Piloting the use of TPA Programmes to improve food safety outcomes for public health and trade in Africa

Competent authorities are increasingly considering and using voluntary third-party assurance (TPA) programmes to better inform their risk profiling of food businesses, and more effectively target resources within their national food control systems. Using voluntary TPA programmes can help competent authorities and food business operators to improve food safety outcomes, while allowing each to operate within their defined roles and responsibilities.

The purpose of the PPG is to develop two regional project proposals to pilot and assess how voluntary TPA programmes may be used in practice in selected West and East African countries to improve food safety outcomes, with a focus on specific commodities, products and supply chains. In West Africa, the project proposal was approved, and the supply chains included the fisheries sector in Mali and Senegal's horticulture sector. Work is ongoing under the PPG to pilot the TPA approach in East African countries, i.e. Kenya, Rwanda and Uganda.

The PPG efforts are based on close collaboration between relevant government agencies and the private sector. Other interested stakeholders are involved to create synergies, learn from existing experiences and ensure linkages with the ongoing work by the Codex Committee on Food Import Export Inspection and Certification Systems (CCFICS) to develop principles and guidelines for the assessment and use of voluntary third-party assurance programmes. This PPG is closely linked to a related regional PPG, implemented by IICA in Central America (STDF/PPG/682), to facilitate synergies, learning and cooperation across regions.

Two regional projects (STDF/PG/665 and STDF/PG/682) resulted from the PPGs in West Africa and Central America. These pilots will follow a broadly similar approach, and test and assess some common elements, so that the experiences and outcomes may be compared. The PPGs, and resulting regional projects, will improve understanding about how TPA programmes may be used to boost compliance and build confidence in national food control systems, for instance, to improve risk-profiling of food businesses, better target food inspections and prioritize resources, build food safety capacity of small-scale producers and small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). They will also improve understanding about the challenges and risks faced, as well as the opportunities to strengthen public-private collaboration to improve food safety outcomes for domestic public health and trade.

**STDF/PPG/665**

**Status**
On-going

**Start Date**
15/02/2019

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**Project Value (US$)**
$82,000

**STDF Contribution (US$)**
$82,000

**Beneficiaries**
Mali
Senegal
Kenya
Rwanda
Uganda

Implementing Entities
Jean Kamanzi