

STDF Workshop to Review Work to Date on the Use of the Multi-Criteria Decision Analysis (MCDA) Tool to Prioritize SPS Capacity Building Options and to Discuss Options to Improve the MCDA Tool

WTO, Geneva, 24-25 June 2013

Provisional Programme

Introduction

1. The Standards and Trade Development Facility (STDF) has supported the development of a decision-support tool, based on Multi Criteria Decision Analysis (MCDA), to help developing countries prioritize options to strengthen sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) capacity.¹ The purpose of the MCDA framework is to improve the effectiveness of decisions on where to allocate public, private and/or donor resources aimed at enhancing SPS capacity. As such, the tool helps to: (i) enhance the economic efficiency of SPS resource allocation decisions so that scarce resources are allocated in a manner that best meets a country's economic development, poverty alleviation, public health and/or other objectives; (ii) promote more transparent and accountable choices between multiple investment options; and (iii) facilitate dialogue and coordination among public and private sector stakeholders with an interest in SPS and encourage more inclusive decision-making processes.

2. The MCDA tool provides a structured framework for public and private sector stakeholders to prioritize SPS capacity building options (investments), which can differ significantly in their characteristics, as well as the associated flow of costs and benefits over time. These options are defined on the basis of: (i) the product(s) affected; (ii) the specific SPS issue/problem faced by exporters of the product(s) whether relating to existing or potential exports; (iii) the export market(s) where this issue/problem is faced; and (iv) the distinct capacity building options that would address the issue faced. The framework complements existing SPS-related capacity evaluation tools² developed by international and regional organizations to identify capacity building needs in animal health, plant health, food safety, etc. It is optimal that the results of these capacity evaluation tools, where available in the public domain, as well as other relevant data and information, inform the selection of the capacity building options to be considered during the MCDA process.

3. In 2011 and 2012, the MCDA framework was applied in a number of countries to identify and prioritize options to strengthen SPS capacity. The STDF facilitated three pilot applications of the MCDA framework at the country level (in Mozambique, Zambia and Vietnam), based on an expression of interest from the relevant national SPS authorities in response to a call from the STDF Secretariat. These pilot applications were very useful to refine and improve the methodology as well as the process through which the framework is applied. Following the STDF pilots, stakeholders in some other countries, specifically government authorities in Ethiopia, Malawi, Rwanda and Uganda with the support of COMESA and USDA/USAID, initiated work to use the MCDA framework themselves. In addition, in 2012, the STDF Working Group approved a project, requested by the Belize Agricultural Health Authority, to apply the MCDA framework in cooperation with national public and private sector stakeholders. USAID is finalizing work in Namibia to use the MCDA framework to examine options for commodity-based trade of chilled de-boned beef from areas with endemic foot and mouth disease. See Annex 1 for additional information.

4. The country-level applications provided useful lessons. These included the importance of: (i) sufficient preparation to encourage participation of all the concerned national stakeholders and ensure access to relevant data and information; (ii) sensitizing high-level decision-makers on the role and value of the MCDA framework to build political commitment and support for the results generated; (iii) identifying ways, appropriate to the particular situation, to adequately engage the private sector including producers, exporters and their associations; (iv) involving an applied

¹ Available at: http://www.standardsfacility.org/Files/EconAnalysis/MCDA_FrameworkGuide.pdf

² These tools include FAO's biosecurity and food safety capacity evaluation tools, the IPPC's Phytosanitary Capacity Evaluation (PCE) Tool and the OIE Tool for the Evaluation of Performance of Veterinary Services (PVS) (5th Edition). For more information, see STDF (2011, 2nd Edition) *SPS-related Capacity Evaluation Tools: An overview of tools developed by international organizations*. Available at: http://www.standardsfacility.org/Files/Publications/STDF_Capacity_Evaluation_Tools_Eng.pdf

economist, in addition to experts in food safety, animal and plant health and trade; (v) re-applying the tool on a periodic basis, for instance, to incorporate new data or address new SPS issues; and (vi) having an external expert to facilitate the process, particularly in contexts where dialogue and coordination among SPS stakeholders is still limited. Finally, the in-country MCDA applications also highlighted that using the MCDA framework to prioritize SPS capacity building options is more productive and takes less time in countries where SPS-related sector assessment tools (e.g. the OIE's PVS Tool, the IPPC's PCE Tool, IICA's PVS tools) have been used, since these have already identified key SPS areas that need strengthening. In cases where the findings of such sector-specific capacity assessments were not available in the public domain, the involvement of senior staff from the relevant regulatory authorities offered "second-hand / indirect" access to this knowledge.

5. Linked to the in-country work, the STDF organized two regional training workshops on the MCDA framework in Johannesburg, South Africa (August, 2011) and Bangkok, Thailand (November 2012). The purpose of these events was to: (i) present the MCDA approach; (ii) share practical experiences from countries where it was used; and (iii) equip SPS experts from other countries with knowledge and skills to apply this approach. Participants included mid- to high-level officials responsible for food safety, animal health, plant health and/or trade. There was overall agreement during these workshops that the MCDA framework: (i) presents a useful and powerful tool to guide and support SPS decision-making; (ii) is likely to work best and be most effective in countries where there is already dialogue and coordination among public and private stakeholders involved in the SPS area; and (iii) provides a useful snapshot of the potential trade impacts directly associated with investments in the SPS capacity building options considered.

6. Discussions in STDF Working Group meetings have indicated the interest of several members, including developing country experts, in the MCDA work, and pointed to the potential usefulness of the MCDA tool to prioritize capacity building needs and determine the expected impacts of investments through a participatory and transparent process, that can also make a strong contribution to enhance SPS dialogue and coordination at the country level. Some Working Group members have proposed exploring options to apply the MCDA framework within particular sub-sectors of the SPS area. At the same time, some members of the Working Group have emphasized the need to ensure that the MCDA framework is not misused, which may require some adjustments to the methodology. In this context, in October 2012 the Working Group recommended that the STDF Secretariat organize a workshop in Geneva, as part of the STDF work plan for 2013, to enable partners and other stakeholders involved in the MCDA work to take stock of and review work to date and discuss possible options to improve the MCDA framework and its use in practice.

Purpose of the workshop

7. The purpose of this workshop is to review and take stock of available experiences and lessons learned where the MCDA framework has been used to prioritize SPS capacity build needs, and to consider options to improve the methodology and process through which it is applied. As such, ample time will be available for interventions from SPS experts from countries where the framework has been used.

8. The specific objectives of the workshop are to:

- i. take stock of experiences and lessons learned from countries where the MCDA framework has been used to prioritize SPS capacity build needs;
- ii. identify, discuss and agree on concrete options to further improve and refine the MCDA framework and its practical application;
- iii. make recommendations to guide future STDF work on MCDA including the development of synergies with other related work of STDF partners.

9. The workshop will also include an introduction to and discussion of the features of the MCDA framework and D-Sight computer software to enable participants to make informed comments and suggestions on improvements to the methodology and its practical application. The number of participants will be limited to approximately 40 to facilitate an interactive and focused discussion. The workshop will take place in English (without interpretation). The provisional programme is provided in Annex 1.

Annex 1: Provisional Programme

STDF Workshop to Review MCDA Work to Date and Discuss Options to Improve the MCDA Framework

Monday, 24 June 2013

- 09.00: Welcome, opening remarks and objectives of the workshop, STDF Secretariat
- 09.15: Setting the scene: Context, purpose and scope of the MCDA framework to prioritize SPS capacity building options, Spencer Henson
- 10.30: *Coffee*
- 10.45: Steps 1 and 2 in the MCDA framework, Spencer Henson
- 11.00: Break-out session: Defining capacity building options using the "Aflandia" case study
- 12.00: Feedback session: Review, analysis and discussion on Steps 1 and 2, including views from developing country stakeholders who have used the MCDA tool, STDF partners and others on possible modifications / improvements to Steps 1 and 2
- 12.30: *Lunch*
- 13.30: Steps 3 and 4 in the MCDA framework, Spencer Henson
- 13.45: Break-out session: Defining information cards for "Aflandia" case study
- 14.45: Feedback session: Review, analysis and discussion on the definition of decision criteria and weights, compilation of information cards and sifting of options, including views from developing country stakeholders who have used the MCDA tool, STDF partners and others on possible modifications / improvements to Steps 3 and 4
- 15.30: *Coffee*
- 16.00: Steps 5, 6 and 7 in the MCDA framework including use of the D-Sight computer software, Spencer Henson
- 16.30: Feedback session: Review, analysis and discussion on Steps 5, 6 and 7, including views from developing country stakeholders who have used the MCDA tool, STDF partners and others on possible modifications / improvements to Steps 5, 6 and 7
- 17.45: Summary and closing remarks

Tuesday, 25 June 2013

- 09.00: Overview of day two
- 09.15: Reflections from SPS authorities in Africa that have used the MCDA framework on the process, experiences, lessons learned, followed by plenary discussion on possible modifications, improvements and opportunities for synergies with related ongoing work
 - o Ethiopia, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Rwanda, Uganda, Zambia
- 10.30: *Coffee*
- 11.00: Continued: Reflections from other SPS authorities, Regional Economic Communities, STDF partners and donors on the MCDA framework, process, experiences, lessons learned, and

plenary discussion on possible modifications, improvements and opportunities for synergies with related ongoing work

- COMESA, Belize, Vietnam
- STDF Partners (FAO, OIE, World Bank, WHO, WTO)³
- Donors (including USDA/USAID)

13.00: *Lunch*

14.00: Going forward: Discussion of specific and practical options to improve and refine the MCDA framework and process through which it is used, expectations, etc. Moderated by the STDF Secretariat

15.30: *Coffee*

16:00: Continued – Going forward: Discussion of specific and practical options to improve and refine the MCDA framework and process through which it is used, expectations, etc. Moderated by the STDF Secretariat

17.00: Concluding remarks and close of workshop

³ For instance, addressing opportunities for possible synergies and linkages with the FAO/WHO work to use MCDA in the food safety area in Uganda, ongoing/planned activities under the Global Food Safety Partnership (GFSP)

Annex 1: Overview and Status of MCDA Work at the Country Level⁴

Country	Overview of MCDA work to date, outputs and experiences
AFRICA	
Ethiopia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COMESA and USAID/USDA worked with SPS stakeholders in Ethiopia to use the MCDA framework in 2012. • Representatives of public and private sector stakeholders participated in a stakeholder workshop on 6-10 August to agree on SPS capacity building options to be included in the analysis. • National experts playing a leading role in the SPS MCDA work came from the phytosanitary services, the Ministry of Trade, academia, the Ministry of Health, and UNIDO. • The draft report was distributed to participants in September 2012. Following the inclusion of comments, a revised draft was released at the end of November 2012. The revised final report is expected in late March 2013, and will take into account additional research and more detailed studies (including improved data) on some of the capacity building options.
Malawi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Ministry of Industry and Trade (MOIT) led efforts to apply the MCDA framework in Malawi in 2012 in collaboration with concerned stakeholders including representatives of government, the private sector and donors. USAID provided technical support and covered the costs associated with national MCDA workshops. A small team of government officials led the data collection and analysis work (including report writing), which enhanced national ownership and developed local skills to re-use the MCDA approach. • The MCDA work was used to support the implementation of ongoing national development strategies, including the National Export Strategy, by identifying SPS-related challenges that need to be addressed in the development of key export product clusters. It was also used to inform the development of funding proposals, including two PPG requests to the STDF. • The MCDA work helped to encourage public-private dialogue on how to enhance SPS capacity. The government considers that it provides a greater degree of confidence about where to invest resources in SPS capacity building to achieve the greatest impact.

⁴ Countries in which the STDF Secretariat was directly involved in the MCDA work are marked with an "*". The STDF website provides access to available country reports: <http://www.standardsfacility.org/en/TAEcoAnalysis.htm>.

Mozambique*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The MCDA work in Mozambique took place in April 2011 and was the first application facilitated by the STDF. As such, this was a useful "pilot" and the experiences were valuable to adapt the methodology and process. • Representatives from government departments involved in the SPS area, as well as research institutes and academia participated in the MCDA stakeholder workshops. While efforts were made to engage the private sector, no industry representatives attended the first stakeholder workshop. Direct contacts with the private sector were subsequently used to gather data for the analysis. • At the time of the first stakeholder workshop, FAO Mozambique hosted a briefing session to enable the preliminary experiences and results to be shared with donors and development partners. • USAID/USDA provided funds for the STDF Consultant leading the MCDA work to return to Mozambique to discuss and revise the draft report with national stakeholders, and to deliver training on the use of the D-Sight software. • Based on the MCDA work, USAID approved funds for two of the top-ranked capacity building options.
Namibia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • USAID is collaborating with the Millennium Challenge Corporation and the Wildlife Conservation Society to use the MCDA tool to incorporate social and environmental criteria into a cost benefit analysis focused on the development of commodity-based exports of beef from the East Caprivi region of Namibia. In this context, the MCDA tool was modified slightly to be able to analyse and rank various scenarios within a single capacity building option. • The work involves all concerned stakeholders in Namibia including the ministries directly involved (agriculture, environment and tourism), the private sector, conservationists and cattle owners directly affected (the latter are being directly consulted in February 2013). • In order to overcome data gaps, a significant effort is being made to gather and generate the data needed to inform the analysis. This process involved short-term technical assistance (approx. 4 months), the review of over 700 reports and peer reviewed papers, and six specially researched "mini reviews" on various criteria used in the analysis.
Rwanda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • USAID/USDA used the MCDA framework in Rwanda in 2012, in consultation with a limited number of national stakeholders, to inform its own decisions on funding for SPS capacity building. Based on the analysis, USAID approved funding for a scoping study (to be implemented by IITA) to determine the importance of aflatoxins in the Rwandan diet. • The experience in Rwanda prompted USAID/USDA to offer support for a second application of the MCDA framework, this time as a country-led exercise with involvement of all the concerned SPS stakeholders. Rwandan stakeholders have confirmed their interest to apply the MCDA work as an initiative of the national SPS committee, with support from COMESA. This work is scheduled for May 2013.
The Seychelles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In Feb. 2013, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Industry requested COMESA to conduct an in-country training workshop on the MCDA tool. The Ministry has expressed its interest to use this tool which will be "extremely useful and will complement national SPS efforts on various fronts ... and will enable to take informed decisions and invest limited (human, financial and utility) resources for the best possible SPS outcome".

Uganda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COMESA and USAID/USDA worked with SPS stakeholders in Uganda to use the MCDA framework in 2012. • Representatives of public and private sector stakeholders participated in a stakeholder workshop on 30 July to 1 August to agree on SPS capacity building options to be included in the analysis. • National experts playing a leading role in the SPS MCDA work come from the Phytosanitary Services, the Ministry of Trade and the Uganda National Bureau of Standards. • A draft report was distributed to stakeholders and is currently being revised on the basis of comments received and the inclusion of new and improved data from additional research into some of the capacity building options. The final report is expected in late March 2013 • FAO/WHO are involved in related work in Uganda to develop a decision-making process (using MCDA) to determine how food safety priorities can be established at the national level. This work considers domestic food safety, public health and food security, but also drivers of export markets, economic earnings potential. The Ministry of Health is leading this work, which also seeks to engage stakeholders from other relevant Ministries, private sector and interest groups (e.g. consumers). The STDF Secretariat facilitated contact between FAO and USAID/USDA for FAO to obtain the information collected for the SPS MCDA work. FAO subsequently invited the national experts leading the SPS MCDA work to the FAO/WHO food safety / MCDA workshop in December 2012.
Zambia*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The MCDA work in Zambia, facilitated by the STDF Secretariat in June 2011, was the second pilot in Africa. Zambia was selected for this STDF-led application based on an expression of interest from a graduate of the advanced SPS course (currently chair of the national SPS Committee in Zambia). • The work involved stakeholders from the public and private sector and academia in a stakeholder workshop to identify the SPS options to be prioritized and agree on decision criteria and weights. • Plans were subsequently made to organize a follow-up meeting to discuss, validate and revise the draft MCDA report, as well as a targeted training on the D-Sight computer software (USAID/USDA offered funds for the travel of the international consultant and to purchase the software), however, this work was delayed for various reasons including scheduling difficulties, limited availability of key officials. Following a discussion on the MCDA work at the WTO national SPS workshop in Zambia (Nov. 2012), some participants expressed their interest to re-run and revise the analysis. The STDF Secretariat has requested the concerned government authorities to discuss and indicate whether they are interested to revise the draft MCDA report and re-run the analysis. If this is to happen, it will require more concerted efforts and national leadership to engage and coordinate national SPS stakeholders. • The STDF Secretariat has shared information on the MCDA work with the World Bank, FAO, WHO, UNIDO and others in the context of plans to assess food safety capacity building needs in Zambia under the Global Food Safety Partnership (GFSP) from April to June 2013. While the scope of the STDF MCDA work was to <i>prioritize</i> SPS-related capacity building options (and therefore much broader than food safety), there are obvious linkages and synergies, which could be explored. Options exist, for instance, to (i) re-apply the MCDA SPS analysis to take into account the findings of the GFSP food safety assessment; and/or (ii) use the MCDA methodology to <i>prioritize</i> the food safety capacity building needs which will be identified through the GFSP food safety assessment, based on appropriate decision criteria and weights identified by the food safety stakeholders concerned.
ASIA & PACIFIC	

Indonesia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Following the participation of two government officials and an economist from the World Bank Office in Jakarta in the STDF MCDA workshop in Bangkok, the World Bank team in Jakarta is trying to mobilize funding from trust funds for SPS consultations and capacity building. There is high demand for such activities, particularly for coffee and cocoa, however, there is currently no funding available.
The Philippines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Following the participation of government officials from the Philippines in the STDF MCDA workshop in Bangkok, the Under-Secretary and Chief of Staff of the Department of Agriculture in the Philippines has expressed his support for the MCDA framework to be used to prioritize SPS capacity-building needs in the Philippines. In this regard, the Bureau of Agriculture and Fisheries Product Standards was requested to take the lead on follow-up and obtain any necessary assistance for the MCDA framework to be used.
Vietnam*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The MCDA work was initiated as part of the STDF work plan for 2012 following an expression of interest from the SPS Office in the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD). • The work is led by the SPS Office and involves a small team of technical experts from the Department of Animal Health, Department of Plant Health, the National Agro-Forestry-Fisheries Quality Assurance Department (NAFIQAD), the Food Safety Authority, Ministry of Trade, etc. • Initial stakeholder consultations took place in Sep. 2012 in Hanoi and HCMC. Data collection is currently underway to be able to carry out the analysis. The STDF consultant will work with the local team in March 2013 to carry out the initial analysis and draft a report. It is expected that this work will be finalized and discussed with national stakeholders by June 2013.
LATIN AMERICA & CARIBBEAN	

Belize*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The MCDA work in Belize was carried out from January to September 2012 under an STDF project, requested by the Belize Agricultural Health Authority (BAHA) and approved by the STDF Working Group in October 2011. • Led by a small team of officials from BAHA, the MCDA work actively involved several government departments, the private sector, industry associations and academia with an interest in SPS issues. • Two national stakeholder workshops were organized during the process. Eight capacity building options were prioritized in the final analysis. Plans are under way to seek national resources for at least three of the top four options, which require minimal investment but have important impacts on product diversification and small farmers. The other options will be included in the Aid for Trade Strategy, particularly since the MCDA work clearly pointed out the upfront investment needed and the potential impact these would have once addressed. • BAHA considered the work in Belize very successful and intends to re-apply the tool based on the availability of new data, additional resources or the conclusion of existing projects and programmes. BAHA also plans to use the MCDA framework to help develop a new strategic plan for BAHA. • Based on its involvement in the MCDA work, the Belize Trade and Investment Development Service (BELTRAIDE) and the Ministry of Natural Resources and Agriculture have expressed interest to use the MCDA framework to prioritize their own programmes and activities. • The final project report identified some key lessons and conclusions of this work: (i) the importance of good stakeholder representation to identify all the key issues; (ii) the synergies with the SPS-related capacity evaluation tools (PCE, OIE-PVS, IICA PVS, etc.) and the benefits of first applying these evaluation tools to identify major capacity needs to be considered during the MCDA work; (iii) the benefits of the MCDA analysis to provide a snapshot of the potential trade impacts linked to strengthening particular SPS capacity options identified; and (iv) the importance of carefully assigning decision weights.
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