

STDF PROJECT PREPARATION GRANT (PPG)

APPLICATION FORM

The Standards and Trade Development Facility (STDF) provides Project Preparation Grants (PPGs), up to a maximum of US\$50,000, for the following purposes (or a combination thereof):

- application of SPS-related capacity evaluation and prioritization tools;
- preparation of feasibility studies that may precede project development to assess the potential impact and economic viability of proposals in terms of their expected costs and benefits; and/or
- preparation of projects proposals that promote compliance with international SPS requirements, for funding by the STDF or other donors.

Applications that meet the STDF's eligibility criteria are considered by the STDF Working Group, which makes the final decision on funding requests. Complete details on eligibility criteria and other requirements are available in the *Guidance Note for Applicants* on the STDF website (www.standardsfacility.org). Please read the *Guidance Note* before completing this form. Completed applications should be sent by email (as Word documents) to STDFSecretariat@wto.org.

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| PPG Title | Preparation for a project proposal to increase market access by strengthen the capacity of phytosanitary inspection and diagnostic of the State Service on Phytosanitary Inspection and Plant Quarantine, Ministry of Agriculture, Republic of Tajikistan |
| Budget requested from STDF | US\$43,900 |
| Full name and contact details of the requesting organization(s) | State Service on Phytosanitary Inspection and Plant Quarantine, Ministry of Agriculture, Republic of Tajikistan Address: h.10, 2 nd ave. Shark str., Dushanbe, 734002 Phone (+992 37) 2289045 Fax: (+992 37) 2240416 www.tojikquarantine@gmail.com |
| Full name and contact details of contact person for follow-up | Mr.Tavarov Nimatullo Hukmatulloevich Head of the State Service on Phytosanitary Inspection and Plant Quarantine, Ministry of Agriculture, Republic of Tajikistan Phone: +(992) 902609057 www.tojikquarantine@gmail.com |

I. BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

1. *What is the purpose of this PPG? Explain whether it is requested to: (i) apply an SPS-related capacity evaluation or prioritization tool; (ii) prepare a feasibility study (prior to project development) to assess the potential impact and economic viability of proposals in terms of their expected costs and benefits; and/or (iii) prepare a project proposal for consideration by the STDF or other donors?*

The purpose of PPG is to prepare the Project proposal for consideration by the STDF and other donors in order to increase market access of exported products from Republic of Tajikistan. In 2014-2015, FAO provided support to the State Service on Phytosanitary Inspection and Plant Quarantine (SSPIPQ) of Tajikistan to carry out a Phytosanitary Capacity Evaluation (PCE) that identified the weaknesses in the phytosanitary system as benchmarked against the core missions

of the NPPOs according to the IPPC and the ISPMs. This PPG will build on the results of the PCE and will be focused on the analysis of the situation for currently threatened exports and for products with high potential to access new markets. In this regard, the PPG will carry out an assessment from the lens of specific products of export potential to identify priority areas in which urgent support to the NPPO is required to enable the Government to achieve its export promotion objectives. Strengthening the capacity of the SSPIPQ that provide the core phytosanitary functions, such as export certification, surveillance of quarantine pests, monitoring of infested areas, import inspection and laboratory analysis focusing on priority products will serve as a trigger for a more system support to the SSPIPQ by showing the economic return of investing in phytosanitary capacity.

The SSPIPQ is responsible authority for export certification of plants and plant products. It establishes structure based on the required institutional needs to carry out core phytosanitary activities such as export certification, pest surveillance and pest diagnostic. However, existing infrastructure and knowledge of staff in phytosanitary issues needs to be improved in order to comply with international standards and requirements of importing countries.

The enhancement of diagnostic laboratory conducting accurate diagnosis and, as a consequence, implementing a reliable inspection of imported plant and plant products will contribute primarily to ensure phytosanitary safety of the Republic of Tajikistan, preventing the introduction and spread of quarantine pests into the country.

Also it is important to carry out the survey and monitoring of the territory of Tajikistan to identify new quarantine pests. As result of such surveys is establishment of pest lists which indicates pests that are present or absent in the country. These pest lists are the bases for importing country to carry out Pest Risk Analyses (PRA) and decide on phytosanitary measures. Based on these measures Tajikistan will be able to establish export certification system what respond to import phytosanitary requirements and improve pest control during export of plant and plant products. Strengthening of the export certification system in Tajikistan will provide the background for better market access and increase export value of plant produce of Tajikistan.

2. Explain the key SPS problems and/or opportunities to be addressed. Clarify why these issues are important, with attention to market access and poverty reduction. Describe, if relevant, how these issues relate to SPS priorities in the Enhanced Integrated Framework's Diagnostic Trade Integration Studies (DTIS), the findings of SPS-related capacity evaluations, national poverty reduction strategies, sector development strategies or policies, etc. See Qn. 7. (b) – (d) of the Guidance Note.

According to national statistics, the population of the Republic of Tajikistan was 8,3 million in 2014. About 27% of them are employed in agriculture, 90% of the population live in valleys where people have better access to food and water. Mountains occupy 93% of the territory of Tajikistan. According to the World Bank classification Tajikistan is a lower middle-income country with GDP of nearly US\$ 9,242 billion (2014 est.)

Agriculture traditionally plays an important role in the national economy and development of Tajikistan, the most significant crops grown in the country are wheat, barley, cotton, potatoes, onions, corn, melons, fruits, vegetables, grapes.

During last years, the Government is focusing efforts on development of intensive orchards. In this regard, the dwarf rootstocks and grafted rootstocks of apple, almond, cherry and other fruit and nut trees are imported to the country. Moreover, the country imports the seeds of cotton, maize and vegetables from China, Iran and Turkey. Tajikistan is building export potential of the production of fruits and vegetables and cotton. However, without proper information of presence of pests in Tajikistan and lacking inspection and diagnostics capacity all efforts to increase export potential may be counterproductive because Tajikistan has different climatic zones, which can be

favorable for acclimatization of introduced quarantine pests. The information on the distribution of quarantine pests in the country is outdated. Economic losses caused by pests and diseases, are the most important aspect in terms of sanitary and phytosanitary restrictions, they negatively affect the agricultural sector in general, undermine economic growth and have additional pressure on the already scarce financial possibilities of the country. The economic consequences of these threats are higher prices for food, which exacerbates food security and poverty in Tajikistan, as well as limits the ability to supply the local plant products to international markets.

The major exported regulated articles: raw cotton, grapes, cherries, apricots, lemons, persimmons, dried fruit, and watermelons. Key export partners: the Netherlands, Iran, Turkey, Kazakhstan, Afghanistan, China, Russia, Belarus, Pakistan.

However, in the favourable crop growing conditions there are obstacles for market access in exporting countries. Tajikistan has limited resources to establish sustainable export certification system because of lacking knowledge and technical capacity in phytosanitary area.

There were several cases when Tajikistan loss market access because of weak export certification system. Grapes in Tajikistan is well known produce and is exported to several countries. However, pest control in this crop needs careful revision and should be update regarding requirements of importing countries. For instance, in 2008 several wagons of grape were returned from Russia because weed *Cuscuta* were found during inspection in importing country that trigger import restrictions. Another example was rice exported to Russia was returned due to improper phytosanitary export documents prepared for the shipment. In some cases, lack of knowledge and capacity of phytosanitary inspection of imported goods also establishes barriers for developing export potential. In many cases, the seedlings of fruit trees imported from other countries are destroyed if any kind of pest is found.

Russia historically was a good trade partner and importing fruits and vegetables from Central Asia countries, including Tajikistan. Currently the total volume requested from Russia is about hundred thousand tones of fruits and vegetables but Tajikistan is able only partly participate in this call. One of the reason is because plant products do not meet import requirements such as freedom of pests, traceability, and absence of test for maximum residue limit of pesticides. One example where Tajikistan is well known producer is tomatoes but market access is threatened because of new pest *Tuta absoluta* that was a quarantine pest and now damaging crop for more than 80% in greenhouses and now is spreading around on other Solanaceae crops. The SSPIPQ is not capable properly address the problem because lack of diagnostics and knowledge.

Also export of cotton to Iran is under pressure because of the requirement of treatment by methyl bromide before shipment. Because of the outdated list of pests present in the country Tajikistan is not in a position to propose alternative measures like pest free area or pest free place of production.

Therefore the result of PPG is expected to be a formulated project proposal for donors. The formulated project should enhance the performance of SSPIPQ functions, create the strategy of its development and further improvement. The key indicators in formulated project will be market access to new exporting countries, less notifications from exporting countries, equipped laboratory and inspectors, number of inspectors trained during the project and number of manuals, procedures, diagnostic protocols developed by the end of project.

3. Which government agencies, private sector, academic or other organizations support this PPG request? Letters of support from each of these organizations would be advantageous (Appendix 1). See Qn. 7. (e) of the Guidance Note.

The State Service on Phytosanitary Inspection and Plant Quarantine as governmental agency is closely working with the relevant departments of the Ministry of Agriculture. Ministry of Agriculture, Republic of Tajikistan support the request for preparation of project proposals that promote compliance with international standards and SPS requirements, for funding by the STDF or other donors.

4. How does this PPG complement and/or build on past, ongoing and/or planned national programmes and/or donor-supported projects? See Qn. 7. (f) of the Guidance Note.

During 2007-2013, the Government of Tajikistan actively created the preliminary conditions for entry into the WTO. Financial support and technical assistance in areas related to SPS, provided by a number of donors and development partners. For instance, Swedish Agency for International Development Cooperation (Sida) funded project on support to seed sector development in Tajikistan assisted to prepare a project proposal on improving the infrastructure of the Central Laboratory and border inspection points. The project was funded by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and implemented through a project focused on cotton sector development during 2011-2013. In 2008 the Turkish Agency for International Development and Cooperation (TIKA), organized a study tour for 10 staff of the SSPIPQ to Turkey on phytosanitary inspection. FAO during 2013-2015 in the framework of the regional project provided technical support in the strengthening the capacity of the SSPIPQ.

In March 2013 the Republic of Tajikistan became the 159th member of the WTO and the second Central Asian acceding State.

Despite this progress, the International Commission noted in 2013 that infrastructure of food safety, sanitary and phytosanitary practices applied in Tajikistan, are still far from meeting the requirements prescribed by the Agreement on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures. There were numerous problems and the Republic of Tajikistan need for additional technical assistance.

Increased market access will provide additional resources to be returned into export-orientated programs. Further technical support will be planning based on the assistance already provided, eliminating the overlaps and duplications with other technical activity in Tajikistan.

5. Have you discussed this PPG request – or funding for the project proposal which would result from it – with any potential donors (bilateral, multilateral, Enhanced Integrated Framework, etc.)? If so, provide details below and indicate potential sources of funding for the resulting project. See Qn. 7. (g) of the Guidance Note.

The State Service on Phytosanitary Inspection and Plant Quarantine requested the WB, ADB, IFC and FAO for technical and investment support to upgrade the facilities and strengthen the technical capacity. It was indicated by donors that potential project proposal should be developed to discuss the possibility of funding. Also, the Government of Tajikistan assures to provide co-finance within the budget available for project proposal. Moreover, FAO expresses interest in providing support in the framework of this PPG and implementation of the project. Therefore PPG is required to make next step and discuss funding of the proposed project with potential donors.

6. Briefly explain how cross-cutting issues (e.g. related to gender, the environment) are relevant for this PPG and, if appropriate, how they will be addressed.

Export-orientated programs for fruits and vegetables focusing on market access will help to create new jobs in Tajikistan and support rural development.

The one of core elements will be strengthening the capacity of State Service on Phytosanitary Inspection and Plant Quarantine. Inspection of fruits and vegetables will help to prevent the introduction into the Republic of Tajikistan new pests and their spread throughout the country.

This will enable producers and farmers to reduce spending on quarantine pests eradication and treatment. Reducing the use of crop protection chemicals have a positive impact on the environment and ecology as a whole.

Development of diagnostics will contribute to improve monitoring the phytosanitary situation in the country and educate the public on phytosanitary issues in order to involve farmers and producers of agricultural products to surveys.

II. IMPLEMENTATION & BUDGET

7. Who will take the lead in implementing this PPG? If particular national experts and/or international consultants are proposed, attach a copy of their Curriculum Vitae and record of achievements (Appendix 2). If no names are provided, the STDF will provide a shortlist of consultants if the PPG request is approved.

The project will be implemented by FAO that has vast experience on phytosanitary issues and will involve experienced experts. Overall in-country management of the PPG would be the responsibility of State Service on Phytosanitary Inspection and Plant Quarantine.

The key working group consisting of national experts together with international consultants will manage the project. The work will be carried out in close collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture, Republic of Tajikistan

The key working group(CV in Appendix 2):

Tavarov Nimatullo Hukmatulloevich - Head, State Service on Phytosanitary Inspection and Plant Quarantine, Ministry of Agriculture, Republic of Tajikistan.

Gulnoza Hisamudinova, The main specialist of the State Service on Phytosanitary Inspection and Plant Quarantine, Ministry of Agriculture, Republic of Tajikistan.

Ringolds Arnitis, International consultant, with long experience in phytosanitary issues and plant health systems

Natalia Sherokolava, International consultant, with long experience in pest diagnostics

FAO Officer will take part in the formulation of strategy, SWOT analyses and project proposal for donors

In the table below, briefly describe the main activities to be carried out under this PPG and specify who would be responsible. Provide an estimate of the budget required (e.g. for national/international expertise, travel and DSA of consultants, stakeholder meetings or workshops, general operating expenses, etc.).

1. Carry out kick-off workshop to present and discuss the activities, gather ideas and establish work plan for implementation of PPG.

2. Consult with stakeholders and collect information on market access issues and possible export-orientated programs: Through interviews, meetings, and conducting desktop research, national and external experts will consult with wide variety of stakeholders, including agronomists, farmers, plant producers and exporters, scientists and other persons involved in phytosanitary issues. This exercise will be focuses on existing export products like grapes and cotton, as well as potential market access for cherries, apricots, peaches and tomatoes; This is a very important component of the project, as it will influence project design and activities.

Cooperation with national research institutions and farmers and trade associations allows for better use of national resources for technical justification of phytosanitary measures, pest risk analysis, development of detection and identification methods.

3. Carry out workshop of the weaknesses and priorities of the phytosanitary system in Tajikistan by using outcome from PCE and gathered information during consultation process with stakeholders.

4. Prepare final project proposal document, budget and activities of the project.

5. Organize the validation workshop that gather key partners and potential donors and will gather inputs and disseminate information. The workshop objective is to ensure if the project documents meet stakeholders' expectations on market access and project is feasible in all areas covered.

| Activity | Responsible | Estimated Budget (US\$) |
|---|--|--------------------------------|
| Carrying out kick-off workshop | State Service on Phytosanitary Inspection and Plant Quarantine and FAO | 4,400 |
| Consultation with stakeholders and collection of information in assistance of internal and external experts | National experts and international consultants, FAO | 8,000 |
| Carry out workshop addressing weaknesses and priorities of the SSPIPQ | National experts and international consultants, FAO | 6,000 |
| Prepare final project proposal document | international consultant, FAO | 20,500 |
| Conduct final workshop for the validation of project proposal | National experts and International consultants, FAO | 5,000 |
| Total | | 43,900 |

The budget includes costs for national/international expertise, travel and DSA of consultants including FAO Officer, stakeholder meetings and translation, and general operating expenses.

Appendix 1: *Letters of support from each of the organizations supporting this proposal.*

Letters from the State Service on Phytosanitary Inspection and Plant Quarantine and FAO Tajikistan attached

Appendix 2: *Curriculum Vitae and record of achievements for any consultants proposed to implement this PPG.*

CV of national experts MR Tavarov Nimatullo Hukmatulloevich and Gulnoza Hisamudinova, Republic of Tajikistan and international consultants Ringolds Arnitis and Natalia Sherokolava attached