

15 September 2021
2nd vTPA Partnership Platform

Participants: Marlynne Hopper (STDF), Marie Michelle Sarr (NPC VTPA West Africa project), Morag Webb (COLEACP), Bruno Séchet (Integralim), Anneke Voss (Global GAP), John Oppong-Otoo (AU-IBAR), Mukayi Musarurwa (COMESA), Ana Cordero (IICA), Joao Stein (IFS), Martha Byanyima, Anne Sophie (Eurofins), Daniela Apu (IICA), Ali Badarneh (UNIDO), Gabor Molnar (UNIDO), Natalia Fernandez (UNIDO)

Agenda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction of new partners • Update on the project progress in the pilot countries • Potential engagement of partners for the pilot initiatives • Round Table Discussion on any other topic
Topic	Comments
Introduction	The discussion started with a round of introduction of the attendants. Mr. Joao Stein from IFS is a new partner of the platform.
Project progress in pilot countries	<p>Ana Marisa Cordero updated on the progress of the vTPA project in Belize and Honduras. After the challenges posed by COVID-19 for the implementation, the activities identified for the coming period are: identification of the crops or value chains to be considered of the project, selection of consultants to be hired for the training for officials in vTPA concepts and risk based inspection.</p> <p>Gabor Molnar updated about the report in West Africa: a workshop took place on the 15th of September to provide an introduction about the vTPA concept and to present the results of the study carried out by a food regulatory expert about the Food Safety situation in Mali. The first Project Steering Committee (PSC) in Mali followed the workshop; original and new members approved the inception report and the work plan. Gabor also talked about coming activities: risk based inspection training, gender study to find out whether there is a correlation between gender and food safety compliance and certification, and webinar on Codex guidelines to be provided by the UK Food Standards Agency for the pilot countries on the 29th of September.</p>
Discussion	<p>Questions from the participants were raised about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - When they would be able to use the approach in their countries; - Which private standards would be targeted; - Why the webinars should be done by developed countries. <p>Ali Badarneh, chief of the Sustainable Food Systems Division in UNIDO informed that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Awareness sessions on the guidelines could already be organized for all other projects willing to apply the approach; - The projects are not limited to any certification schemes; - Developed countries will share their experience on how they have implemented the vTPA approach as partners to contribute with lessons learned to facilitate the learning and implementation in developing countries.
Potential engagement of partners	<p>Ali Badarneh asked a series of questions to the different participants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Is there already a national/regional scheme already existing in Africa? <p>Mukayi Musarurwa informed about two schemes currently working in Zimbabwe. Interest was put on a voluntary industrial driven scheme that has been present for the last 15-20 years. Additional information will be shared in a bilateral meeting.</p>

	<p>- Would it make sense for Senegal and Mali to invest in developing product specific scheme, for example, for mango?</p> <p>Morag Webb informed that the work they have done is not about schemes but rather good practice guides and value-chain-approach methodologies to apply risk assessment along the value chain. The methodology brings public and private sectors together. Morag showed interest in looking at good practices and safety guides.</p> <p>An entry level globalGAP scheme recently developed in a pilot project in Nigeria was mentioned.</p> <p>Challenges observed: a certification scheme is usually thought to be a “checklist” but prerequisites are needed to be in place for it to work; if buyers do not demand a scheme, it will not work; costs for the government to operate the scheme.</p> <p>A meeting with GlobalGAP and COLEACP will be organized to discuss options to align on this.</p> <p>- Are GlobalGAP, IFS and FSSC22000 ready to contribute in the sharing of information and awareness creation about their schemes with the pilot and other countries?</p> <p>FSSC 22000, GlobalGAP and IFS agreed on participating in workshops to explain the ABCs of their schemes. The workshops will contain a presentation of success stories to engage the countries, explanations about the schemes and the integrity programs as well as on the difference between development programs, certification schemes, standards and vTPAs. A mock exercise for the countries to learn in a practical way will be designed. A training webinar will be organized with GlobalGAP, IFS and FSSC22000.</p>
<p>Recognition of schemes by authorities in other countries</p>	<p>The authorities in Germany do not recognize IFS and GlobalGAP schemes but Developing countries might recognize different schemes in the future.</p> <p>Bruno Séchet provided information about the recognition provided by the French government of the schemes, which is a two-year process involving a questionnaire of the scheme governance, 20-30 surveillance audits done by the authority and the evaluation of whether the non-conformities raised by the inspectors are the same as those found by the auditors.</p>
<p>Date for next vTPA platform</p>	<p>The next vTPA platform will take place in February. In the meantime, bilateral or tripartite sessions will be organized to follow up on topics discussed during this platform.</p>