

**Ex-Post Evaluation of the STDF Project
"Rolling Out Phytosanitary Measures
to Expand Market Access
in the Southern Cone Plant Health
Committee Region"
(STDF/PG/502)**

**Andrea Spear
14 June 2023**

Description of Project

Project Value (US\$): \$1,796,998

STDF Contribution (US\$): \$1,084,270

Start date: 1 Nov. 2015;

End date: 30 April 2019 (6-month ext.)

Beneficiaries: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay, Perú, Uruguay

Partners

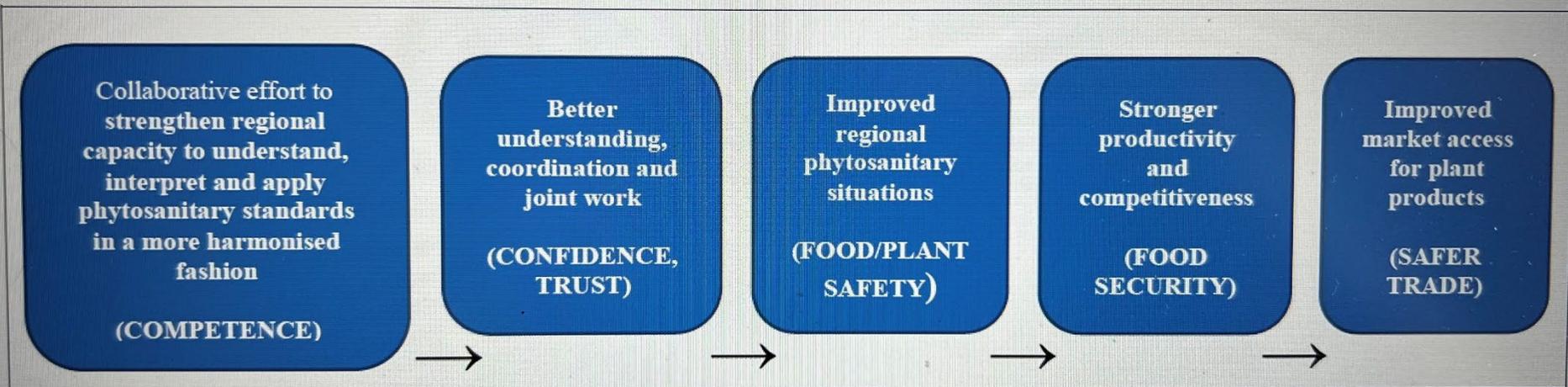
- Comité de Sanidad Vegetal del Sur (COSAVE)
- National Plant Protection Organisations (NPPOs) of the seven beneficiary countries
- International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC)

Implementer: Instituto Interamericano de Cooperación para la Agricultura (IICA)

Objectives of Project

- **Specific objective:** *Collaborative* development of practical tools, and *joint* technical **capacity-building** to **strengthen and harmonise implementation of phytosanitary measures**
- Focus on 4 areas:
 1. **Surveillance (ISPM 6)**
 2. **Pest risk assessment (ISPM 11)**
 3. **Inspection (regional online school)**
 4. **Socioeconomic impacts of phytosanitary measures (ISPM 14)**

Overall Objective and Theory of Change



Stakeholder Consultations

- Key programme partners (STDF, IPPC, COSAVE)
- Direct beneficiaries (seven NPPOs), incl. field visits to Argentina, Paraguay and Uruguay
- COSAVE Board of Directors
- IICA implementing and oversight teams (esp. Lourdes Fonalleras, the Project Director)
- 50+ participants in all four results areas (participants, experts, lecturers, tutors) (email survey + focus groups)
- Project Technical Committee members
- Relevant government officials in the Ministries of Agriculture and Foreign Affairs
- Business people (industry associations, analysts).

Findings/Conclusions - EQ1: Relevance

*How well did the project **design** address concrete issues affecting capacity to respond to phytosanitary requirements and challenges, improve trade performance and enhance competitiveness?*

- **Highly relevant**; addressed practical phytosanitary capacity issues well.
- **Theory of change**/intervention pathway: **logical and realistic** in terms of the specific role of phytosanitary officers and institutions.
- **Strongest point** (which contributed most to the overall success): the **collaborative, participatory approach** used to both develop and implement the project. *'By technical officers for technical officers'*.
- **Weakest points**: lack of rigorous **assessment of risks, assumptions and sustainability issues** during both design and implementation.

Findings/Conclusions - EQ2: Coherence

How well did the Project fit within the broader development and SPS landscape?

Coherent with the aims of relevant international organisations and standards-making bodies.

- Focused on coherent and conscientious regional implementation of international standards and norms, esp. ISPMs 6, 11, 14.
- Reflected STDF programme goals and overall aims. In fact, the Project personified: *“convene and connect, pilot and innovate, learn and disseminate, influence and catalyse”*.

Findings/Conclusions - EQ3: Efficiency

Was the programme implemented with the best possible use of resources and inputs, in terms of quality, quantity and timing?

Overall, **good value for money**: implemented efficiently; achieved many of the desired results in a relatively short timeframe; delivered savings that were used for additional value-added outputs. **Exception**: the **national inspector-training modules** had a poor cost-benefit outcome.

Cost-effective way of addressing needs: 'hybrid' face-to-face cum virtual delivery modes.

Systematic, well-sequenced delivery of the outputs (guides, methodologies, manuals, case studies).

'Excellent, prompt and timely' communications and 'effective management'.

Findings/Conclusions - EQ4: Effectiveness

Did the Project achieve its objectives?

Key Achievements:

1. Stronger **common understanding** and the **tools and skills** to implement ISPMs 6, 11, 14
2. Greater contact, **confidence and trust** among regional phytosanitary authorities and officers
3. Better national and regional **surveillance and pest management skills**
4. More **informed decision making** thanks to more solid, evidence-based analyses
5. More **agile phytosanitary transactions** at national and regional levels thanks to stronger competence and contacts.

,

Findings/Conclusions - EQ4: Effectiveness

112 phytosanitary officers from all 7 COSAVE member states participated in the activities on surveillance, pest risk analysis and impact of phytosanitary measures: *30% more than expected!*

- **Surveillance**: initial IT system and a users manual; general and specific surveillance guides; 2 case studies. 54 technical officers. (*IT system still a 'work in progress'.*)
- **Pest Risk Assessment**: 2 guides: (1) to assess the economic & non-economic risks of pest entry; (2) to analyse the risks of the entry of weeds (malezas); 3 case studies. 37 technical officers.
- **Impact assessment of phytosanitary measures**: Methodology and users guide based on the *integrated system approach* of ISPM 14. 2 case studies. 21 officers participated. (*Uptake of methodology poor.*)

54 officers completed the 'international module' of the **ERVIF online inspectors training school** **54 officers** completed the 'international module' + 30 teachers/academic assistants trained + course materials delivered for both international and national modules. (*The national modules did not meet expectations. ERVIF paused.*))

Findings/Conclusions – EQ5: Impact

What difference did the project make?

- **More competent implementation** of ISPMs 6, 11, 14 and WTO SPS Agreement.
- **Greater COSAVE NPPO role in FAO/IPPC activities** in Rome.
- More rigorous processes → more **solid, reliable information** → more **evidence-based decision making**.
- Stronger surveillance, PRA, + greater confidence/competence → better **trade negotiating and market access outcomes**.
- Effective contact networks + competence → greater trust among authorities → more **agile, streamlined phytosanitary actions**.
- Better **trade performance**: Fruit exports from COSAVE region up 70% in 2015-22. Cereal exports doubled in 2015-22.
- **More fruitful relations** between phytosanitary officers, other ministries and the private sector.

EQ6: Impact *cont.*

“Estos proyectos son canales hacia cosas que no veíamos – catalizan un montón de cosas que nos permiten saltar a otro nivel y ver las cosas de otra manera.”

“These projects are channels toward areas we did not originally contemplate; they catalyse a whole range of things that allow us to leap to another level and view things in a different way.”

(SENASA Argentina)

Findings/Conclusions – EQ6: Sustainability

Have the benefits proved to be sustainable?

Widespread use of the contact networks.

‘Embedded’ use of good practices and knowledge.

Among the **tools** produced, the (updated) **guides for surveillance and pest risk analysis** were the most popular.

Sustainability challenges:

- IT platform for regional surveillance information gathering/communicating
- Methodology for evaluating the socioeconomic impact of phytosanitary measures
- Online regional inspector training programme (ERVIF).

Key issues: Project design, funding (budget), national sensitivities (transparency), human resources (expertise, rotations, retirements), follow-through.

Sum-Up of Findings/Conclusions

Important regional objectives achieved:

- Greater competence and confidence
- More harmonisation in applying specific standards
- Stronger surveillance, pest risk assessment, inspection and impact analysis capabilities; more evidence-based decision making
- Better regional communications, coordination and trust.

Numerous positive impacts, both intended and unexpected: eg,

- Contribution to improvements in trade performance, negotiations and market access
- More agile, streamlined bilateral/regional phytosanitary action
- Maintenance of phytosanitary status
- More efficient NPPOs
- Better relationships with government agencies and the private sector

Challenges: To consolidate and build on these achievements to underpin longer-term objectives. To work more closely with the Private Sector.

In future projects, devote more attention in design and implementation to the underlying issues that presented challenges in this project, especially sustainability.

What is the Difference?

In this Report:

Recommendations come from the Evaluator. They address strengths and weaknesses in the Project design and performance that should be taken into account in future development assistance.

Lessons Learned come from the Project participants. They highlight what worked well and what did not – and what should be done differently in future projects.

Suggestions come from the Project participants and other Stakeholders. They focus on practicalities, specific areas for improvement, and themes of interest.

Recommendations

1. Support continuation and consolidation of the ERVIF regional online inspector training programme. **COSAVE, IICA, NPPOs**
2. Encourage broad use of the collaborative, 'by technical officers for technical officers', learning-by-doing approach used in this project. **IICA, COSAVE**
3. Find a constructive way to institutionalise accountability for the sustainability of the key outputs. **NPPOs, COSAVE, national governments**
4. Strongly encourage recipients of project funding to assess rigorously needs, risks and sustainability issues in their application/inception and reporting documents. **Implementers, beneficiaries, development partners**
5. Strongly encourage implementers of projects to include a plausible exit strategy in the inception documents, update it regularly and give it prominence in the final project report. **same**
6. Consider a role for the private sector in future phytosanitary projects and COSAVE/NPPO activities. **COSAVE, NPPOs**

Lessons Learned

1. NPPOs with a solid core team of phytosanitary technical officers and experts tended to display better longer-term outcomes from the project than those with regular rotations.
2. In areas with so many national political and trade interests, it is important to assess evolving national sensitivities, priorities, challenges and risks at the design stage and regularly during implementation, in order to adjust and manage expectations and desired outcomes.
3. Regional projects should assess carefully the potential risks and success factors before establishing goals which depend primarily on third parties, and not on the implementing partnership.
4. The appropriate implementation levels and roles should be identified *a priori* for designing and using technical tools.
5. All experts in tool-development activities should embrace a participatory approach when this is an underlying principle of the project.

Fin

¡Gracias!

Merci!

Thank you!

Andrea Spear

a.spear.v@gmail.com