

# SUCCESS STORY

## Ensuring Food Safety & Plant Health

### USAID developed SPS Strategies for the benefit of 15 Member States in the Southern Africa region



*US Ambassador to Botswana Earl Miller presents the SADC Regional SPS Strategy to Willie Shumba and Margaret Nyirenda of SADC*

The Southern African Development Community (SADC) is an inter-governmental organization designed to support socio-economic cooperation and integration as well as political cooperation among 15 southern African countries: Angola, Botswana, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. SADC was established in its present form in 199 and has headquarters in Gaborone, Botswana.

SADC is responsible for many initiatives that support cooperation and mutual benefit among its member nations, including the SADC Free Trade Area as well as 27 different legally binding protocols, including SADC Protocols on Trade, Development, Energy, and Gender. USAID's Southern Africa Trade Hub works closely with the organization on a number of important activities and strategic plans.

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On August 4, 2015, senior staff of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), government officials from the United States Embassy Botswana, USAID, and the Southern Africa Trade Hub gathered at the SADC Secretariat in Gaborone, Botswana for a ceremony to celebrate the handover of the completed Regional Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Strategies for Food Safety, Plant and Animal Health.

The Regional SPS Strategies were developed by USAID's Southern Africa Trade Hub at the request of SADC. They will strengthen the capacity of SADC's fifteen Member States to effectively manage sanitary and phytosanitary risks by implementing SPS measures consistent with international standards and best practices.

Sanitary and phytosanitary measures protect humans, animals and plants from diseases, pests or contaminants. The SPS strategies developed ensure that the fifteen SADC nations are able to guarantee that consumers are supplied with food and food products that are safe, while at the same time facilitating regional trade and integration.

In the past, inconsistent SPS controls and measures were sometimes used to create trade barriers and to hinder the flow of goods across the southern Africa region. Thus, one of the major objectives of the SPS strategies is to offer guidelines in keeping with global standards while eliminating trade barriers that serve no legitimate purpose.

As US Ambassador to Botswana Earl Miller stated during his address at the ceremony, "The US 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 hardworking people across our region."

Effective SPS Strategies will benefit people throughout the southern Africa region, including smallholder farmers growing crops for the local market, agribusiness owners producing food for export, truck drivers who ferry goods across borders, retailers who deliver products, and consumers who want to count on safe, reliable standards for food, plant, and animal health.