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SADC TRADE RELATED FACILITY

PROJECT SUCCESS STORIES

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SADC TRADE RELATED FACILITY (TRF)

PROJECT SUCCESS STORIES

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Preface

The SADC Trade Related Facility is a mechanism for financial and technical support to SADC Member States committed under two windows as follows:

- **Window 1** - EUR 16,8 million targeted at supporting SADC economic integration initiatives for 12 SADC Member States within the context of their implementation of the SADC Protocol on Trade and the SADC Free Trade Area (FTA). The eligible countries under this window (Botswana, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe) were each allocated EUR 1.4 million.
- **Window 2** - EUR 6 million targeted at supporting 5 SADC Member States who have signed the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) with the European Union (EU). The support focuses on implementing their obligations and taking advantage of the market access to the EU provided under the EPA. The eligible countries under this window, Botswana, Lesotho, Mozambique, Namibia and Swaziland, were each allocated an additional EUR 1.2 million.

The outcome of this support is to contribute to sustainable development in the SADC region and increase intra and inter-regional trade. The main areas of support common to both the SADC Protocol on Trade and the EPA windows include Enhancing Customs Cooperation, Technical Barriers to Trade, Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures, Rules of Origin, Trade Facilitation, Industrial Development, Trade Promotion and Development, and Trade in Services. In addition, there are specific areas that relate only to the EPA window: Trade Defense Instruments, Trade Related Adjustment, and Competition Policy.

The Facility, which commenced operation in January 2015, was at the time of submitting this report for dissemination at the end of August 2020, in the process of final replenishment of funding with Member States expected to demonstrate that outstanding national projects can absorb all funds allocated by 31 March 2021.

As the TRF project winds down to completion, the Facility Support Unit (FSU) in pursuance of enhancing the visibility and relevance of the TRF projects to the regional economic integration process, and its trade potential for the SADC region to key stakeholders, has encouraged and facilitated Member States to contribute success stories and articles on implemented projects. Covered in this short compilation, are contributions from Member States, which besides randomly illuminating on work done in their respective countries under the TRF, also provides living record and reference to the achievements made possible through implementation of the TRF.

This is the first publication of contributions submitted by Member States to this consolidated compilation of success stories and articles on projects implemented under the TRF. The second and final contributions to this compilation will be made before mid-December 2020.

Productive Competitiveness and Industrial Development/ Value Chain Development



ESWATINI ADOPTS AN AGRO-VALUE CHAIN DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

The Kingdom of Eswatini has managed to extensively analyse the high priority economic impact value chains to guide the development of the national strategy for the value chain development as a major step taken by Government toward promoting agro-processing and industrialisation in those chains.

This was made possible with support under the SADC TRF, financed by the EU, through the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Trade as part of the implementation of the SADC Industrialisation Strategy and Roadmap, as well as Eswatini's Industrial Development Policy (2015-2022) which outlines value addition and beneficiation of primary products as one of the policy statements to achieve resource based industrialisation.

Needs, challenges and strategies for upgrading the beef and fruits and vegetables value chains have been identified as falling in the following five categories: enabling environment; capacity building for the support institutions; development of basic infrastructure; technology transfer; and partnership building. The four value chains studied were fruits and vegetables, meat, honey and dairy.

The policy undertakes value chains analyses and diagnostics of priority sectors such as agro-processing, mining and mineral beneficiation and pharmaceuticals and other economic sectors to determine key areas for the development of value chains and how they can contribute optimally to promoting Eswatini's industrialisation, creation of employment opportunities and economic growth.

While Eswatini had always recognised the importance of value addition in industrial development, there was no clear identification of constraints, challenges and opportunities for the promotion of value addition in the agricultural sector to inform the development of deliberate strategies. There was unsupported evidence in terms of the availability of raw materials, value chain actors, position in the chain, consumption and production patterns as well as current productive capacity and

potential productive capacity and if productive capacity is low, what would be the factors preventing the country from operating at optimum capacity.

Through the SADC TRF project, an agro-value chain analysis study in Eswatini was undertaken by Food Safety Associates Ltd. The purpose was to bring forth key information and issues for guiding the development of a national agro-value chain development strategy and related action plan. Specifically, the analysis sought to:

- ✓ identify priority agro-produce (commodities) that are important to the economy of Eswatini based on potential export and employment;
- ✓ undertake the national value chain diagnostic study of the identified agro-value chains, determining key issues to guide re-organisation; and to identifying the change agents and leveraging points for policy and technical interventions;
- ✓ develop a national strategy for value chain development (agro-processing development and industrialisation) of the selected value chain building on existing opportunities and potential; and
- ✓ provide information to guide the development of the agro-processing component of Industrial Upgrading and Monitoring Programme that is aimed to reinvigorate the manufacturing sector.

Key enablers of success

The stakeholder participatory process as well as the identification of critical criteria in the selection of priority agro-value chains were key enablers of success for the strategy development process. An inclusive stakeholder engagement was undertaken, including all stakeholders in the priority sectors.

Criteria for the selection of priority value chains were identified as employment import substitution; export promotion; diversification; environmental sustainability; competitiveness; and positive gender effect.

In addition, there was a desk top review to identify the key commodities, including secondary data and information obtained from key Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) mandated to support, regulate or offer services to agro-value chains.

Significance to the SADC regional economic integration agenda

Article 4(2) of the SADC Protocol on Trade (key to also mention the SADC Protocol on Industry) provides that the process of intra-SADC tariff liberalisation should be accompanied by an industrialisation strategy to improve the competitiveness of SADC Member States. Under the SADC Industrialisation Strategy and Roadmap, 2015-2063, Member States have agreed to act collectively to implement effective strategies to boost the productive capacity of the region's constituent economies. In particular, the Industrialisation Strategy recognises that agriculture remains the backbone of region's economy and holds potential for the continent's industrialisation through value addition. The value chain analysis has also identified the potential for national,

regional and global value chains. Therefore, this TRF project intervention in Eswatini holds a significant contribution to the regional economic integration agenda of SADC.

Key lessons learnt

The major lesson learnt in this process is the fact that the development of policies and strategies has to be accompanied by an analytical process because strategies have to be supported by figures. Value chain strategies can be improved through evidence-based analytical inputs and inclusive stakeholder

The implementation of the strategy lies with the private sector. Government has to provide a conducive environment for effective implementation.

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IMPROVING OILSEED PRODUCTION IN MALAWI

Malawi significantly increased and improved its oilseed production during the 2018/2019 agricultural season, thanks to the European Union-Southern African Development Community Trade Related Facility (EU-SADC TRF).

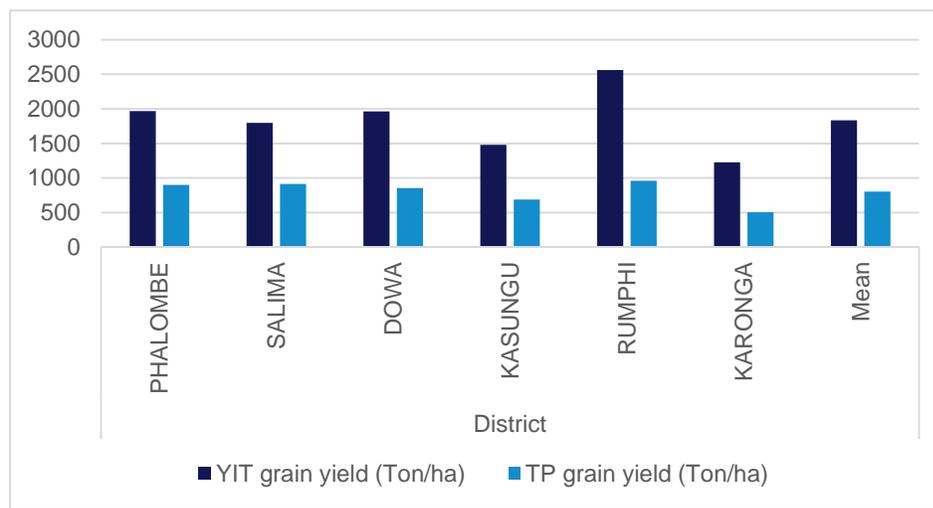
The Government of Malawi accessed Euro 1.4 million through the EU-SADC TRF, funded under the 10th European Development Fund (EDF). One of the projects implemented by Malawi sought to enhance the production of oil seeds and development of the country's oilseed value chain involving groundnuts, sunflower and soya beans by utilising yield improving technologies and training of farmers on selected demonstration plots.

Demonstration plots where oilseed improving technologies such as certified seeds, inoculants, soil and plant pest control chemicals, and good agronomic practices were utilized and Agricultural Extension Officers and service providers mobilised to work with existing groups of farmers for provision of extension services in seven districts.

Groups of farmers in designated demonstration plots were trained on the use of oilseed yield improving technologies, resulting in increased oil seed production as well as better quality of yields. One hundred and sixty farmer groups, covering over 16,000 stakeholders, have directly benefited from this intervention.

The demonstration plots registered grain yield increases in soybeans, groundnuts and sunflower in the 2018/19 season as compared to the 2017/18 season. The Yield Improving Technologies (YIT) demonstration plots did better than the Traditional Plots (TP), registering mean grain yield of 1.65 ton/ha (91.4%) higher than that of 0.86 ton/ha respectively. Certified seed of improved varieties, inoculants (in legumes), planting pattern, crop protection agents and fertilizers and good agricultural practices enabled improvement in grain yield. As illustrated in Fig 1 below, 2018/19 grain yield difference between YIT plots did better than the TP:

Fig.1: Grain yield performance in demonstration plots



These positive results would encourage both direct and indirect beneficiaries of the project to adopt the technologies displayed on these demonstration plots, thereby further increasing the yields of the above crops. The results from the demonstration plots also enlightened the farmers of the possibilities for doubling their income within the unit area they cultivate through the use of yield improving technologies and modern agronomic practices.

The increase in the yields provided an opportunity for the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Tourism to engage and collaborate with the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Water Development, small-scale farmers, oilseed processors, and not-for-profit service providers involved in oilseed sector to work together towards enhancement of oil seed production and oilseed value chain.

The Significance of the Benefits

With the possibility of the farmers doubling their yields, production of the targeted oilseeds will increase and provide the much-needed raw materials for the edible oil extraction industry in Malawi. This will enable oil processing operations to increase capacity, with implications on oil seed output, employment as well as export opportunities, especially to regional markets. The anticipated increased output from the oil production would have a domino effect in supporting sectors such as packaging, livestock, hospitality, transportation and engineering services. This intervention in Malawi is significant in the context of regional integration. Value addition is a critical element of SADC Industrialisation Strategy and Roadmap, which has also prioritised agro-processing.

The oilseed sector is one of the prioritised export-oriented clusters for economic diversification in Malawi's National Export Strategy. However, limited quantity of yields and low levels of quality oilseed production by farmers had been a critical challenge. This situation had forced oilseed processors to rely on imported crude palm oil as the main raw material in value addition processes. The poor quality and low production levels emanated from limited application of high

yielding improved technologies. As a result, the poor quality of the oilseed output led to very low prices being offered by local traders and processors, thus discouraging small-scale farmers from venturing into oilseed production. The utilisation of domestic oil extraction and refinery capacities remained had sub-optimal.

Key lessons learnt

- Working with existing structures and systems in different districts of the country ensures attainment of the results of the project quicker than trying to create new systems and structures.
- Collaboration with both public and private operators in multiple sectors (for this project, agriculture, trade and industry) would ensure efficiency in resource utilisation.
- Farmers easily adopt technologies and practices, when there is proof of concept, i.e. the use of demonstration plots to highlight different crop improving technologies.
- The importance of training and continued extension work by service providers to farmers.
- Common understanding of the importance of enhanced linkages between farmers (producers) and processors towards mutual gains and broader national development imperatives.

Conclusion and next steps

Oil seed sector continues to play a key role in Malawi's domestic economy. It has tremendous potential in enhancing regional and international trade as evidenced by continued demand in global markets. There is need to sustain benefits accrued from the TRF project through further adoption and use of the different technologies, agricultural extension service provision and intensification of industrial extension services to oilseed processors as Malawi continues to implement this project.



Fig.2: Thondwe groundnut and soybean demonstration crops developing thick canopies in total defiance of the drought spells as a response to the TRF pack of technologies; March 2018.



Fig.3: Profile of farmers and other stakeholders appreciating the influence of the TRF pack of technologies on growth, development and productivity of sunflower during the field day at Champhira in Mzimba on 18th April 2018.



Fig.4: Contrast of YIT (left) and TP (right) sunflower plots, Dowa, 22 February 2019



PROMOTION OF COTTON AND TEXTILES VALUE CHAIN OPENS UP OPPORTUNITIES IN MOZAMBIQUE

The Trade Related Facility (TRF)-Funded Cotton and Textile Value Chain project in Mozambique has opened up a lot of opportunities for citizens as well as foreign investors as the sector has vast potential for growth and development.

Essentially, this project has opened a window to a possible prosperous future for the Mozambique population living in the cotton producing areas. The introduction of small manual looms has turned many lives into positive players in the economy and the increasing household income is of great importance for human capital development as these small producers are now able to send children to school and training in various skills which are essential for Mozambique's development.

The public-private partnerships realised thus far indicate that there will be more coming on stream in the coming years as the current partnership shows growth and increases productivity. Further, the ability to also attract cooperating partners such as Holland Development Organisation (SNV) is an indication of the confidence that has been built by the project to date. The signing of cooperation agreements or Memoranda of Understanding with countries like India and Indonesia also ensures continued access to training and capacity building initiatives in the sector.

Mozambique produces a lot of cotton, mainly by small-scale farmers. However, most of the cotton is exported in its raw form without any beneficiation or value addition. The key ambition of the EU-SADC TRF intervention was to promote participation of small-scale cotton and textile enterprises in the cotton and textile value chain and to reduce the import bill for cotton and textile products in to Mozambican market. The project was also aimed at raising the level of income for cotton producing farmers through equipping them with simple tools to add value to their cotton.

However, the Small-Scale Cotton and Textiles enterprises lacked capacity to participate in the cotton and textiles value chain both in terms of human capacity and tools or equipment that could easily be used to add value to cotton. The cotton and textile industry was exporting raw

or semi-processed product without much value addition, hence the returns were not as high as would be the case when exporting processed products.

There was also no Computerized Central Data Base for Cotton Fibre Analysis Laboratory and Bar Code Labelling Systems which made it difficult to align with other countries on cotton products.

The TRF resources therefore came as an important starting point to support and promote many small-scale farmers and producers to participate in the cotton value chain. The Mozambique Cotton and Oilseed Institute has been pivotal in providing possible solutions to the challenges faced by the country of exporting raw cotton and then import processed cotton for hospitals and other industries. The key solutions adopted include the following:

Provision of Equipment to the Small Scale Textiles Initiative

One of the key issues that the Mozambique Cotton and Oilseeds Institute decided to work on was an initiative aimed at the provision of equipment to a Small-Scale Textiles Promotion Centre through the acquisition of manual tools for cotton processing from Ethiopia. These tools would empower small producers, particularly women, to process cotton and generate an income.

The initiative was aimed at contributing towards processing new local cotton products and by-products, thus contributing towards the filling of gaps in the cotton value chain. Further, the initiative would also, serve as a model for encouraging and sensitising big cotton companies to host or replicate the initiative in their areas of operation.

As a result, the Namialo Centre for Cotton Small-Scale Promotion (CEPAAN) was established and equipped with five tool-kits for artisanal textiles capable of producing 1,000 metres of yarn per member and 60 metres of textile (12m/machine). Additionally, a vehicle was provided to CEPAAN in order to facilitate the Centre's logistics.

CEPAAN was inaugurated by the Minister of Agriculture and Food Security, now the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development in November 2019 (fig 1).





Fig. 2. Images of CEPAAN inauguration by the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development.

Training

At CEPAAN, trainees were trained in artisanal spinning and weaving techniques, 30 associated producers from the family sector (17 women and 13 men) associated with the National Cotton Producers Forum (FONPA).

Production

The main CEPAAN products are textiles for several uses such as scarfs and tablecloths. Until then, 160 metres of textile had been produced, corresponding to 100 scarfs as part of the learning and improvement process. The products are being exhibited at national fairs where appropriate. The most recent exhibition took place at the launch of the cotton-seed marketing campaign in Monapo, in July 2020 (Fig. 2). More attractive markets are being identified for exhibition and sale of the products, as well as the establishment of economic partnership agreements with textile producing countries.

The development of a Computerised Central Data Base for Cotton Fibre Analysis Laboratory Results and Bar Code Labelling Systems was a critical component of the Cotton and Textile value chain development system.



Fig. 3 Exhibition of the cotton fibre artisanal processing at the launch of the cotton-seed marketing campaign in Monapo (June 2020).

Immediate Benefits

- (i) The quality of the yarn is improving and, consequently, the quality of the textile produced is also increasing, enabling it to reach a sustainable trade value, in accordance with market requirements.
- (ii) Continued efforts to identify mechanisms to ensure CEPAAAN self-sustainability. Partnerships have already been established with Primavera Partner Developer and Hotel Cardoso for easiness of the commercialisation process of the textiles in quantity and quality previously agreed. It is expected that 5,000 metres of textiles for trade will be produced before the end of this year, while the market is consolidated;
- (iii) Continuation of a programme for the establishment of initiative replicas in all cotton producing areas;
- (iv) Continuously add value to cotton seed production;
- (v) Increase producers' incomes; and
- (vi) Computerised Central Data Base for Cotton Fibre Analysis Laboratory Results and Bar Code Labelling Systems.

Lessons Learnt

Replication of the Artisanal Textiles Initiative

The key lesson learnt relate to the capability to replicate such cotton artisanal textiles initiative in the cotton producing areas. The first such effort took place in the Niassa Province (Cuamba) in partnership with a private company called JFSSAN, where 30 associate members benefited from training mainly for young women in cotton fibre spinning and weaving (See fig 3 pictures).

The first weaving prototype was produced at national level with daily production capacity of 12 metres of cotton fibre textile. During the experimental phase, 50 metres of textile were produced, corresponding to 12 pieces, and it is expected that two additional weaving machines will be produced until December 2020 in order to increase production.

The focus of the initiative is the experience of Portugal that already has the use of artisanal textiles as a consolidated culture due to the advantage it has for human health and domestic economy, considering that a 50cm scarf can be sold for €35.

Another replication of this initiative is anticipated in Montepuez District in Cabo Delgado Province in partnership with SNV. In order to operationalise this initiative, a draft specific project proposal and a Memorandum of Understanding have been prepared, and are waiting for the project approval and subsequent signature. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the process has been interrupted.



Fig.4 Training in the artisanal textiles replica in Cuamba.

Building and identifying Potential Partners as a result of the TRF Project

The Mozambique Cotton and Oilseed Institute has learnt to build and identify reliable partners, who have agreed to cooperate with Mozambique in continuously improving the cotton and textile sector. There will be institutional collaboration and support in various areas including skills development and training. So far such cooperation initiatives have been found in Indonesia and India.

Mozambican technical mission (DNI/MIC and IAOM/MADER) to Indonesia was aimed at exchanging experiences in areas linked to institutional coordination for cotton value chain development, textile and apparel industry in Mozambique, and cotton, textile and apparel sectors institutional development.

The Mozambican technical mission to India (IAM e DNI) sought to explore the cotton value chain in India as part of a study about the cotton, textile, apparel implementation plan strategy; as well as learn from the Indian experience regarding the structuring and performance of the cotton value chain, and develop technical and financial partnerships for the development of the cotton value chain in Mozambique.

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Namibia Enterprises Benefit from Targeted Sector Grants

The SADC Trade Related Facility (TRF) assisted Namibia's Industrial Upgrading and Modernisation Programme (IUMP) with the awarding of industry grants to qualifying enterprises. Fifty companies were identified and subsequently awarded out of 295 applicants. The IUMP is an agenda of the Ministry of Industrialisation, Trade and SME Development aimed at improving production and supply capacity, efficiency and competitiveness of Namibian owned manufacturing firms.

The IUMP was established as a national extension of the sub-regional IUMP for SADC, with the objectives of improving the competitiveness of local industries; contribute to the strengthening of industrial capacities of Namibian Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs); diversify national value-addition; enhance capacities for job creation; support efforts that reduce poverty; and to achieve long-term presence in the international marketplace.

The programme provides targeted support in areas such as diagnostic studies and upgrading plans; supply and value chain analysis and management; technical training and coaching; product and market development, standards and quality management of new operations and maintenance techniques in the production cycle; production costs analysis; product upgrading; quality control and organising production lines among others.

Government's decision to establish the IUMP is based on its objective to significantly improve the current status of the Namibian manufacturing sector. Currently, the manufacturing sector accounts for about 10% of Namibia's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Yet, it is the largest employer in the productive sector after agriculture. Therefore, the Government of Namibia recognises the important role that manufacturing has in achieving its long-term developmental goals.

Manufacturing-sector strategies for Namibia's Fifth National Development Plan (NDP5), the third five-year implementation plan towards Vision 2030, include increasing manufacturing and value

addition; creating value-chains of production; increasing labour productivity; imports substitution for agro-processed goods and developing a comprehensive economic incentives framework.

Therefore, the desired outcomes have been identified for increasing the contribution of the general manufacturing sector from N\$17.8 billion (about US\$1,2 billion) in 2015 to N\$20.8 billion (US\$1,4 billion) by 2020 and further increasing the contribution of the manufacturing sector in combination with other non-government services sectors to 60% of GDP and achieving a competitiveness score of 4.2 by 2020.

Unfortunately, Namibia's target of being the most competitive economy in Africa received a setback when the country's ranking on the World Economic Forum's Competitiveness Index fell by six places to 90 in the 2017/18 report. This placed Namibia as the seventh most competitive economy in Africa, one place lower than in 2016/17. The country's score fell from 4.02 in 2016-17 to 3.99 in the 2017/18 report. However, in the 2018/2019 report, Namibia significantly improved to a score of 4.0 that inches the nation closer to its target of 4.2. Namibia is now third on the continent, second to Mauritius and South Africa respectively.

Given the agenda set out by the Government and the aforementioned conditions, Namibia has considerable potential for investment in manufacturing products that are currently not being produced or produced in low volumes. The IUMP's Industry grant scheme set out to ameliorate Namibia's level of industrialisation by targeting 11 growth sectors namely game meat and value added wildlife products; hides, skins, leather and wool products; metal fabrication; charcoal and other value added bush products; gemstones and jewellery; cosmetics and pharmaceuticals; fish processing and value added blue economy products; forest-related manufacturing (inclusive of handicrafts); agro-horticultural food processing; dimension stones processing; and the refrigeration and air-conditioning sector.



Figure 1 Tuli Line Products benefited under the Cosmetics and Pharmaceuticals sector following an impressive application submission

The evaluation committee of the IUMP concluded the function to enhance productivity and competitiveness of selected firms, focusing on firm level diagnosis and implementation of supply-side interventions under the SADC Trade Related Facility (TRF) Project by evaluating 261 applications. The evaluation and grant scheme fall under Intervention 8: Enhancing Industrial Development; Output 8.2: Interventions to enhance productivity and competitiveness developed and implemented including participation in regional value chains under Activity 8.2.2, and Activity 8.2.3. the financial envelope for the grant. Upon analysis, firms were awarded amounts varying from N\$150,000 (US\$10 714) to N\$450,000 (US\$32 143) out of a total budget allotment of N\$7,720,550 (US\$551 468) or an estimated €408,000.



Figure 2 Six charcoal producing firms benefited from the grant. Savannah Makara currently supplies South African markets

Firms were diagnosed according to their level of readiness to receive the IUMP's technical support in order to grow their businesses. Firms had to meet basic requirements such as being in operation for at least two years, being a majority Namibian owned entity, maintaining a positive net worth for the year under review and being able to contribute 15% of the grant amount. The interventions under the IUMP grant scheme are either in the form of "soft" or "hard" support, or both, as follows; hard in the form of equipment purchase and soft in terms of technical training; diagnostic studies and

developing comprehensive upgrading plans; new operations and maintenance techniques in the production cycle; product development and improvement; marketing and export promotion; technology upgrading; standards compliance and production cost analysis.

During the process of firm level diagnosis, the IUMP utilised the database and analysis tool developed for the IUMP and also funded under the SADC TRF Project to capture and track all firms, including the firms that did not qualify for the industry grant yet demonstrated potential.



These firms were then referred to EMPRETEC, another project being implemented by the Ministry of Industrialisation and Trade to provide mentorship and business advisory services to micro, small and medium-sized enterprises.

Award winner Mr. Meinholf Hamutenya is the owner of Tumbu Tumbu, a firm that processes a variety of vegetables. Mr. Hamutenya drove 700km from the north-eastern town of Rundu to the capital city, Windhoek, to receive his contract. When asked why he did not simply refer to his regional offices in Rundu, Mr. Hamutenya said, “I wanted to come see you people, face-to-face and look you in the eye when expressing my appreciation. This assistance could not have come

at a better time.”

The awarding of 50 enterprises across 13 out of 14 of Namibia’s widely-spread out regions demonstrates the success of the IUMP in selecting firms in a regionally-inclusive manner. This is a noteworthy achievement given Namibia’s large inequalities where wealth and opportunity tends to centre around the capital city, the port city and towns in the northern part of the country. Disappointingly, the large southern region of Hardap did not produce a beneficiary. This situation informs the IUMP that increased strategies to stimulate manufacturing in the southern part of the country is needed for future interventions.

Gender participation in the scheme was encouraging with 18 out of the 50 firms being jointly or wholly owned by women. And, two firms are owned by persons with physical disabilities.



Figure 3 **Tameka** is a woman-owned jewellery company. This beneficiary has a sophisticated website to promote her products

The IUMP has learnt valuable lessons from this undertaking to enhance Namibia's industrial development. The outcomes of this grant scheme and the subsequent coaching and advising are expected to be favourable based on the strong business profiles of the selected firms. The overwhelming response from the business community is indicative of Namibia's persistent lack of funding for SMEs. According to the Global Competitiveness Report for 2019, Namibia ranks 102 out of 141 countries on the World Economic Forum's Competitiveness Index in its ability to finance SMEs. Therefore, two processes need to be strengthened. Firstly, it needs targeted interventions that provide sectoral support in order to strengthen enterprises by addressing the key constraints to businesses starting and their sustainability. Secondly, the country needs financial institutions to expand their client base to include more SMEs. In this way, it can better attract and resource Namibia's SMES as its agenda to industrialise depends on it.

Mr. Mase Mupatami, a young charcoal producer and grant recipient, said that he applied for the grant in order to set up a proper processing plant. He stressed, "SMEs should continue to take advantage of such assistance schemes because the benefits are two-fold. I benefit by growing my business and my clients also benefit from a better product."

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[1] Productive Competitiveness / Value Chain Development



Zambia Prioritises Small-Scale Mining Through the TRF Facility

Rufunsa – The Government of Zambia has, through the European Union-funded Southern African Development Community Trade Related Facility (TRF) Project, prioritised procurement of modern mining and panning equipment for small-scale miners.

This was confirmed by Honourable Christopher Yaluma, Minister of Commerce, Trade and Industry (MCTI), during the inspection and handover of the equipment to mining cooperatives in Rufunsa District which was witnessed by His Excellency, Dr Edgar Chagwa Lungu, President of the Republic of Zambia.

“The TRF project has procured gold mining and panning equipment at a cost of 70, 000 euros. The equipment include gold detectors, panning dishes, shaking tables, sluice boxes and a metallurgical refracted darkfield microscope and are being distributed to mining cooperatives in Rufunsa, Lumezi and Vubwi Districts,” he said.

Historically, mining has been the cornerstone of Zambia’s economy. However, not until recently, concentration has been on copper with mining of other precious and semi-precious stones receiving limited attention. Therefore, in an effort to expand and diversify mining activities, the Government has placed emphasis on the need to exploit other potential minerals and gold is one of the targeted minerals.

The ensuing interest in gold stems from increasing reports of illegal mining activities taking place in key parts of the country, including Central, Eastern and North-Western Provinces. This, therefore, encouraged the Government, through the EU-funded SADC TRF, to support geological audits in Nyimba and Petauke Districts of Eastern Province to ascertain the existence of gold deposits.

A geological survey report confirmed the existence of alluvial and lode gold deposits in Petauke District. The population engaged in illegal gold mining in the district was around 6700, according to Joseph Kanyama, president of the Federation of Small Scale Mining Associations of Zambia (FSSMAZ). However, the report reveals that most miners use un-mechanised tools to mine.



Picture above shows illegal gold mine pit along Rufunsa river.



“Miners utilise improvised ‘James tables’ for their processing operations but have no exploration tools or mechanised mining equipment. The excavation tools are picks and shovels only. For processing, 200-litre drums cut into half longitudinally are used as sluice boxes. Rubber mats are then laid at an angle so that as the gravel is being washed in the sluice box the minus material flows over the rubber mats leaving higher density material (including gold) on the mat. Any gold remaining on the mat is collected. Any plus size material unable to pass through the sluice box is discarded,” says the report.



Types of modern gold detectors

The hand-over was characterised with practical demonstrations of the panning process for alluvial gold. The demonstration was led by the cooperative members and Ministry of Mines. Ms Dories Daka, a youth and member of Pokela Mining Cooperative, showcased how to use the donated modern gold detector and sluice box.



Her presentation was complemented by a detailed explanation of the entire process by Mr Mutumbi Nguni, chief metallurgist. He explained that gold panning was mostly a manual technique of separating gold from other materials. He said that pans will be filled with sand and gravel that

may contain gold. The pan is submerged in water and shaken, sorting the gold from the gravel and other material. As gold is much denser than rock, it quickly settles to the bottom of the pan.

He further explained that the shaking table, on the other hand, was there to separate extra fine gold from the soil and other minerals through a process called gravity separation.



Cooperative members being trained on how to use shaking tables to extract gold.

Speaking after witnessing the handed over equipment and demonstration by the members of the cooperatives, President Lungu expressed happiness with the model used to empower artisan miners.



His Excellency, Dr Edgar Chagwa Lungu, President of the Republic of Zambia, verifying a gold nugget in Rufunsa District.

He said that the Government intends to promote responsible mineral production and supply chains by encouraging legalisation and formalisation of small-scale mining and trading.

“The formation of cooperatives is just one step in having organised structures for a sound governance system. Cooperation from the communities concerned and support from the local leadership were critical success factors in this exercise. The Government is counting on you to take leadership and guard the exploitation of this resource jealously, for the benefit of the local communities” said President Lungu.



Lesotho Upgrading Sanitary and Phytosanitary System

After almost two years of intervention from the SADC-EU TRF which started in 2017, the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security in the Kingdom of Lesotho, through the Department of Agricultural Research, has fulfilled some of the most critical requirements for international trade.

Lesotho acceded to the World Trade Organisation (WTO) membership in May 1995. Owing to this, the country agreed to be bound by the rules and regulations related to multilateral trade. On the other side, it became a contracting party to the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) in October 2013, which is the body that oversees all the plant health issues, particularly that enables smooth and safe trade. Acceding to these two international organisations was not enough, as the country had to observe requirements and standards for better trade facilitation, thus exporting and importing commodities that meet the international required Sanitary and Phytosanitary standards.

The SPS team (Phytosanitary and Quarantine Unit) had to create awareness about Sanitary and Phytosanitary requirements throughout the country targeting farmers and other relevant stakeholders. Ten awareness workshops were held in the 10 administrative districts of the country and in total 197 people participated in these workshops of whom 104 were women.

Engagement with other border agencies to ensure that they understand issues on SPS was done through combined training with customs officers and five officials were involved, of whom three were women. The unit also distributed promotional materials to retailers and vendors to educate them about the importance of SPS. Awareness creation was also enhanced through visiting points of entry and exit in the districts (Mafeteng, Leribe, Mohale's Hoek and Quthing). At all these points,



sensitisation of DAR staff after the launch clientele (retailers, clearing agents, exporters/importers and preferred traders) was undertaken as a means of raising awareness.

Regional Integration Significance

The project was aimed at shaping the country's international trade by ensuring smooth trade and opening up markets for citizens globally that have been hindered by a failure to comply with international standards, in particular SPS measures. Currently, the country, through SPS system, has gained the much-needed recognition to the point where bilateral trade extends to the trading partners in Europe (Germany and UK), Asia (India), United States of America and the SADC region, in particular, South Africa and Swaziland, sharing information and ironing out the differences concerning SPS matters. Beyond the success achieved to improve its SPS system with the help of EU funding under the TRF, the country will continue to progress in order to match best international practice when it comes to SPS matters. The growth of SPS in the Kingdom of Lesotho means the growth of the economy of the country by protecting its agriculture and natural resources against pests.

From the SPS team perspective, success has been anchored on the support from the line ministry, understanding from the departmental management, and good planning of activities from the Unit. This enabled the timely consumption of the EU-SADC TRF funds, even though allocation did not cover all our requirements. The positive response we got from the stakeholders also contributed to the success as the catchwords were international trade and plant health, which are the major challenges to many stakeholders, particularly in the farming fraternity.

Few obstacles such as timing of the release of funds, which sometimes affected the schedule of activities, were encountered along the way but we managed to overcome them. Also, delays from the suppliers, particularly in delivering laboratory equipment, was experienced. Communication and timely reporting helped to iron out most of the challenges.

Allocation of a budget to SPS could have been done differently compared to Technical Barrier to Trade (TBT). DAR thinks the duration of the project could have been extended from the onset. Marketing of the TRF project could have been magnified compared with what has been the case.

SPS Border Inspection



The recruitment of two Phytosanitary border inspectors at two commercial borders (Maputsoe and Maseru) became the other immediate achievement of the project. Placement of the adequately equipped border inspectors, which are the first line of defence against the introduction and spread of plant pests into the country, was a milestone. The department managed to track the trend of plant-based commodities coming into the country with better-regulated flow. This changed the statistics of the number of Phytosanitary Import Permits which increased exponentially from an annual cumulative of 20 to 1 000 per annum, and for Phytosanitary certificates which increased from 100 to 400 plus annually.



Two inspectors and a SADC TRF official



SPS awareness at Caledon border

Improved Laboratory Facilities

Improved laboratory facilities and practices with contemporary equipment installed were another testimony to the success story of the project. This happened after the procurement and capacitation of the staff in certain aspects like the proper use of the High-Performance Liquid Chromatography (HPLC) (in the picture attached) equipment for the analysis of samples for pesticide residue and mycotoxins, as well as the use of other laboratory equipment. Establishment of new testing disciplines on plant microbiology, molecular biology, analytical chemistry, and nematology were introduced. Further setting up of border mini-labs for screening at points of entry, enhanced the capacity of the Agricultural Research Department to monitor plant and plant products movements.



High Performance Liquid Chromatography (HPLC)

Improved Regulatory Framework to Support SPS Activities

Harmonisation of the Agricultural Marketing Act that controls exports and imports in Lesotho with our regulatory framework to support SPS activities was discovered while trying to harmonise plant health regulations with other relevant legal frameworks while verging upon Plant Protection Policy and Act thereof. The improved regulatory framework facilitated the incorporation of the plant import permit and phytosanitary certificate into customs system (Asycuda) through harmonised system (HS), which has been a major achievement in promoting collaboration and close working relationship with customs officials.

Capacity Building Enhanced



Capacity building through training was also considered a landmark success. The target beneficiaries in this regard were technical and laboratory staff as well as newly recruited border inspectors. Three laboratory technicians and two inspectors, comprising three women and two men, undertook three-week intensive training on pesticide residue analysis through the use of HPLC at KEPHIS Centre of Excellence in Kenya (see picture). The same team also undertook a benchmarking study visit to the Zambia Agricultural Research Institute (ZARI), which helped to share experience on how a single window at the port of entry operates, particularly at the Chirundu One Stop Border Post bordering Zambia and Zimbabwe. The team

learned how the entire SPS system is run with emphasis on border and inland inspection.

The project aimed at improving not only the services rendered to the stakeholders from different walks of life but also targeted the traders to bring closer the facilities that will help them in reaching out to the international market with a convinced level of compliance. Largely the WTO article that talks to inspection and testing, by procuring equipment that will serve that purpose has attained the desired result.

Pictures below - Chirundu One Stop Border Post. On left, meeting with the plant health inspector and Customs officer. On right, traffic at the border

The project focused on addressing the following challenges;

2.1 Lack of SPS awareness within different stakeholders across the board. Institutions dealing with SPS matters have been there for quite some time but previously only the animal health sector was given priority in funding at the expense of plant health issues which had much less resources allocated in the national budget.

2.2 Ports of entry or borders have not been manned, hence there were no border inspectors to inspect plants and plant products as well as other regulated articles to guard against exotic plant pests and food safety challenges such as maximum residue levels or mycotoxins (aflatoxin). Quarantine facilities were therefore not available.

2.3 Poor laboratory facilities to test and identify plant pests. This also covers equipment and other amenities that help to comply and make scientific inferences to support the recommendations for use in international trade.

2.4 Lack of technical capacity within plant health inspectors in both quantity and quality. One of Lesotho's key challenges is the lack of technical capacity in terms of adequate numbers of trained and qualified staff in the entire plant health section handling SPS matters. This is largely due to high turnover of well trained staff leaving for greener pastures where there's better remuneration.

2.5 Lack of an appropriate policy and regulatory framework: For a long time, Lesotho has lacked an appropriate policy and regulatory framework to deal specifically with SPS matters and its institutional framework was not clearly defined.

The support of the TRF has assisted Lesotho address most of these challenges, however, the question of sustainability remains to be addressed as the project winds down.



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Beside the TRF support to enhance capacity on SPS issues, Lesotho also managed to access other initiatives in this area. One of the initiatives that expedited the accession of Lesotho to the IPPC in 2013 was the Phytosanitary Capacity Evaluation (PCE), which is a management tool, developed by the IPPC, which helped countries rapidly improve their National Plant Protection Organizations (NPPO) and entire phytosanitary system. Around 4 million maloti, which is equivalent to EUR400 000, was granted to the Department of Agricultural Research (DAR) to upgrade laboratory facilities, create public awareness on SPS countrywide, improve phytosanitary and quarantine (certification, testing and inspection) services as well building the capacity of the SPS staff. These were done to meet the international requirements and standards for smooth and safe trade.

The employees of the institutions have been keen to achieve good results from this project after many cases of failing to provide certain services to the clientele of DAR, which resulted in them failing to secure markets for their products. All these results were noted because of the enthusiasm shown by the institution, its plant protection team and from support provided by the following:



- the Government of Lesotho (pictured herein, the Principal Secretary, officiating the border inspection launch) and Steering Committee comprised of directors from each component;
- the project management unit which was fully available to the project; and
- the SADC Secretariat through its technical support and monitoring missions.

Principal Secretary officiating at the

Conclusion and Next Steps

The SADC TRF has taught us, as plant health team responsible for Sanitary and Phytosanitary issues, a lesson that nothing is impossible through teamwork. The SPS system was barely existing, but through the funding provided by the EU, we now have something to show regionally and internationally. Infrastructure development and capacity building enhanced, Lesotho is no longer lagging behind in terms of SPS issues as a result of financial assistance from the TRF Project.

To continue the foundation that has been laid by the TRF Project, DAR will continue to grow the system and human capacity, by so doing more market opportunities for Basotho who aspire to trade safely and smoothly regionally and internationally will be created. Compliance with SPS requirements will always be key thereby meeting international standards for both emerging and well-developed business persons in the country. DAR will continue to create awareness concerning SPS issues because the more people are informed the better the decision they make on exports and imports.

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MOZAMBIQUE STRENGTHENING MEASURES TO PROTECT PLANTS AND ANIMALS

The Trade Related Facilities Programme (TRF) has assisted Mozambique's Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, through the National Livestock Health and Biosecurity Directorate (DNSAB) and the National Livestock Development Directorate, on plant protection, animal health and the strengthening of the Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS).

The SPS deals with animal health, food safety and plant protection and each of these areas have continuously identified areas of concern that plague the region with regard animal and plant pests and diseases as well as potential food safety threats.

Regional guidelines have been developed in order to harmonise Member States approaches to matters that contribute towards the advancement of the region in the agricultural production sectors and on issues that threaten the region's food security and food export potential. Of high importance to regional collaboration on SPS matters is the existence of well-resourced national SPS committees from which emanate contributions to the regional agenda. As the region moves towards a more industrialised future, SPS matters will be prioritised in order to secure market access to the SADC produced commodities.

TRF is a programme funded by the European Union-funded through SADC. Due to the training that took place since the TRF implementation, the Phytosanitary Inspectors in Mozambique now execute their work in a more harmonised way with the SADC regional guidelines and standards, as well as meeting the regulations applicable to border processing of several commodities and in particular the application of the lists contained in Tables 4 and 5 of the Seed Harmonised Regulations (RHS).

Inspector Celso Vitória, of the Namaacha Phytosanitary Inspection Post, in the south of Mozambique, said, "The reduction of non-conformities on issuing certificates improves the credibility with international trading partners in accordance with the conventions that we have signed."

World Trade Organisation (WTO) notification system



Mozambique has sent 15 Notifications to the World Trade Organisation (WTO), African Union (AU) and Ping Alert. The most relevant of these were the WTO's regarding the temporary banning on the importation of all meats, meat products and meat derived products originating from Brazil enterprises with codes SIF 825, SIF 2155, SIF 3459, SIF 3796, SIF 4460, in this way safeguarding food security.

The temporary banning of wild birds, poultry and poultry products, day old chicks, table eggs and fertile eggs domestic imports from the Democratic Republic of Congo, South Africa and Zimbabwe in order to protect animals and humans susceptible of getting the Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI), safeguarded the poultry industry and consumers in the country.

In the context of the world health crisis after measures adopted by other countries in the world in order to prevent COVID-19 infection and spreading of the virus, leading to the strict limitation and control of commercial flights, the National Plant Protection Organisation (NPPO) in Mozambique communicated the exceptional measures adopted to ensure the supply of food, particularly plants and vegetable products, thus ensuring national sovereignty.



G/SPS/N/MOZ/4

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Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures

Original: English

NOTIFICATION OF EMERGENCY MEASURES

1.	Notifying Member: MOZAMBIQUE If applicable, name of local government involved:
2.	Agency responsible: Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security (MASA)
3.	Products covered (provide tariff item number(s) as specified in national schedules deposited with the WTO; ICS numbers should be provided in addition, where applicable): Live domestic and wild birds, eggs, fresh and frozen poultry meat, unheated products derived from birds
4.	Regions or countries likely to be affected, to the extent relevant or practicable: <input type="checkbox"/> All trading partners <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Specific regions or countries: Democratic Republic of the Congo, South Africa, Zimbabwe



G/SPS/N/MOZ/5

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Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures

Original: English

NOTIFICATION

1.	Notifying Member: MOZAMBIQUE If applicable, name of local government involved:
2.	Agency responsible: Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security National Directorate of Veterinary Epidemiology Department
3.	Products covered (provide tariff item number(s) as specified in national schedules deposited with the WTO; ICS numbers should be provided in addition, where applicable): This notification refers to an outbreak of Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) which affects live bovine, goats, sheep, swine, and their fresh meat

In the context of all fisheries products, derivatives and by-products, food and aquatic foods for aquatic organisms produced by aquaculture for human consumption and food for aquaculture aquatic organisms, the general regulations project is ongoing with the aim of hygienically sanitary controlling food products of aquatic origin with the objective of adapting them to the new fisheries law in force, allowing for the inspection of fish to adequately fulfil its mission, including the need for collaboration with other government institutions and harmonisation with international legislation..

Improvement in Laboratory Capacity

One of the important achievements is, certainly, the increased laboratory capacity to contribute to pests and diseases introduction and dispersion prevention assured by a better laboratory diagnostic, with the acquisition of equipment and availability of reagents to face the present challenges.



1. Binocular Optical Microscope allows for greater speed in the identification of phyto-pathogenic species.



2. Autoclave ensures efficiency in the preparation of culture media.



ZAMBIA ADOPTS TOOLS AND PROTOCOLS ON HONEY AND FISH TO ENHANCE EXPORTS

The Zambian Government is working towards diversification of the country's economy from traditional export commodities such as copper to non-traditional ones.

Honey and fish have been identified as some of the commodities because of their potential of earning the much-needed revenue for the country. On the local, regional and international markets, Zambian honey and fish and fish products have a growing demand because of their organic nature.

Zambia exports honey to regional markets such as Botswana and South Africa, and to European countries, including Germany and the United Kingdom. Demand for Zambia's fish and fish products is also growing both for domestic and export markets.

To ensure that food standards are complied with and residues are monitored correctly, Zambia has with respect to honey, developed tools and protocols for this purpose. Aquaculture is a growing industry in Zambia and the earlier the industry adopts the correct standards of the products, the better for capturing export markets.

It is imperative that the honey produced in Zambia meets the food safety standards in accordance with the Codex Alimentarius. The honey has to be safe from any form of contamination such as microbiological and chemical hazards. In this regard, the Zambian Government, with its collaborating partners, is working to establish various Residue Monitoring Plans for a number of high potential non-traditional exports meant to give confidence to both the domestic and export markets.

So far the Fish Residue and Honey Residue Monitoring Plans have been developed under the EU-funded SADC TRF Project to prepare Zambia export products that meet the international market requirements and demand.

Economic diversification policy, in particular one focused on increasing non-traditional exports such as natural honey and fish and fish products, required the development and adoption of tools and protocols to monitor residues in these products in order to access regional and international markets.

Chemicals that are present in foodstuffs can be intentionally added (i.e. food additives, or the illegal addition for adulterant purposes), are present as residues from defined uses (e.g. pesticides and veterinary drugs) or are contaminants (formed during production, processing, and storage or stemming from the environment). Governments operating a food safety system do so to ensure that food available to the population is safe and compliant with established regional and international standards.



The need to produce unique organic products that are free of contaminants and other residues is a mammoth challenge as it involves designing the tools and protocols to assess the products throughout the production process and ensure that the products adhere to the required regional and international standards.

Key to the TRF Project's success in assisting Zambia put up the necessary tools and protocols to effectively monitor residues in natural honey and fish and fishery products, were the following:

- (i) The commitment and willingness of the University of Zambia (UNZA), the Zambia Bureau of Standards (ZBS) and other tertiary institutions in providing competent experts to the project.
- (ii) The involvement of local experts in developing these monitoring tools and protocols guarantees their sustainability and the continued monitoring by these institutions in future.

- (iii) These institutions developed training manuals for aquaculture and UNZA has integrated these into its training programme, thus buttressing sustainability of the sector in Zambia.

Immediate Benefits

The requirement for residue monitoring tools and protocols generated a need for research which resulted in an analytical method that was applied to both honey and fish residue monitoring. Zambia has developed the Residue Monitoring Plans for honey and fish.

For honey the key requirement is that the honey has to be truly organic and therefore the monitoring has to be robust and intense to achieve this goal. As a result, there is an increase in demand for the Zambian Organic Honey within SADC and in the EU countries. Additionally, on the honey residue monitoring side, a number of outputs and impacts have been scored. The honey residue monitoring technical team that has been established through this TRF project has been able to develop and re-calibrate honey sampling instruments in various districts where naturally occurring honey production exists.

What has changed is that, in the past honey residue monitoring was not well structured and lacked a well, coordinated system. The honey RMP has been developed to manage this deficiency.

From the formulated Fish Residue Monitoring Plan-Tools (FRMP-Tools), it has come out clearly that the tools will be able to cover primary production (inclusive of both Capture and Aquaculture – with the latter being more intensive covering brooding stock, fry ponds, nursery ponds basically consisting of hatcheries, to grow out ponds or cage culture) to various secondary production and processing levels. Further, the tools are able to handle feed mills, and fish related processing plants and establishments across the value chain. Primarily, these tools have been developed to guarantee safe fish and fishery products from harvest to the table by monitoring, assessing and determining the possibility or likelihood of residues entering the fish value chain. Further, these tools have been designed to be applied also at Point of Entries (PoEs). Thus the tools are able to be used by those intended for or engaged in the handling, production, storage, distribution, export, import and sale of fish and fishery products locally, regionally or to and from international markets.



Visitation and collection of feed samples from one of the manufacturers.

Regional Integration Significance

The significance of this project in the region is that Zambia is now producing products that comply with the international food standards and has already established key markets for these products and more so for organic honey which is already being exported to the EU and UK markets. Fresh water fish is gaining in demand in the region and the project is going to enhance Zambia's export competitiveness for fish and fish products in the near future as production levels increase. Fish was declared a major food product by the African Union and this boards well for Zambia to develop its aquaculture in order to meet future increases in demand for fish.



Collection of sediments from (a) non-boat landing areas and (b) boat landing areas by the research team



An traditional bee hive being showcased

Conclusions

Zambia has developed the Fish Residue Monitoring Plan (FRMP) and the Honey Residue Monitoring and Control Plan (HRMCP) that are critical in the implementation of an efficient food safety system. These tools have been developed under the SADC TRF Project through funding from the EU. These tools will be instrumental in ensuring that Zambian honey and fish commodities meet the regional and international standards. This is important for assuring public health and safety as well promoting trade. However, for effective implementation of these RMPs, there is a need to strengthen laboratory analytical capacities.

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SMALL-SCALE FARMERS, PROCESSORS BENEFIT FROM NEW FOOD SAFETY TRAINING INITIATIVE IN ZAMBIA

There has been increased knowledge and appreciation of food safety among Small and Medium Enterprises in Zambia following the development of food safety modules by the Government, University of Zambia (UNZA) and the Zambia Bureau of Standards (ZBS).

This is positioning the SMEs to enter high-value market through improved product quality and safety, and compliance with international standards. In addition, these training modules are now part of the professional curriculum at the University of Zambia, thus ensuring sustainability of the intervention.

The programme has covered 32 training modules in food safety and quality management based on international standards and best practices were designed and implemented; 65 fish farmers; 71 dairy farmers and processors; 28 rice farmers; 25 pineapple farmers; 10 employees of Zambezi Pineapple factory; 10 board members and employees of Choma Dairy Co-operative. Two good agro-practices assessments and mentorship for certification were conducted.

These training modules covering prerequisite programmes (PrPs) for food safety such as good agricultural practices, good hygiene practices and good manufacturing practices and food safety management systems (Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points (HACCP)) are practical in orientation. They are aimed at improving the standard of hygiene in food operations and ultimately the safety and quality of food traded on the Zambian market. These training modules have since been institutionalised at UNZA and the country is now ready to provide continuous professional training to personnel in the food sector.

The SADC TRF, which is a technical and financial mechanism funded by the EU, provided up to €150,000 for UNZA and ZABS to undertake interventions in the key identified sectors which resulted in the development of the 32 modules. Key SME players in the sectors were engaged to inform the design of the training programme. Module development workshops were organised and subsequently training workshops for SMEs conducted. The developed modules provide additional resource for UNZA to use for its ensuing masters and targeted professional educational development programmes on food safety. To ensure a wider coverage, the modules will be offered through the Module E-learning platform.

The EU-funded SADC TRF enabled mobilisation and mutual collaboration of food safety experts from Government, academia and the private sector to design training modules and conduct training. Further, commitment of Government and implementation partners, especially in releasing their staff for this assignment, enabled smooth implementation of this intervention. Mutual collaboration of the food safety experts enabled development of modules at reduced cost.

The TRF project implementation unit at the Ministry of Commerce, Trade and Industry (MCTI) has been very efficient and effective in logistics planning and timely disbursements of funds.

A total of 205 farmers and agro-processors have been trained in prerequisite programmes for food safety in seven sites namely Mongu, Ikelengi, Rufunsa, Choma, Siavonga, Luanshya and Kabwe districts of Zambia. The PrPs were delivered to the targeted beneficiaries selected from four sectors namely Dairy, Rice, Aquaculture and Pineapple. Through this intervention, the SMEs are now confidently positioning themselves to access high-value markets.

The challenge

A number of needs assessment in both PrPs and Food Safety Management Systems in Zambia have identified, among other factors, lack of knowledge and skills in food hygiene and quality management as major constraints to production of safe food. As such, SMEs in Zambia have been facing many challenges in meeting market requirements for food quality and safety. This has then resulted in their products not being competitive in regional markets, despite preferential market access gained from regional economic integration initiatives. Previous training interventions have been done by interested stakeholders, including external donors, but have not been based on documented training materials which have erudite input from renowned academicians and practitioners operating in the food safety management jurisdiction.

This challenge prompted the need to design and implement capacity building training in prerequisites programmes and food safety management through a collaborative effort between the private sector, academia and government. This collaborative effort resulted in having about 32 modules being developed based on both old and contemporary quality and standards needs of industry.

Significance to the SADC regional economic integration agenda

The PrPs trainings have enabled small and medium-scale farmers and agro-food processors to identify food safety hazards and critical control points in their processes in order to effectively implement food safety management systems. They have further been mentored for product certification through HACCP awareness and gap assessments. Certification will enable the targeted beneficiaries become more competitive and enter regional and international markets.

This deliberate intervention by Government in the food industry has enabled SMEs with inadequate financial capital to access valuable food safety training. Moreover, the institutionalisation of the training modules at the University of Zambia will give an opportunity to SADC citizens to access these trainings. Specifically, this intervention enables Zambia to

effectively implement some provisions of the SADC Sanitary and Phyto-sanitary (SPS) Annex as well as commitments under the World Trade Organisation (WTO) SPS Agreement.

Key lessons learned

Key lessons learned, include:

- Participatory needs assessments and module development with the beneficiaries enabled identification of critical sector-specific training needs and general appreciation of the subsequent training programmes.
- Mutual collaboration and commitment of the experts from the Government, academia, and the private sector enabled development of modules at reduced cost.
- Deliberate government intervention in the food industry enables SMEs with inadequate financial capital to access valuable food safety training.
- Effective communication with the Project team, including timely release of funds, flexibility in budget adjustments.

A major obstacle encountered included language barrier with some of the participants. In future, it would be ideal to translate the training materials into local languages since a number of beneficiaries, especially at the primary production, are not well vested in the English language.

An essential element in implementing national food safety systems is having skilled manpower at all levels of the food value chain. For the SMEs, most of whom are involved in primary production (the first phase of the value chain), this requires appropriate and adequate knowledge and skills in implementing PrPs, which include Codes of Good Agriculture Practice, Codes of Good Animal Husbandry Practice, Codes of Good Manufacturing Practice, Codes of Good Transport and Storage Practice, etc. The training modules in PrPs and HACCP achieved under this TRF project will contribute to improved livelihoods and economic development through production of safe and quality food, thereby maintaining consumer confidence in the food system at domestic level and further promoting regional and international trade in food.

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[III]

Addressing Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT)



ESWATINI REWARDS EXCELLENCE

The Kingdom of Eswatini's Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Trade (MCIT) has, through the SADC TRF project, been able to run a Quality Awards Programme to the tune of \$50 000 for two consecutive years, complemented by additional Government funding.

The Quality Awards Programme is open to all organisations (large and small) in the public and private sectors.

MCIT introduced the Annual Quality Awards Competition on 26 October 2017 to promote an effective national quality environment for the business community in Eswatini. This was also, by extension, the execution of a decision made by the SADC Committee of Ministers of Trade and Industry in 2009 to implement a SADC Quality Award Competition aimed at encouraging businesses, private and public sector institutions to implement standards and quality procedures in their operations.

Winners from the national awards competitions would be eligible to be included in the SADC Annual Quality Awards competition. Eswatini opted to use the SADC TRF, which is a mechanism for financial and technical support granted to eligible SADC Member States, to assist them to implement regional integration commitments. The TRF is funded by the EU under the 10th European Development Fund (EDF) envelope.

The National Quality Infrastructure (NQI) is a critical enabler for any economy's integration into regional and global markets, and thereby promoting the country's sustainable economic development. The MCIT is charged with the responsibility of stimulating the capacity of businesses to produce goods and services that compete favourably in local, regional and global markets through adherence to national, international quality standards and regulatory requirements.

Eswatini Quality Awards Competition is an integral part of the Regulatory and Quality Policy (NRQP) approved by Cabinet in 2010 and its Implementation Plan (2013) and, as such, it has the necessary political ownership. In his statement at the 2018 Eswatini Quality Awards Ceremony, the Right Honourable Prime Minister Mr Ambrose Mandvulo Dlamini, stated that the hosting of

the event “signals the importance attached to excellence in the production of quality goods and services as a vehicle towards economic growth”.

The Quality Awards Competition has also been embraced by relevant stakeholders, particularly the private sector, as evidenced by the number of companies participating, especially micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs), rising to the challenge of competing on a national scale, thus embedding a quality culture in Eswatini.

Immediate benefits

Since the commencement of the Eswatini Quality Awards, there is a noticeable increase in quality awareness among the public and private sector organisations. For example, following participation in the competition, the National Tuberculosis Reference Laboratory (NTRL) and the National Molecular Reference Laboratory (NMRL) have improved implementation of their laboratory quality management systems and have now achieved accreditation. Accreditation is the process of providing recognition that an organisation is competent to perform certain tasks/tests. Accreditation determines the technical competence, integrity and impartiality of organisations providing conformity assessment services such as testing, calibration, certification, and inspection based on international standards.

Significance to the SADC regional economic integration agenda

The Eswatini Quality Awards Programme is part of the overall SADC agenda to enhance a quality culture in the region. Both the SADC Standardisation, Technical Regulations, Quality Assurance, Accreditation and Metrology, known as the Technical Barrier to Trade (TBT) programme, and the SADC Industrialisation Strategy and Roadmap (2015-2063) require Member States to implement measures such as national quality awards to stimulate competitiveness. Through their participation in the National Quality Awards Competition, Eswatini, companies are now active entrants in the SADC Quality Awards. In 2017, Eswatini Railways won the SADC Service of the Year award.

Key lessons learned

- That organisations/companies are progressively improving the implementation of the required standards/management systems.
- Comparatively companies are increasingly giving information and supporting documents without any fear.
- That there is an increase in the number of MSMEs and therefore a belief that the Government Strategy of supporting MSMEs and transforming the Kingdom of Eswatini’s economy to an export driven economy would be achieved through this programme.
- It was also noted that some organisations/companies still lag behind in the implementation of quality standards/management systems, hence the need to continue with the programme as a way of embracing the culture of quality.

Eswatini Quality Awards are one of the vehicles that support large enterprises and MSMEs to participate in local, regional and international markets. The quality awards programme will be sustainable as the Government of Eswatini has committed to providing resources towards this programme, considering the benefits realised from its implementation.

The Ministry will also embark on providing training programmes to assist organisations/companies to acquire knowledge and understanding of the relevant standards. There is a need for National Quality Infrastructure Institutions to provide subsidized services to the MSMEs.

Eswatini Quality Awards Categories

- **Category 1:** *Eswatini Company or Organisation of the Year, with wide implementation of the quality principles covering all essential key business elements;*
- **Category 2:** *Eswatini Product of the Year, awarded on the product that best reflects commitment to quality;*
- **Category 3:** *Eswatini Service of the Year, awarded on the basis of a locally-delivered service that best reflects a commitment to quality;*
- **Category 4:** *Eswatini Exporter of the Year, awarded on the basis of significant progress in commencing or expanding exports to new or wider markets by introducing quality in their company;*
- **Category 5:** *Eswatini Quality Ambassador of the Year, given to an individual that has made significant input into quality advancement within their organisation and Eswatini Quality Infrastructure at large; and*
- **Category 6:** *Eswatini Conformity Assessment Body of the Year, awarded on the basis of competence in implementing accreditation standards such as: ISO/IEC 17020 or ISO/IEC 17021 or ISO/IEC 17025 or ISO 15189.*

The **Call for Entry** was made through advertising, using both local newspapers and Eswatini TV. The adjudication process was conducted by professional judges coming from quality infrastructure institutions and other organisations who have massive experience in the quality standards and systems.

In 2017, 32 companies entered the competition, with the following receiving quality awards in their respective categories: Royal Swaziland Sugar Corporation Ltd; Eswatini Meat Industries (Pty) Ltd; Tintsaba Craft; Eswatini Railways; JR Modes (Pty) Ltd t/a; Bethel Court Vineyard Hotel; Eswatini Water Service Corporation (Micro Biology Laboratory & Chemistry Laboratory); and Ministry of Natural Resources and Energy (Fuel Testing Laboratory).

In 2018, there were 42 entrants to the contest, with Eswatini Railways; Eswatini Meat Industries; National Molecular Reference Laboratories, Lubombo Referral Hospital Ministry of Health and Swaziland National Tuberculosis Reference Laboratory scooping awards.



The Right Honourable Prime Minister Dlamini delivers his address during the launch of the National Quality Awards



Awards presented by His Excellency the Right Honourable Prime Minister Dlamini.



Group photo

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ENHANCING ZIMBABWE'S NATIONAL QUALITY INFRASTRUCTURE THROUGH APPROPRIATE POLICY FRAMEWORK

The Government of Zimbabwe has accessed Euro 1.4 million from the SADC TRF, funded under the EU's 10th European Development Fund (EDF), to address the challenge of fragmentation of the national infrastructure landscape.

One of the projects implemented by Zimbabwe is the development and implementation of a national quality policy. A consultant was engaged to facilitate the development of a National Quality Policy over a four-month period, employing an inclusive stakeholder consultative process. The process involved all the relevant role players and agencies in the SQAM sector and concluded with public stakeholder validation exercises. The outcome policy document, therefore, represents the first step towards development of a robust and modernised national quality infrastructure for Zimbabwe.

With the support under the SADC TRF, financed by the EU, Zimbabwe's Ministry of Industry and Commerce has now completed the drafting of the National Quality Policy. This is the basic Government instrument that sets out the objectives of the quality infrastructure system in relation to Standardisation, Quality Assurance, Accreditation and Metrology (SQAM). Over the years, fragmentation and duplication have characterised the National Quality Infrastructure in Zimbabwe.

The National Quality Policy aims to strengthen institutions to implement a harmonised institutional and regulatory framework for SQAM that meets international standards. The ultimate aim is to produce quality products and services, enabling Zimbabwe to exploit commercial opportunities available on the domestic, regional and global markets. Export markets are particularly important for the country to generate the much-needed foreign currency as well as participate in international value chains. The policy will benefit SQAM institutions and industry players through harmonisation and coordination of quality standards and related activities; consumers in terms of protection, food safety and environmental protection; and the economy in terms of industrial development and competitiveness.

The quality infrastructure in Zimbabwe, and especially the regulatory framework, has developed in an ad-hoc, non-coordinated and fragmented manner in the absence of a clear Government policy framework. The result was the emergence of a national SQAM framework with entrenched restrictions aligned to institutional mandates that hinder rather than support trade, such as

overbearing and costly licences and documentation. The absence of a national policy, which is harmonised to international standards, also created challenges for the country to fit into the broader SADC SQAM agenda and compliance with international quality standards and trade rules. The effective participation of key institutions, including the Ministries of Lands, Agriculture, Rural Resettlement and Climate Change and Industry and Commerce, Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Health and Child Care; the Department of Livestock and Veterinary Services, Department of Research and Specialist Services, Government Analyst Laboratory; Plant Quarantine and Inspection Services, National Biotechnology Authority, Department of Environmental Health; National Metrology Institute; and Standards Association of Zimbabwe, was key in the drafting process.

The immediate benefit of the intervention is the production of an acceptable policy document that sets in motion a coordinated development of the national quality infrastructure. An inclusive consultative engagement with relevant stakeholders has contributed to increased awareness of the pivotal role of quality in building the foundation for effective trade and to serve Zimbabwe's socio-economic development. The development process was also aimed at breaking entrenched positions around protectionism and 'business as usual' mentality towards a culture of competitiveness and commitment to change. In the long term, the benefit would accrue to consumers through consumption of quality goods through local production as well as imports generated through cross border and international trade.

Significance to the SADC regional economic integration agenda

The National Quality Policy has been developed within the context of the SADC integration agenda, specifically establishing an environment conducive to meeting Zimbabwe's commitments under the SADC Annexes on Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) and Sanitary and Phyto-Sanitary (SPS) measures. This re-engineered quality policy framework will facilitate the fulfilment of the country's regional and international commitments in the areas of SQAM. It will also facilitate the country's implementation of the regional trade and industrialisation strategy, placing it on par with neighbours and key trading partners.

The major lessons learnt in the drafting of the National Quality Policy was that the participation of stakeholders, including the private sector and non-governmental stakeholders, is crucial in order to develop an acceptable policy document and have to work in a coordinated manner to achieve an efficient quality system for the country. Linking national quality policy with regional and international frameworks is key to the promotion of regional and international trade and enhancement of compliance with associated commitments. The draft National Quality Policy is undergoing the internal Government processes for it to be officially launched. After formal adoption, the policy implementation process will be taken to its logical conclusion by elaborating an implementation action plan and activities. In addition, it is important to give legitimacy to the quality policy framework through appropriate legislation, which will entail the review of all current legislation, amending or developing new ones, and then promulgation. Continued support will be an important enabler for this process going forward.

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Seychelles Helping Business Trade Fairly - Drafting a Legal Framework for Trade Remedies

In June 2018, the Trade Department, in the Ministry of Finance, Trade, Investment and Economic Planning, with support of funding provided under the Trade Related Facility (TRF) a Southern African Development Community (SADC) programme financed by European Union, undertook a project to develop a national legal framework on trade remedies encompassing anti-dumping, safeguards and countervailing measures. The first phase involved numerous consultations, with all relevant stakeholders, such as the Fair Trading Commission and the Seychelles Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and after which a draft legislation on trade remedies was developed. A National validation workshop on the development of the legal framework for the trade remedies covering the three components of trade defense systems, was held at the Eden Bleu Hotel on 13th August 2018.



Getting down to business; training workshop for private sector on Trade Remedies for Business.

The challenge

As a small developing, island country, with limited economies of scale, the local industry is often faced with certain adversities brought about by an increasingly globalised trade environment. This may result in challenges in particular for the micro, small and medium enterprises, in the face of increased importation of goods and services.

Enabling solution

It was therefore found necessary for Seychelles to have a trade remedies legislation to provide the domestic industry with a recourse for any negative impact that may be caused by import surges, subsidies and/or dumping of a particular product in its territory. In this respect, the establishment of a national legal framework on trade remedies is being developed to address these issues among others with a view to balance the trading environment and promote fair trade.

Key enablers of success

The first phase involved consultations, with all relevant stakeholders who were the key enablers for the success of the assignment, such as the Fair Trading Commission and the Seychelles Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and after which a draft legislation on trade remedies was developed as well as the necessary working procedures. The second phase focused on developing the capacity of the Seychelles Investigation Unit and relevant stakeholders to understand the role of trade remedies and to ensure effective implementation of the laws once in force as well as capacity enhancement in terms of use of software and equipment for the Investigation Unit.



All attention; Mr. Gustav Brink takes staff from various agencies through their paces during a training workshop on Trade Remedies.

Achievements to date

The outputs achieved so far include the following:

1. The draft Trade Remedies legislation and a brochure with further information on trade remedies. These can be accessed here:
<http://www.seychellestradeportal.gov.sc/news/seychelles-%E2%80%98steps-towards-drafting-its-first-legal-framework-ever-trade-remedies>
2. Capacity building for officials serving on the Investigation Unit on various aspects of trade remedies;
3. Procurement of equipment and software for the Investigation Unit.

Conclusion and next steps

Trade Defence Legislation and Operational Regulations: were finalised and have been submitted to the Attorney General's office to align with the constitution before presentation to Parliament and this output has been achieved. A virtual Trade Defence Investigation Unit was established, trained and equipped.

For any further queries or comments on the draft legislations please send an email to enquirywto@finance.gov.sc.



ESWATINI DEVELOPS EPA IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN

Eswatini has utilised the SADC Trade Related Facility (TRF) towards its ambition to effectively implement the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) by developing an EPA Implementation Strategy and Action Plan.

The TRF is an EU-funded mechanism for financial and technical support to eligible SADC Member States to assist them implement their commitments under the SADC Protocol on Trade and the SADC-EU EPA. In June 2016, Eswatini together with other SADC countries namely Botswana, Lesotho, Mozambique, Namibia and South Africa signed an EPA with the EU, providing Eswatini with an immediate duty-free quota-free market access to the EU market. Eswatini, together with its partners in the Southern African Customs Union (SACU), namely Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia and South Africa, has removed duties on around 86% (fully for 74.1 and partially for 2.5%) of imports from the EU.

The SADC-EU EPA, if effectively implemented, holds potential in Eswatini's economic transformation journey towards a dynamic and competitive economy, with high value addition, export diversification in which the trade sector is an engine for sustainable growth and development.

Eswatini's capacity to utilise benefits offered under the EPA is limited by several factors, including insufficient production capacities; narrow export base and lack of competitiveness; limited information about the EU market; inadequate and inappropriate quality and standards' infrastructure and technology, amongst others. Accordingly, this EPA Implementation Strategy and Action Plan is elaborated to address identified challenges and translate the obligations undertaken under EPA into actions towards realising benefits, particularly from improved access to the EU market.

As part of the Eswatini SADC TRF project, a consultant was recruited to develop Eswatini EPA Implementation Strategy and Action Plan (EIS & AP). This development was enabled through the following key approaches:

- An inclusive stakeholder consultative approach, involving all national actors in the EPA implementation process.
- Anchoring and aligning the EPA Implementation Strategy and Action Plan to key official policy framework of Eswatini, including the National Development Strategy (NDS) 2022; the Industrial Development Policy; Investor Road Map; Aid for Trade Strategy; National Trade in Services Strategy & Action Plan; National Export Strategy; the Draft National Trade Policy and Action Plan; Eswatini Investment Policy; Small and Medium Enterprise Policy; National Cooperative Development Policy; National Regulatory and Quality Policy; and the National Regulatory and Quality Action Plan.
- Aligning the EPA Implementation Strategy and Action Plan to regional, international and multilateral agreements of which Eswatini is an integral part, namely SACU, SADC, Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA), the WTO; and in particular the SADC-EU-EPA, amongst others.

Key enablers of success

A key enabler for the development and adoption of the EPA Implementation Strategy and Action Plan, was the level of increased awareness of the EPA, through an inclusive engagement with all relevant stakeholders, particularly those who tend to benefit from its effective implementation. The availability of TRF support enabled this consultative approach as well as the engagement of a technical expert to support the process. A clear EPA implementation as illustrated in the Fig.1 below underpinned the strategy development process:



Fig.1: EPA environment

Immediate benefits

The intervention has significantly raised EPA awareness among stakeholders, and in particular, the necessary ownership required for effective implementation. The implementation strategy has set out a clear vision, objectives and targeted support interventions to address the identified challenges in order to maximise the benefits from implementing the EPA. The following strategies and targeted interventions form part of the implementation action plan:

- ✓ Support programmes for addressing supply side constraints in export-oriented sectors to incentivise Eswatini production and trade with EU;
- ✓ Support programmes for enhancing export readiness of firms to exploit EU market opportunities;
- ✓ Support trade facilitation programmes to ensure easy movement of goods and services across borders;
- ✓ Support programmes to promote mobilisation of export-oriented investments inflows, especially from the EU market;
- ✓ Support programmes on strengthening sanitary and phyto-sanitary (SPS) measures and technical barriers to trade (TBT) infrastructure and capacity; Support programmes to promote private and public sector policy dialogue on EPA issues, and targeted EPA Communication and Visibility; and
- ✓ Capacity building programme on issues in the EPA rendezvous clause (Competition Policy, Public Procurement and Intellectual Property Rights), including services sector development in Eswatini; amongst others.

Thus, an immediate benefit relates to the realisation of a nationally owned strategy and action plan to guide an effective and efficient EPA implementation process in Eswatini, providing clarity on what needs to be done and how, as well as embedding strategies into the national development policy framework.

Significance to the SADC regional economic integration agenda

The national implementation strategy and action is aligned to the regional SADC-EU Implementation Strategy, thereby ensuring a coherent regional integration approach, and building on achievements made on this front, such as the consolidation of the SADC Free Trade Area (FTA) and the SADC Industrialisation Strategy and Roadmap (2015-2020).

Key lessons learned

The development of the Eswatini EPA Implementation Strategy and Action Plan was participatory, involving consultations with relevant stakeholders, particularly private economic operators. The process was also anchored in Eswatini's national development policies and strategies and those of the SADC and COMESA regions.

Conclusion and next steps

While it has been adopted, the strategy and action plan require a robust monitoring and evaluation to be undertaken at three levels – national/ multi-sectoral, industrial and firm level. Key performance indicators have been identified, such as number of exports product lines to EU, increase in production lines and volumes, volume of exports - increase in export earnings attributed to EPA, increase in investments attributed to EPA, ability to meet rules of origin and cumulation, number of firms exporting and rate of entry and exit into and from export market and complaints reported on exports to EU -due to non-compliance with standards.



ESWATINI COMPETITION COMMISSION UNDERGOES CULTURAL TRANSFORMATION

The Eswatini Competition Commission, through the SADC TRF, procured the services of the Pacific Institute Swaziland to assist the Commission with its organisational development needs. The Commission significantly required assistance in the area of coherent work flow processes to achieve optimal efficiency. Organisational development was cited as one of the key areas that this deficiency was attributable to, hence the request for assistance in this area under the SADC TRF.

The target beneficiaries of the organisational development work were the entire staff complement of the Commission with a slight bias on management, given that they would be required to drive the implementation of the outcomes of the project on completion.

The aim of this project was to analyze and improve the overall health of the organisation by coaching leaders to foster productive, innovative and accountable teams. It has also given support to employees to become aware of how their thought processes, talents and actions can support or inhibit positive outcomes.

The Commission was also able to procure the services of upgrading its website to enable greater interface and effective interactions with the Commission on a web based platform that is easy to access. Following the upgrade, the Commission has experienced greater ease of Communication with its stakeholders who use the website as their first port of call when seeking information from and about the Commission. There has also been greater use of the website in accessing the Commission's services, particularly the Consumer Protection Department. There has been a noticeable preference by users to the website over the Commission's social media pages, which speaks to the quality of the website.

The major challenge for the Commission was despite the fact that the Commission was operationalised in 2010, it continued to exhibit traits of an organisation at its infancy. During the development of the Commission Strategic Plan (2017/18-2021/22) an assessment was

conducted of the roles of the investigative and adjudicative functions for both competition and consumer issues.

The following issues were looked at in particular:

- (1) The level of stakeholder engagement efforts and results;
- (2) the Commissions performance culture and supporting systems;
- (3) human resources capacity in terms of leadership, management and technical acumen of its staff; and
- (4) the sufficiency and sustainability of funding lines.

Organisational culture drives behaviour and impacts performance of employees, it was therefore imperative to address the state of the organisational culture first in order to realise the desired agency growth, efficiency and effectiveness.

With regard to the website upgrade programme, the key challenge with the former website was that it was static and allowed for no user interface thus stakeholders could not interact well with the Commission through it. Yet in the digital age web-based platforms like website literally constitute virtual workstations where stakeholders can interact with organisations in the way they would had they physically visited the offices. This was disadvantageous to the Commission and it hindered its goals for advocacy of its work to its stakeholders as well as interacting with them on services they would require.

Enabling solution

The 12-month journey began with a cultural assessment that looked at how employees perceived the organisation's culture. The outcome of the assessment provided the factors contributing to the culture at the time, the outcomes of that culture as well as direction on the interventions implemented during the 12-month period. The cultural transformation programme's fundamental philosophy is that performance improvement starts first with the individual before it can migrate to the group and entire organisation. Therefore, there was a need for leadership and employee buy-in throughout this process.

One of the key enablers for this project's success was the openness of employees to assimilate the service as delivered by the Pacific Institute. At the beginning of the process this seemed unlikely but with each coaching and power session, employees began to trust the process and each other more. Employee feedback has transformed from feelings of demotivation and mistrust to a willingness to open up and feeling excited about the culture change journey and the future of the Commission.

Employees have therefore begun to relate more positively to one another and are able to plan and execute in a cooperative manner. This has been a key element in the success of the programme as it has resulted in increased commitment to the programme, employees prioritising the activities of the programme and even going as far as rescheduling their annual leave to ensure full participation in the programme.

The Commission's former website underwent a complete overhaul. In the process, two employees of the Commission were trained to operate the website. This allows for effective dissemination of information in real time, effective user interface as stakeholders are assisted in shorter turnaround times. Thus overall, it makes for a highly effective tool.

A key enabler for the website's success was the training of in-house personnel to operate it. This heightens that user interface ability tremendously. As information is fed in real time and queries, questions and comments received are acted on as soon as possible. It follows that the effective interaction ability of a website is key to ensuring its population.

Both interventions were funded exclusively by the SADC TRF and thus, their existence and success is for the major part, wholly attributable to that facility.

Towards regional integration

As the region becomes more integrated, the need for efficient and effective organisations becomes more pronounced as cooperation through common institutions and rules grow. It will be critical to harmonisation of competition law practice that the Eswatini Competition Commission is well placed to perform at the level of other similar organisations in the region. Scaling up the Commission's efficiency and effectiveness as an organisation will further this aim. It is also anticipated that the success of culture change programme will play a significant role in the Commission's ability to establish and maintain fruitful cooperative relationships nationally and regionally.

This will align the Commission's work to the regional efforts encapsulated in the SADC Declaration on Regional Cooperation in competition and consumer policies.

It is further critical that no state is left behind in terms of competence as Africa begins to unravel the workings of the single economic community that recently came into force, being the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). To realise the desired effects of the AfCFTA, organisations key to economic development and transformation such as Competition Authorities will have to be effective enough to carry through the tenets of economic development in regional economic communities.

Moving forward

A key realisation through the organisational change journey was the importance of commitment to consistency. To realise tangible change, this process took the form of a 12-month journey and it has been in these 12 months that gradual change has been realised and greater commitment to the process has been possible. This has taught the Commission that the process of change is one that is long-term and requires constant guidance, and that the change management process is one that should be maintained long after the experts are gone. Thus for future interventions, reliance on the experts should not outweigh the desire to get participants to commit to and own a process. Once the process is owned by participants, they can be constantly encouraged to deliver on that commitment. This is done until the participants are able to act independently. That is how real change can be realised.

Conclusion and next steps

The Commission has found the opportunities afforded to it under the TRF invaluable. The SADC TRF funded projects have assisted the Commission to work on patent challenges that the Commission faces, particularly that of its organisational culture. The interventions have enabled Commission employees to openly establish these issues and begin to address them. Going forward it is hoped that the lessons learnt from the interventions can serve as a solid base from which the Commission could foster engagement by the Commission staff on issues affecting organisation efficiency. From that engagement the tools learnt are used to cater to the constant evolution and/or dynamism of the organisation which will bring with it its own dimensions that will require change management.

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