DATE: MARCH 14-25, 2022

INTERNATIONAL TRAINING PROGRAM

Food Safety Quality Infrastructure for Market Access for Developing Countries

ORGANIZED BY MEKONG INSTITUTE(MI)

IN COLLABORATION WITH

THAILAND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AGENCY (TICA)

Food Safety Quality Infrastructure for Market Access for Developing Countries

Number of Participants : 30 government and agri-food private sector representatives with responsibilities on food safety standards and agri-food trade standards compliance (SPS/TBT measures)

Duration : 2 weeks (10-days) - ONLINE

Venue: Mekong Institute, KhonKaen-Thailand

Related SDGs: SDG 2 on Zero Hunger – Access to safe, sufficient and nutritious food

1. INTRODUCTION

Food supply chain contains numerous links 'from farm to plate' and enhancing food safety can only be assured by aligning the efforts of producers, the food industry and public health authorities. Consumers have increasing interest in the way food is produced, processed and marketed. These impose pressure on governments and agri-food businesses for increased food safety and consumer protection.

Recent health concerns arising from bovine diseases, bird flu, anti-microbial resistance and various toxins in food have led to stringent standards and conformity procedures, in agri-food trade. Countries exporting or intending to increase exports of their agri-food products must acquire the capability to comply with importing countries' requirements in terms of quality, safety, health and the environment.

Agri-food businesses need to strengthen compliance with technical food safety standards from farm to table not only to increase consumer confidence but also to gain access to regional and global value chains.

The rules-based global trading system for the agri-food sector presents vast opportunities to developing countries as many (especially in tropical and sub-tropical regions) are endowed with good climatic conditions, arable land and labour to expand agricultural production. Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in agri-food processing can readily move up the value chain, providing opportunities to improve livelihoods, development in rural communities contributing to poverty reduction.

International trade in agri-food is governed by sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) and technical barriers to trade (TBT) agreements[1].

[1] *The Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (the "SPS Agreement") entered into force with the establishment of the World Trade Organization on 1 January 1995. It encompasses regulations / measures related to food safety and animal and plant health.*

The TBT (Technical Barriers to Trade) Agreement covers all technical regulations, voluntary standards and the procedures to ensure that these are met, except when these are sanitary or phytosanitary measures as defined by the SPS Agreement.

Many developing countries however are ill equipped to take advantage of the opportunities provided by trade. Weak infrastructure, lack of capacity to meet technical product / process specifications and increasingly strict requirements in terms of quality, safety, health and environment presents significant obstacles for their integration into global trade. Studies have summarized the challenges faced by developing countries in complying with SPS and TBT measures as follows:

- High cost of compliance - the costs of establishing the technical infrastructure for complying with standards and technical regulations constitute a major obstacle to building productive capacity in developingcountries.
- Lack of institutions, infrastructure and human resources for providing conformity assessment - the certification and testing capacities are non-existent or weak. They face difficulties demonstrating that the national certification and testing schemes meet international best practice standards. Lack of harmonized local certifications/ conformity assessment procedures that are mutually/multilaterally recognized; Lack standardized set of practices and procedures aligned to international market requirements to ensure compliance with internationalstandards.
- Transparency - Lack transparent inspection and certification systems which undermines international recognition (such as those referred or managed by, IAF, ILAC, BPIM,APLAC[2]).
- International trade environment - the multitude of often contradictory standards ranging from national, international, private, product and process-related standards, leading to the question of which standards developing countries have the capacity to complywith.

UNIDO's[3] border rejection analysis report and capacity building needs study suggest a strong and robust national quality infrastructure (NQI) for food safety will ensure that developing countries adapt well to evolving international agri-food trade environment.

Mekong Institute's 2017 training needs analysis (TNA) in Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Vietnam supports UNIDO's study. The TNA showed that government and regulators in these countries need to strengthen human resources in NQI especially in laboratory management system and border inspection.

2. ROLE OF NATIONAL QUALITYINFRASTRUCTURE

Two WTO agreements - Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) and Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS) - define the rules under which standards and technical regulations are formulated. They also provide rules on how trade disputes are resolved.

Developing countries have significant gaps in national quality infrastructure to support implementation on SPS measures and TBT agreement. Studies of WTO and trade standards

[2] IAF – International Accreditation Forum, ILAC – International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation,. APLAC - Asia Pacific Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation. BIPM- international organization established, through which Member States act on matters related to measurement science and measurement standards – Bureau Internationale des Poids et Mesures.

[3] United National Industry Development Organization

facility find that technical regulations and standards applied in developing countries, including packaging, marking and labeling requirements, are often incompatible with international standards. Laboratory capacity to test and certify goods for developed markets is also not well- developed to support trade.

Generally, the components of national quality infrastructure are metrology, standards, testing laboratories, certification and accreditation bodies and quality management.

Compliance system and infrastructure will broadly include the following: national standards institute; microbiology and chemical testing laboratories; national metrology institute; and national accreditation certification capacity to certify enterprises for various food safety management standards such as ISO 22000 and to train internal auditors.

Compliance services are known to be costly but should be considered a public good under the national quality infrastructure development. Least developed countries in particular may require international assistance to establish costly new standardsinfrastructure.

This training program aims to support technical assistance through human resources development in national quality infrastructure for agri-food safety and trading standards compliance.

3. TARGET PARTICIPANTS:20

Twenty participants from government and agri-food private sector representatives from developing countries with responsibilities related to food safety control and agri-food trade facilitation.

4. OBJECTIVES OF THETRAINING

The training program will provide:

- Awareness, information and training to the target participants regarding the principles and requirements related to food safety, international trade in food and agricultural products embedded in the WTO agreements and bestpractices.
- Knowledge on best practices in national quality infrastructure to support improvements in national food safety control, trade facilitation (SPS and TBTcompliance).
- Updates and support regarding issues addressed in the work done by the participants through project or action plan that will be conducted in the countries of the participants

5. EXPECTEDRESULTS:

Participants will gain understanding on implementing sound national quality system to support food safety and facilitate agri-food trade through:

1. Improved food safety standards development andregulations
2. Improved conformity assessment system: certification, testing andaccreditation
3. Improved support for agri-food sector in understanding and complying with SPS and TBT measures related to trade in agri-food (for example border inspection and quarantine procedures and information on importing countryrequirements)

6. TOPICS TO BECOVERED

- International trade based on the WTO SPS (sanitary and phytosanitary) and TBT (Technical Barriers to Trade) Agreement; relationship between the WTO TBT and SPSAgreements
- International best practices in food legislation and inspection, principles for food safety, animal health, plant health, additives and residues in contact with food and feed, risk analysesetc.
- National quality infrastructure: system and structures for food safety and trade in food and agricultural products, as well as conformity assessment, accreditation, inspection systems and structures, laboratory testing and certification, referencelaboratories.
- International standards bodies within the food sector (Codex Alimentarius, International Animal Health Organization, International Plant Protection Convention, ISO)

Prior to the course, participants will be given assignments among which will include:

1. Status of NQI for food safety in their country based on the key elements of NQI, issues and challenges, current support and technical assistance in this area, SPS / TBT issues theyface
2. Project plan after the course

7. DRAFT SCHEDULE

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
Module 1: Module 1: Global Burden of Foodborne Illnesses, Food Security and Agri-food Trade	Module 2: Agri-food Trade Rules - SPS and TBT	Module 3: Regional Agri-food Trade Facilitation	Module 5: - National Quality Infrastructure for Agri-food and Country Reports	Module 5: - National Quality Infrastructure for Agri-food and Country Reports
Day 6	**Day 7**	**Day 8**	**Day 9**	**Day 10**
Module 5: - National SPS and TBT Committees	Module 6: National Food Control System and Agri-food Trade	Module 7: Best Practices in Food National Quality Infrastructure - Thailand Case Study	Regulatory Dialogue Action Planning	Action Plan Presentation

8. COURSEEVALUATION

1. Pre and post- test /understanding
2. Assignments and workshops during thecourse
3. Genderbalance
4. Course feedback /survey

Tentative Schedule
International Online Training on
"Food Safety Quality Infrastructure for Market Access for Developing Countries"
March 14-25, 2022

Time/Day	Thai Time Zone GMT + 7 (Tentative)	Contents	Instructor	Lecture	Workshop
Day 1	09:00-10:00	➢ Opening Ceremony ➢ Getting to Know Each Other ➢ Exploring Expectations from Participants ➢ Guidance for Online Training ➢ Pre self-assessment (pre-test)	MI staff		1
	10:00-12:00	Module 1: Global Burden of Foodborne Illnesses, Food Security and Agri-food Trade	RP and MI staff	2	
	13:00-15:00	Module 1: Global Burden of Foodborne Illnesses, Food Security and Agri-food Trade (con't)	RP and MI staff	2	
Day 2	09:00-10:00	Recap of Day 1	RP and MI staff		1
	10:00-12:00	Module 2: Agri-food Trade Rules - SPS and TBT	RP and MI staff	2	
	13:00-15:00	Module 2: Agri-food Trade Rules - SPS and TBT (con't)	RP and MI staff	2	
Day 3	09:00-10:00	Recap of Day 2	RP and MI staff		1
	10:00-12:00	Module 3: Regional Agri-food Trade Facilitation	RP and MI staff	2	
	13:00-15:00	Module 3: Regional Agri-food Trade Facilitation (con't)	RP and MI staff	2	
Day 4	09:00-10:00	Recap of Day 3	RP and MI staff		1
	10:00-12:00	Module 5: National Quality Infrastructure for Agri-food and Country Reports	RP and MI staff	2	
	13:00-15:00	Module 5: National Quality Infrastructure for Agri-food	RP and MI staff	2	
Day 5	09:00-10:00	Recap of Day 4	RP and MI staff		1
	10:00-12:00	Module 5: National Quality Infrastructure for Agri-food (cont…)	RP and MI staff	2	
	13:00-15:00	Module 5: National Quality Infrastructure for Agri-food (cont…)	RP and MI staff	2	
Staturday					
Sunday					
Day 6	09:00-10:00	Recap of Day 5	RP and MI staff		1
	10:00-12:00	Module 5 - National SPS and TBT Committees	RP and MI staff	2	
	13:00-15:00	Module 5 - National SPS and TBT Committees (cont..)	RP and MI staff	2	
Day 7	09:00-10:00	Recap of Day 6	RP and MI staff		1
	10:00-12:00	Module 6: National Food Control System and Agri-food Trade	RP and MI staff	2	
	13:00-15:00	Module 6: National Food Control System and Agri-food Trade (con't)	RP and MI staff	2	
Day 8	09:00-10:00	Recap of Day 7	RP and MI staff		1
	10:00-12:00	Module 7: Best Practices in Food National Quality Infrastructure - Thailand Case Study	RP and MI staff	2	
	13:00-15:00	Module 7:Best Practices in Agri-food Trade Facilitation - Thailand Case Study	RP and MI staff	2	
Day 9	09:00-10:00	Recap of Day 8	RP and MI staff		1
	10:00-12:00	Module 7: Regulatory Dialogue	RP and MI staff	2	
	13:00-15:00	Module 8: Development of Action Plan	RP and MI staff		2
Day 10	09:00-10:00	Module 8: Presentation of Action Plans	RP and MI staff		1
	10:00-12:00	Module 8: Presentation of Action Plans	RP and MI staff		2
	13:00-15:00	Course Synthesis, Evaluation and Closing Ceremony	RP and MI staff		2
			TOTAL HOURS	**34**	**16**
				50.00	