed on the basis of SPS issues identified in the EIF. The EIF provides a major opportunity for the STDF to put its role as a reference point for good practice in SPS-related technical assistance capacity building to good effect.

Coordination with Aid for Trade

44. Constraints arising from inability to comply with the SPS requirements of importing countries are an important "supply side" constraint facing developing, and in particular, least developed countries. Given the Aid for Trade focus on designing actions to address "supply side" constraints, it is appropriate that the STDF should further seek to raise the profile of SPS issues in international trade through further participation in Aid for Trade events. The various inputs that STDF could provide to the Aid for Trade process in 2009 and beyond are summarized below:⁹

- Preparation of Secretariat desk reviews of SPS needs and overview of assistance for Aid for Trade review meetings;
- The use of project preparation grant activities to develop bankable projects from needs identified in additional Aid for Trade events;
- Participation in Aid for Trade review meetings and meetings organized by the WTO and other partners;
- Acting as a channel for input from partner organizations to discussions on Aid for Trade indicators;
- Collaboration with other related initiatives, such as the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme, may also be envisaged.

45. A desk study on SPS needs and assistance of eight LDCs (Benin, Cambodia, Lao PDR, Lesotho, Mozambique, Rwanda, Senegal and Yemen) was prepared by the Secretariat during the second half of 2008 and presented at the LDC Ministerial Conference on 19-20 November 2008 in Siem Reap, Cambodia. This event was jointly organized by WTO and UNIDO within the context of Aid for Trade. The report complemented and strengthened UNIDO's broader programme proposals aimed at addressing the supply-side needs of the eight LDCs. The Secretariat also intends to put parts of the UNIDO report on the STDF website as individual country briefings to complement the work on the compendium (see above).

46. Similar country briefings on SPS needs and assistance could be envisaged for other national Aid for Trade events in 2009, notably those to be organized by the regional development banks (and feeding into the next Global Review on Aid for Trade planned by mid-2009). One further outcome and an area for future STDF work could be the creation of further SPS action plans and strategies in countries where national Aid for Trade activities are planned (similar to the one prepared in Cambodia).

47. The STDF will participate in national Aid for Trade events organized by the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB) in the first quarter of 2009 in Peru (which would build well on the cost benefit analysis which was carried out through project STDF 20) and Honduras (which would be an opportunity to follow-up on the regional consultation work in Central America). Discussions with the African Development Bank about STDF participation under its Aid for Trade agenda is ongoing.

⁹ See also document STDF 253 for a discussion on STDF and Aid for Trade.

48. The Secretariat will also continue to liaise with the Committee on Trade and Development, which oversees Aid for Trade in the WTO.

II. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

49. The STDF Medium Term Strategy considered PPGs a key mechanism for future STDF programme development. PPGs help overcome constraints faced by developing countries in the articulation of their needs and are a mechanism for ensuring synergy with other on-going initiatives, in particular the Enhanced Integrated Framework. A total of 32 PPGs have been approved and funded by the STDF since its inception. Several PPGs are currently at various stages of implementation.

50. The main criterion in awarding preparation grants is the likelihood that the project developed may receive funding. Final project funding may be provided by the STDF or from another funding source, e.g. a bilateral donor. Greater reliance will be placed on the use of PPGs to provide a basis for donor interventions and as a vehicle for mobilizing funds for projects developed by the STDF. To this end, it is worth noting that two projects developed from PPGs are being funded from other sources. Discussions are presently on-going on the funding of additional PPGs.

51. In the 2009 Operating Plan, PPG development will result from:

- Follow-up on the regional consultations;
- Synergy with the Enhanced Integrated Framework;
- Direct requests for PPG funding.

52. One source of potential projects which has not been actively explored to date is specific trade concerns raised in the SPS Committee. In the twelve years between 1995 and the end of 2007, 261 specific trade concerns were raised.¹⁰ Technical assistance may assist, either directly or indirectly, in the resolution of many of these concerns. Several STDF projects already assist countries with compliance issues, either directly or indirectly.¹¹ Further attention should be given to this linkage as a possible source of project development.

53. From these sources, a total of at least 6 PPGs are expected to be funded in 2009, corresponding to 2 PPGs approved at each STDF Working Group meeting.

III. PROJECT FUNDING AND IMPLEMENTATION

54. The Medium Term Strategy agreed that the STDF would continue to fund technical cooperation activities which:

- address underlying issues of SPS capacity building in beneficiary countries (in particular in LDCs or OLIEs, or on a regional basis), ideally through innovative, preventative and / or pilot projects which may be replicated by other donors; and
- which aim to address gaps in SPS information, training materials or which aim to improve co-ordination among SPS technical co-operation providers through collaborative projects.

55. In various instances, the Working Group has instructed the Secretariat to match projects approved with funding from donors outside the STDF in the first instance. This trend reflects a

¹⁰ See G/SPS/GEN/204/Rev.8 and addenda

¹¹ Of particular note is project STDF 114 which is assisting compliance with aflatoxin residue limits on the parts of brazil nuts producers and exports in Brazil, Peru and Bolivia.

greater focus in the STDF Working Group on the value added that STDF projects may have over and above existing bilateral or multilateral assistance and the concept that STDF should act as a catalyst to bring additional resources to SPS capacity building, but not just through the STDF.

56. Evaluations of the results of the first STDF projects point to positive outcomes, but also weaknesses in project cycle management. Many of these weaknesses were recognized at the time of the elaboration of the STDF Medium Term Strategy in 2006. One particular issue relates to project oversight and monitoring. This has been strengthened through the signature of framework agreements with the FAO, ITC and the World Bank which allow these organizations to provide oversight services for STDF projects. An additional agreement was signed with UNIDO in November 2008. Additional scrutiny is also being given to the project cycle aspects of the STDF Operational Rules to ensure due diligence in project execution.

57. Predicting the number of projects which will be funded through the STDF is problematic given that the main source of project applications are requests submitted directly to the Secretariat. These applications are of varying quality. In line with the Medium Term Strategy the STDF is operating greater quality control over these applications. The main limiting factor for the Working Group may however be the overall level of funding in the Facility if the target level of US\$ 5 million is not met. Similar to 2008, the Operating Plan for 2009 is based on a projection of 6 projects being funded with the same size average budget (US\$ 450,000).

IV. INFORMATION DISSEMINATION

58. The Medium Term Strategy envisages the STDF acting as a reference point for good practice in the provision and receipt of SPS-related technical co-operation. To realize this role, a key function identified was the dissemination of co-ordination and project work. Key activities in 2009 will include:

- Reporting on the experience gained from the implementation of projects and regional consultations. Independent evaluations of STDF projects have been included as a basic requirement in all project terms of reference. Collation of these results and project documentation is a considerable task, given that 35 projects have been funded since the inception of the STDF. Much greater emphasis will be placed on communicating the results of these projects and their evaluation in the 2009 operations. These results may also be issued as publications.
- An important focus of dissemination activities should be through the WTO SPS Committee. The Committee normally brings together almost 200 officials responsible for SPS matters from a large number of countries three times per year. Additional side events on the margins of the SPS Committee are planned for 2009 (see above). In addition, partners, donors and observers are invited to organize activities to present the results of joint work under the STDF umbrella. Such events will be accepted if they fit with the role of the STDF as a centre of good practice in SPS-related capacity building.
- An important part of the dissemination strategy will also involve bringing the results of the STDF to the attention of donors. Dissemination of results to donors will also provide an opportunity to implement STDF's funding strategy (STDF 186, as amended). The STDF evaluation observes that the Secretariat should participate more in donor meetings.
- Dissemination of lessons will also take place in other fora including the annual meetings of Codex, IPPC and OIE and observer organizations, for example the OECD Development Assistance Committee, regional Codex meetings, etc

- The STDF will also disseminate information on projects through the development of training materials and a DVD/film in 2009.
- Dissemination of the tri-annual newsletter will continue in 2009.
- Further updating the STDF website as source of information on SPS-related project, programmes and initiatives.

V. STDF SECRETARIAT

59. In 2008, the STDF Secretariat staffing was strengthened with the recruitment of two new staff. A further vacancy has been advertised for a secretary to replace the current temporary support staff arrangement. This brought the full staffing strength of the STDF to four professional full time staff, one professional staff member shared with the Trade and Development Division and a support staff post, as approved in the original Operating Plan 2008-2009. The WTO will continue to provide the STDF Secretary from the WTO's budget.

60. The STDF evaluation considers the current increased staffing level as essential if the STDF is to deliver the work plan as set out in this document, in particular in relation to its co-ordination mandate. Additional temporary resources may also be called on in the event of a surge in work.

VI. BUDGET PREDICTIONS

61. Table 3 overleaf sets out an indicative budget for the STDF in 2009 totalling US\$ 4.74 million. Activities have been based on the annual target level of funding of US\$ 5 million. The funding strategy (STDF 186) will be revised to address potential shortfalls in 2009 and beyond. In the event of any shortfall in the total amount of funding received, some activities may be scaled back or dropped from the Operating Plan. In practical terms, any scaling back will be felt in the ability of the STDF Working Group to approve requests for project funding. An amendment has been proposed to the Operational Rules to further clarify funding priorities, with priority first being given to staffing requirements, then to coordination activities, to PPGs and lastly to project funding.

62. Expenditure related to project development and project funding would be subject to approval by the STDF Working Group on the basis of requests for funding – with the exception of participation in EIF missions. Other elements of the work plan would be implemented on the basis of approval by the Working Group and Policy Committee of the 2008-2009 Operating Plan (in particular, co-ordination, dissemination and staffing).

Table 3: Projected STDF Operating Budget (2009)

2009			Total	
Task	Amount	Number		
Co-ordination	Workshop on cost benefit analysis	100,000	1	100,000
	Workshop SPS and climate change	100,000	1	100,000
	Workshop on mobilizing action on fruit fly in West Africa	148,000	1	148,000
	Participation in Aid for Trade events	7,500	6	45,000
			sub-total	393,000
Project development	Project Preparation Grants	30,000	6	180,000
	Participation in EIF missions	7,500	5	45,000
			sub-total	225,000
Project funding	Projects	450,000	6	2,700,000
Dissemination	Participation in meetings of partners and observers	4,000	10	40,000
	Meetings with donors	2,000	4	8,000
	Development of DVD	153,000	1	153,000
			sub-total	201,000
Operating costs	Travel of developing country representatives to meetings	20,000	4	80,000
	Four professionals, one administrator			600,000
Sub-total			sub-total	680,000
Administrative overhead			sub-total	4,199,000
	Administrative overheads	13%		545,870
Total				4,744,870

STDF MEETING DATES 2009¹²

February (GENEVA)

19 December	Deadline for submission of proposals
22 January	Deadline for circulation of projects and overview by STDF Secretary
5 February	Deadline for circulation of overview of project implementation, other documentation and submission of comments by partners on proposals within their areas of expertise
27 February	STDF Working Group meeting

JUNE (GENEVA)

3 April	Deadline for submission of proposals
8 May	Deadline for circulation of projects and overview by STDF Secretary
29 May	Deadline for circulation of overview of project implementation, other documentation and submission of comments by partners on proposals within their areas of expertise
25 June	Cost benefit analysis workshop
26 June	STDF Working Group meeting

OCTOBER (GENEVA)

7 August	Deadline for submission of proposals
11 September	Deadline for circulation of projects and overview by STDF Secretary
2 October	Deadline for circulation of overview of project implementation by STDF Secretary, other documentation and submission of comments by partners on proposals within their areas of expertise
30 October	STDF Working Group meeting

DECEMBER (to be confirmed)

November	Deadline for circulation of documents to the Policy Committee
December	Policy Committee meeting

¹² Dates for the submission of projects are final. Dates of future STDF Working Group meetings are tentative and subject to confirmation prior to each meeting.