

STDF WORK PLAN 2015-2016

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1. This document sets out the Work Plan for the STDF in 2015-2016, i.e. the first and second year of STDF's revised strategy (2015-2019). Planned activities are organized under the following four outputs of the STDF: (1) information among providers of SPS capacity building exchanged and dialogue among relevant stakeholders promoted; (2) good practice to support SPS capacity building identified and promoted; (3) needs assessments, feasibility studies and project proposals produced; and (4) SPS capacity building projects in specific areas supported. Sections VI, VII, VIII and IX provide information on monitoring and evaluation, risk assessment and mitigation, staffing and the estimated budget for 2015 and 2016, based on STDF's annual target level of donor funding of US\$5 million.¹ A monitoring and evaluation plan is attached in **Annex 1**.

2 OUTPUT 1: INFORMATION AMONG PROVIDERS OF SPS CAPACITY BUILDING EXCHANGED AND DIALOGUE AMONG RELEVANT STAKEHOLDERS PROMOTED

2.1. The revised STDF strategy places particular emphasis on STDF's role as a knowledge sharing platform and highlights the central role of the STDF Working Group in this regard. At least four Working Group meetings will be organized in Geneva in 2015-2016, ideally on the margins of the SPS Committee meetings in March and October.² Travel expenditure of developing country experts to the meetings will be covered by the STDF trust fund.

2.2. In the Working Group members will have ample opportunity to share information and report on past, ongoing and planned SPS activities, including on SPS experiences and lessons learned. Information can be shared, *inter alia*, under a specific agenda item for this purpose and during the Working Group's review of project and PPG applications.

2.3. For purposes of monitoring and evaluation, the Working Group will focus on documenting cases of collaborative/cross-cutting/innovative/regional approaches, as facilitated by STDF activities and projects/PPGs. To facilitate discussion in this regard, each meeting will feature at least one presentation related to an STDF activity or project/PPG. The STDF trust fund will cover travel expenditures of at least one presenter.³ Presentations by STDF partners and other members and organizations are also envisaged.

2.4. Each Working Group meeting will have a dedicated agenda item to discuss and agree on possible options for future thematic work to be addressed by the STDF.

3 OUTPUT 2: GOOD PRACTICE TO SUPPORT SPS CAPACITY BUILDING IDENTIFIED AND DISSEMINATED

3.1. The Secretariat will initially focus its efforts on finalizing/updating ongoing work on topics that were previously selected by the Working Group. Some of this work was initiated in previous years and encountered delays due to reasons beyond STDF's control. In 2016, the STDF Secretariat may initiate one additional activity (e.g. research, workshop etc.) to address a new thematic topic, if agreed by the Working Group (see also paragraph 6 above).

¹ For ease of reference, the Work Plan is denominated in United States (US) dollars. However, the WTO maintains financial and accounting records in Swiss Francs (CHF).

² Meetings will be scheduled for one day and a half, or two days. The Working Group may also request the Secretariat to organize a meeting of the Policy Committee.

³ The STDF trust fund will cover travel expenditure of presenters from beneficiary countries.

3.2. The following activities are foreseen in 2015-2016:

3.1 Finalize STDF Guide on SPS Market Access Prioritization

3.3. In June 2013, the STDF organized a workshop in Geneva on the use of Multi Criteria Decision Analysis (MCDA) to prioritize SPS capacity building options for market access. Participants reviewed and took stock of experiences and lessons learned in countries where MCDA was used to prioritize SPS investments, and considered options to improve the methodology and process through which it was applied.⁴ Based on the recommendations of this workshop, and following discussions in the Working Group in October 2013, the Secretariat will finalize this work. It will be supported by the STDF consultant (Mr Spencer Henson) and selected developing country experts familiar with the guide (peer review). Activities include:

- Finalize the current guide on SPS Market Access Prioritization (SPS-MAP), making it more practical and easy-to-use, and including further clarifications on process, notably: (i) its focus on market access; and (ii) the use of specific terms (identification, prioritization, compliance, etc.). The Secretariat will also update the current STDF Briefing Note on this topic for wider dissemination.
- Monitor and evaluate use of the guide to learn from and disseminate experiences and lessons, including through STDF communication channels. Developing countries interested in prioritizing SPS investment options for market access can apply for STDF funding. Relevant documents obtained through use of the guide (SPS needs assessments, project documents and evaluation reports, cost-benefit analysis studies, etc.) will be uploaded in the Virtual Library, where possible.

3.2 Finalize research on the implementation of SPS measures to facilitate safe trade

3.4. In 2013, the STDF initiated research work in selected countries in Southeast Asia and Southern Africa to analyse the implementation of SPS measures in the context of trade facilitation, in particular Article 8 and Annex C of the SPS Agreement (control, inspection and approval procedures). The research aims to: (i) analyse the current practices and experiences in the implementation of SPS controls, through the lens of trade facilitation, for particular countries/products selected; and (ii) identify key lessons, good practices, common challenges, opportunities and recommendations to improve health protection at a lower cost to traders and consumers. This work is expected to generate new knowledge and information resources on a topic of widespread interest, which has not been systematically addressed to date.⁵

3.5. The regional report focused on Southeast Asia was completed, discussed in the STDF Working Group and published in 2014. The report focused on Southern Africa will be completed, discussed and published in 2015. Members may wish to continue discussing this topic in the Working Group, including in terms of potential follow-up STDF work in this area. To facilitate this process, the Working Group will give consideration to prepare a two-page STDF Briefing Note for wider dissemination.

3.3 Finalize the joint EIF/STDF study

3.6. In 2014, the Enhanced Integrated Framework (EIF) and the STDF initiated a joint study to analyse the coverage of SPS issues in EIF Diagnostic Trade Integration Studies (DTIS) and to identify good practice for future studies and their implementation.⁶ The study will be completed and published in 2015 and presented and discussed in the Working Group.

3.4 Produce new STDF film material

3.7. In 2014, the Secretariat initiated the preparation of three short films focused on case stories that demonstrate the usefulness of specific approaches in building SPS capacity and link to STDF

⁴ More detailed information on this work is available in the Background Note that was discussed in the Working Group in October 2013.

⁵ More detailed information on this work is contained in the Background Note that was discussed in the Working Group in March 2013.

⁶ More detailed information on this work is contained in the Background Note that was discussed in the Working Group in March 2013.

work. The new films will build on the success of the previous STDF film "Trading Safely: Protecting Health, Promoting Development", developed in 2009 in English, French and Spanish, and later also translated and produced in Arabic, Chinese and Russian. This film has been widely distributed and shown at numerous internal and external workshops, training courses and other events. Following completion of the WTO procurement process, filming is expected to start in the first half of 2015. This activity will be completed in 2016.

3.5 Revise STDF publication on SPS-related capacity evaluation tools

3.8. In 2011, the STDF published the 2nd edition of its guide on SPS-related capacity evaluation tools. This document, first published in 2008, presents information on the scope and use of a number of tools developed by international organizations. The Secretariat will: (i) bring this publication up-to-date; (ii) explore opportunities to produce the 3rd edition as an on-line guide. This work will be implemented in 2015 or 2016, depending on information on new or revised tools becoming available to the Secretariat.

3.6 Disseminate information

3.9. The STDF has limited resources and continues to put emphasis on the use of internet and where possible other (on-line) communication technologies to maximize the impact of information dissemination activities. More specifically, the Secretariat will pursue the following activities:

- Maintain and enhance the STDF website, including the project webpages and Virtual Library;
- Prepare and circulate electronic news items on a regular basis;
- Liaise with other relevant Aid for Trade organizations, partnerships, programmes, networks and initiatives, including the EIF; and
- Participate in a number of selected events to disseminate information about the STDF and its work, raise funds, monitor developments, foster synergies, and promote coherence and coordination in SPS technical cooperation; this includes, *inter alia*, regular reports to the WTO SPS Committee⁷, other relevant WTO committees, and annual/regional meetings of partners, including the Codex and IPPC Secretariats.

4 OUTPUT 3: NEEDS ASSESSMENTS, FEASIBILITY STUDIES AND PROJECT PROPOSALS RELATED TO SPS CAPACITY BUILDING PRODUCED

4.1. Based on experiences in previous years, it is anticipated that the STDF will receive a considerable number of applications for funding (both projects and project preparation grants) for initial review by the Secretariat. These ideas and applications are usually at various stages of development, ranging from two-page concept notes to fully-fledged proposals. As part of its helpdesk function, the Secretariat will review the official applications and provide advice and support to applicants, where appropriate, notably in terms of SPS needs assessments, priority setting and proposal development. This work is expected to consume a relatively large portion of staff time.

4.2. Within the STDF, project preparation grants (PPGs) are the main mechanism to assist beneficiaries in articulating and prioritizing SPS needs and developing projects. Predicting the number of PPG applications to be funded through the STDF in 2015-2016 is difficult, given that the number and quality of applications received is beyond the Secretariat's control. Based on experiences in previous years, the Working Group will aim to approve and contract at least four project preparation grants (PPGs) for funding per year, corresponding to an average of two PPGs approved at each meeting. Normally up to US\$50,000 is available to eligible organizations under a PPG.

4.3. The STDF will continue to assume a pro-active role in the implementation of PPGs and resource mobilization. In some instances, this may include accompanying selected consultants on (parts of) their missions or participating in project validation workshops. Resulting projects can be

⁷ In line with the recommendation made by the Committee in the Third Review of the Operation and Implementation of the SPS Agreement, see document G/SPS/53.

submitted to the STDF for funding or to another donor. Given the limited resources available in the STDF trust fund, emphasis will be placed on the use of PPGs as a vehicle for mobilizing funds (including "co-funding" options) outside the STDF, where feasible and appropriate.

4.4. In consultation with relevant STDF partners, and if the necessary resources are available in the Secretariat, the STDF may accept to review SPS-related projects and programmes initiated by other organizations and initiatives. This includes draft proposals submitted by the EIF Executive Secretariat to the WTO for comments ("Tier 2" proposals).

5 OUTPUT 4: SPS CAPACITY BUILDING PROJECTS IN SPECIFIC AREAS SUPPORTED

5.1. Predicting the number of projects which will be funded through the STDF in 2015-2016 is also difficult given that the number and quality of applications received is beyond the Secretariat's control. The overall level of funding in the trust fund may be another limiting factor. With these caveats in mind, the Working Group will aim to approve and contract at least four project grants, corresponding to an average of two applications at each meeting. It is anticipated that the average STDF contribution to these projects will be approximately US\$ 750,000.⁸

5.2. The Secretariat will continuously monitor the implementation of ongoing projects. The Working Group will select a number of projects for an independent ex-post evaluation, in line with the STDF Operational Rules. Up to US\$ 20,000 is budgeted for each evaluation.

6 MONITORING AND EVALUATION

6.1. In line with the new M&E framework for the STDF, the Secretariat will report to members on the implementation of this Work Plan in the Working Group meetings. The Secretariat will also report on the operation of the Facility to the SPS Committee. In the first half of each calendar year, the Secretariat will prepare, circulate for comments, finalize and publish the STDF Annual Report.

6.2. To assist the Secretariat in implementing the new M&E framework, the STDF will continue to use the services of the STDF consultant (Mr Jens Andersson) on a need basis. Up to US\$ 20,000 is allocated for this assignment. This will include support in preparing surveys to Working Group members and project and PPG beneficiaries, improving indicators, reporting, etc.

7 RISK ASSESSMENT AND MITIGATION

7.1. The logical framework attached to the STDF strategy identifies a number of general and specific assumptions and risks relevant to the Facility's operation during the strategy period (2015-2019). These assumptions and risks also apply for the time-frame covered by this Work Plan. Although the probability that these risks occur are generally low, Table 1 below highlights measures that the Secretariat and/or members can take to mitigate or manage them, in the event they would occur. The Secretariat will report on risk mitigation and management in STDF's Annual Reports.

⁸ Corresponding to the average STDF contribution to projects approved in 2012-2014.

Table 1: Risk assessment and mitigation (2015-2016)

Risk	Actions to mitigate and/or manage risk
No active participation in Working Group	The Secretariat will generally encourage and facilitate a good working environment and continue to: (i) encourage members to provide timely input for the draft agenda prior to each Working Group meeting; and (ii) circulate all documents, including the annotated agenda, well in advance of the meeting to facilitate discussion and participation. The Secretariat will monitor and assess the timing and appropriate format of the Working Group meeting.
Insufficient number of high-quality PPG and project applications received by STDF.	Members should step up efforts to disseminate information on the STDF, specifically on its funding mechanism. The Secretariat can facilitate this by preparing and providing targeted standard presentations on the STDF. The Secretariat may consider participating in selected external meetings with potential beneficiaries. Consideration could be given to development of project preparation module/training package to improve quality of applications.
Insufficient funding available in STDF Trust Fund	The Secretariat should engage more actively with existing (and potential) donors. This may include, <i>inter alia</i> , organizing information sessions with donors (development agencies/ministries). Donor members should consider increasing their (preferably multi-annual) contributions to the STDF. Donor members could also consider co-funding STDF projects directly.
STDF Secretariat not fully staffed and operational	The WTO may hire additional staff on a temporary basis in the event of prolonged absence. The WTO may also consider hiring additional interns. Consultants may be hired in the event of specific activities or a sudden increase in the Secretariat's workload (see section VIII below).
Implementation of STDF projects influenced by external conditions (i.e. political stability, national commitment to address SPS constraints, government support, allocation of resources, etc.)	These risks are assessed during the review process of project applications, which include a section on risk identification and mitigation. Each STDF-funded project includes a Logical Framework, which includes a section on risk identification and management. These are analysed and reflected in the Secretariat's review of project applications.

8 STDF SECRETARIAT

8.1. The Secretariat is housed in the WTO (Agriculture and Commodities Division, AGCD) and includes the Secretary, five professional staff and one administrative assistant. The WTO continues to provide the Secretary from WTO's regular budget. Indicative staffing needs in terms of implementing the activities outlined in this Work Plan are incorporated in the budget under each of the four Outputs (see **Annex 2**). Table 2 below provides an overview of the estimated staffing costs in 2015-2016. The WTO may decide to hire additional temporary staff for the STDF in the event of specific activities or a sudden increase in the Secretariat's workload.

Table 2: Estimated staffing costs of the STDF Secretariat (2015-2016)⁹

Title	Grade	Annual approximate cost including salary and benefits
STDF Secretary	Grade 9	NA – funded from WTO regular budget
2 Economic Affairs Officers	Grade 8	CHF 400,000 (total)
2 Economic Affairs Officers	Grade 7	CHF 300,000 (total)
1 Economic Affairs Officer	Grade 6	CHF 120,000
Administrative assistant	Grade 4	CHF 100,000
Total approximate cost		CHF 920,000

9 BUDGET ESTIMATE

9.1. **Annex 2** sets out an estimated budget for the STDF in 2015-2016 totalling US\$10,288,650. In the event of a shortfall in the total amount of funding received, some activities may be scaled back or dropped from the Work Plan. In practical terms, given the priority-setting established in the STDF Operational Rules, any scaling back will affect most the ability of the STDF to approve project grants.¹⁰

9.2. Expenditure related to project development and project funding will be subject to approval by the Working Group on the basis of requests for funding. Other elements will be implemented on the basis of approval by the Working Group of this Work Plan.

⁹ The information included in this table is an approximate projection of the cost. The actual cost will depend on the individual circumstances of the staff member, including place of recruitment, dependents, etc. Staff may be promoted in accordance with WTO rules and procedures.

¹⁰ In the event the financial resources of the STDF are insufficient to fund all the projects approved, priority will be given to staffing requirements necessary to fulfil existing commitments, then to funding activities under Outputs 1 and 2, then to funding PPGs (Output 3), and lastly to projects (Output 4). See paragraph 86 of the Operational Rules.

ANNEX 1: MONITORING AND EVALUATION PLAN (2015-2016)

Vision							
Sustainable economic growth, poverty reduction, food security and environmental protection in developing countries							
Programme goal							
Increased capacity of developing countries to implement international sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) standards, guidelines and recommendations and hence ability to gain and maintain market access							
Intervention logic	Indicator	Baseline and target	Activities	M&E activities planned 2015-2016	Individual assumptions and risks	General assumptions	
Outcome							
Enhanced effectiveness of SPS capacity building	Perceived value of STDF partners and other WG members/observers with relevance and effectiveness of STDF activities and projects/PPGs	At least 80% of respondents report a satisfaction rate corresponding to 4 or higher on a 5 grade scale		Prepare and circulate survey (Nov/Dec 2015) to STDF partners and other WG members/observers – to feed in 2015 Annual Report	Good response rate to survey	Ongoing interest, engagement and support of partners, other members/observers and beneficiaries to participate actively in STDF and share information. Sufficient funding available in STDF Trust Fund and STDF Secretariat fully staffed and operational Other necessary conditions exist (i.e. political stability, national commitment to address SPS constraints, government support, allocation of resources, etc.)	
	Documented cases of collaborative/cross-cutting/innovative/regional approaches to capacity building facilitated by STDF activities and projects/PPGs	At least three new cases identified annually		Identify and maintain list of relevant cases – including in WG meetings and through external project evaluations – to feed into 2015 and 2016 Annual Reports	Capacity building providers and beneficiaries willing to consider, apply and use new approaches		
Output 1							
Information among providers of SPS capacity building exchanged and dialogue among relevant stakeholders promoted	Number and type of participants in WG	At least 30 participants attending each WG meeting, including partners	Organize 4 WG meetings	Document 4 WG meetings (reports, presentations)	Active participation in WG		
	Number and type of presentations made in WG (including reports by partners, donors, observer organizations and beneficiaries)	Minimum of one presentation in each WG	Organize 4 presentations	Upload presentations on website	Active participation in WG		
Output 2							
Good practice to support SPS capacity building identified and disseminated	Number of thematic topics	Minimum of one thematic topic addressed annually	Address five topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finalize SPS Market Access Prioritization (SPS-MAP) guide (2015) and monitor its use (2015-16) Finalize research on implementation of SPS measures to facilitate safe trade, including STDF Briefing Note (2015) Finalize joint 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Document thematic topics (publications, reports, film, briefing notes) Discuss and agree on new thematic topic in WG (2015-16) 	Agreement in WG on priorities for thematic work		

			<p>EIF/STDF study on coverage of SPS issues in DTIS (2015)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop new film material (2015-16) • Update (on-line) publication on SPS-related capacity evaluation tools (2015-16) <p>Initiate activity on new topic in 2016</p>				
	Number of visitors to STDF website and number of STDF e-newsletter recipients	Baseline to be specified. Target is to have at least a stable number of visits and recipients over longer time-period.	<p>Maintain and enhance website & Virtual Library</p> <p>Prepare and regularly distribute e-news</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Establish baseline (using numbers on 31 Dec 2014) 2. Report on use of website, Virtual Library and E-news (statistics) 	Website attractive and regularly updated		
	Number of external events attended by the STDF Secretariat	Minimum of ten events attended annually	Participate in selected events (including related to STDF PPGs/projects)	Report on external events (back-to-office memos)	STDF Secretariat receives invitations to external events, including from partners		
Output 3							
Needs assessments, feasibility studies and project proposals produced	Number of project preparation grants (PPGs) completed with satisfactory outputs	At least 70% of PPGs having satisfactory output	<p>Implement ongoing PPGs</p> <p>Approve at least 8 new PPGs</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop and circulate end-of PPG questionnaire to applicant/beneficiary 2. Assess final PPG reports, studies and project proposals 	Sufficient number of high-quality PPG applications received by STDF. Specific assumptions of relevance to individual PPGs		
Output 4							
SPS capacity building projects in specific areas supported	Number of projects completed with satisfactory outputs (as per individual results framework)	At least 70% of specific outputs achieved for each individual project	<p>Implement ongoing projects</p> <p>Approve at least 8 new projects</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop and circulate end-of project questionnaire to applicant/beneficiary 2. Assess final project reports 3. Select, contract and implement 4 independent evaluations 	Sufficient number of high-quality project applications received by STDF. Specific assumptions of relevance to individual projects		

ANNEX 2: BUDGET ESTIMATE FOR 2015 AND 2016

Output	Activity	2015		2016	
		Number	Amount	Number	Amount
Information among providers of SPS capacity building exchanged and dialogue among relevant stakeholders promoted	STDF Working Group meetings (travel of six developing country experts, one presenter, subsistence allowances and other costs)	2	80,000	2	80,000
	Sub-total		80,000		80,000
Good practice to support SPS capacity building identified and disseminated	Finalize guide on SPS-MAP + monitor its use	1	0	0	0
	Finalize research on implementation of SPS measures to facilitate safe trade + prepare a Briefing Note	1	0	0	0
	Finalize joint EIF/STDF study on coverage of SPS issues in DTIS	1	35,000	0	0
	Develop new STDF film material	1	100,000	1	100,000
	Update publication on SPS-related capacity evaluation tools (possibly on-line)	0	0	1	0
	Initiate new activity on thematic topic (to be agreed in 2015)	0	0	1	100,000
	Maintain and enhance STDF website and Virtual Library	1	10,000	1	10,000
	Prepare and regularly distribute electronic news items	6	0	6	0
	Liaise with other relevant organizations, partnerships, programmes and initiatives (including the Aid for Trade and the EIF)	1	20,000	1	20,000
	Participate in selected events	20	100,000	20	100,000
	Staffing to support thematic activities (one Grade 8, one Grade 7)		350,000		350,000
Sub-total		615,000		680,000	
Needs assessments, feasibility studies and project proposals produced	Advice and support to applicants and review of project and PPG applications	30	0	30	0
	PPGs contracted (average US\$50,000)	4	200,000	4	200,000
	Staffing to support project development (50% of one Grade 8 , 50% of one Grade 7 and 50% of one Grade 6)		235,000		235,000
	Sub-total		435,000		435,000
SPS capacity building projects in specific areas supported	Projects contracted (average US\$750,000)	4	3,000,000	4	3,000,000
	Independent evaluations of completed projects	2	40,000	2	40,000
	Staffing to support project implementation (50% of one Grade 8 , 50% of one Grade 7 and 50% of one Grade 6)		235,000		235,000
	Sub-total		3,275,000		3,275,000
Other	Administrative assistant	1	100,000	1	100,000
	Implementation of M&E framework	1	10,000	1	10,000
	STDF Policy Committee meetings (travel of three developing country experts, subsistence allowances and other costs)			1	10,000
	Sub-total		110,000		120,000
Total		4,515,000		4,590,000	
Administrative overhead	Overhead costs (13%)		586,950		596,700
Grand Total			5,101,950		5,186,700

Overhead costs on project implementation are normally shared between the WTO (1%) and the organization implementing the project or providing oversight services (12%).