

Engaging SPS stakeholders at national level

The project aimed to improve countries' institutional capacity against the backdrop of an international trading system, which requires countries to comply with food safety, animal and plant health standards. Improving public and private sector capacity on sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) areas, in turn, leads to improved export performance.

STDF/PG/019

Status

Completed

Start Date

01/12/2004

End Date

01/04/2007

Project Value (US\$)

\$291,218

STDF Contribution (US\$)

\$291,218

Beneficiaries

Paraguay

Sri Lanka

Implementing Entities

Abt Associates

Background

The SPS Agreement provides international requirements and guidelines on the information a country must provide on SPS measures, although it doesn't specify the mechanism to manage the information available. The project focused on sharing model arrangements to handle notifications at national level for information generated by WTO and the international standards setting organizations – OIE, Codex, and IPPC.

Paraguay and Sri Lanka were pilot countries in the project, which included three phases: needs assessment, implementation of improvements, and reassessment of results and final reporting.

Results

The project improved the coordination of SPS activities at the national level in Paraguay and Sri Lanka. This included improving the capacity of government bodies to respond to SPS information flows and assess the implications for national exports of meeting SPS measures and Codex, IPPC, and OIE standards.

In Paraguay a national SPS Committee was set up in November 2005, with participation from the National Notification Agency, National Enquiry Points, and National Contact Points, supported by IICA. The SPS Committee significantly improved the frequency and quality of coordination. Following the project, comments on SPS notifications increased and public-private dialogue built consensus on SPS matters.

Recommendations

Engaging the private sector more actively in SPS matters will help to create a more responsive notification mechanism. At the same time, a national mechanism for notification should include feedback from the private sector, to allow National Contact Points to advocate on their behalf, boosting competitiveness.

