



Public Affairs Section

U.S. Embassy, Gaborone, Botswana

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Press Release

SADC Sanitary and Phytosanitary Strategies for Improving Food Safety and Promoting Regional Trade

Gaborone, BOTSWANA: Today's event celebrated 12 months of cooperation between the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Secretariat's Sanitary and Phytosanitary Programme. The results of this collaboration are Regional Sanitary and Phytosanitary Strategies to ensure that consumers are being supplied with food products that are safe to eat, plants and animals are protected from plant pests and animal diseases and at the same time improving safe regional and international trade.

Senior staff of the SADC Secretariat, government officials, and representatives from regional and international organisations including the United States Embassy, USAID and the USAID/Southern Africa Trade Hub gathered at the SADC Secretariat for a ceremony to celebrate the hand-over of the recently completed Regional Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Strategies for Food Safety, Plant and Animal Health.

SPS measures protect humans, animals, and plants from diseases, pests, or contaminants. The SPS strategies developed seek to ensure that SADC Member States are able to assure that consumers are being supplied with food products that are safe to eat, while at the same time facilitating safe regional trade and integration.

The Regional SPS Strategies will strengthen the capacity of SADC's fifteen Member States to effectively manage sanitary and phytosanitary risks through implementing SPS measures that are consistent with international standards and best practices. The SPS strategies apply to all measures that may, directly or indirectly, affect trade between the Member States.

According to US Ambassador Miller, "The U.S. government believes improving SPS strategies will lead to increased trade flows in Southern Africa; promoting economic growth, creating jobs, and increasing the standard of living for hard working people across our region --- from the smallholder farmers who grow crops for the local market to the agribusiness producing food for export; from the truck drivers who ferry goods across borders to the traders and retailers who deliver these products to the consumer. Unlocking their economic potential starts with improving SPS standards and quality control."

The Director Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources, Ms. Margaret Nyirenda, SADC Secretariat noted that, “Implementation of the Regional SPS Strategies is a long-term undertaking for SADC Member States but adopting the sanitary and phytosanitary strategies and building the capacity of Member States to apply them will advance private business, trade, as well as large agribusiness and smallholder farmers in our region.”

By implementing robust and effective SPS measures and quality controls, SADC Member States will promote intra-regional trade in plants, plant products, animals and animal products, ensure food safety and better manage identified and emerging SPS related threats, and also improve access to international markets,

The SADC Secretariat will oversee the implementation of the Regional SPS Strategies within the framework of its regional SPS capacity building programs and will endeavor to mobilize resources for this purpose in collaboration with SADC Member States.

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Or visit:

<http://www.sadc.org>

The **Southern Africa Development Community (SADC)** is an inter-governmental organization headquartered in Gaborone, Botswana. Its goal is to further socio-economic cooperation and integration as well as political and security cooperation among 15 Southern African States.

<http://www.usaid.gov/southern-africa-regional>

The **United States Agency for International Development (USAID)** is the lead U.S. Government agency that works to end extreme global poverty and enable resilient, democratic societies to realize their potential.

<http://www.satradehub.org>

USAID’s Southern Africa Trade Hub is a team of regional and international experts based in Gaborone, Botswana and Johannesburg, South Africa, working to enhance economic growth and food security through trade.