ITALIAN TRAINING PROGRAMME

ITP: 305 MENA
Quality Infrastructure for Food Safety

12 February to 10 March 2017 in Sweden
August 2017 in one of the participating countries

Closing date for applications:
> 5 October 2016
Welcome

This International Training Programme is specially designed for persons qualified to participate in reform processes of importance on different levels and holds a position in the home organisation with mandate to run processes of change. It offers support to strengthen, adapt and maintain capacity over time in order for your organisation to define and achieve goals in both the short and long term. A participant will take part of the latest development in your area of work supervised by skilled Swedish colleagues and experts, develop a network of colleagues from other countries and enhance knowledge in new working methods. The methodology used is based on the assumption that your organisation wish to carry out changes and are willing to invest own resources to achieve these changes.

An essential, and often a basic, condition to reduce poverty is that trade between countries is functioning properly. This relationship has become even more obvious with the on-going and accelerating globalisation process. One of the key features in the Swedish policy for global development is economic growth as a basis for development towards enhanced democracy and equality. A condition for sustainable economic growth is national and international confidence in the activities of both public authorities and economic operators.

At present, relations for trade in food and food products are, to a great extent, governed by the agreements within the WTO framework, mainly the WTO SPS (sanitary and phytosanitary measures) Agreement. This agreement includes technical regulations necessary to protect life and health of humans, animals and plants. The SPS Agreement is built on three fundamental principles:
• 'There must be scientific basis for all measures
• 'The measures must be non-discriminatory
• 'The effect of the measures on trade shall be minimized

The agreement strives to find a balance between the trade and protection interests and to encourage the countries to apply the same or similar import rules.

SPS related trade regulations can be as big an obstacle as custom tariffs for the developing countries. At the same time the SPS Agreement is a resource consuming agreement to apply, since several articles require the countries to have their internal control and documentation in order, but also due to the fact that the protection levels in developed countries are often rather high. The SPS Agreement has therefore regulations in two different areas: special and differential treatment of developing countries as well as technical assistance.

The agreement states that the developed countries shall take account of the special needs of the developing countries when preparing regulations. However, the rule is not mandatory and the developed countries are rarely prepared to allow products, which do not fulfil the requirements on hygiene and health protection, into their markets, just because they originate from developing countries.

The SPS Agreement complements the WTO Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade, the so-called TBT Agreement. It is therefore of the utmost importance that decision makers within the food sector are well acquainted with both these agreements and how the two interact. The two agreements do not, however, cover everything that will be required from food producers. In order to successfully market food and feed products on the international markets it is required that the production chain is well defined and that transparent regulations ensure that the chain of production is not contaminated.

For developing countries food and agricultural products are a trade sector with development potential, it is consequently of great importance that the decision makers understand the requirements on the national systems for food safety, in order to provide the producers with adequate possibilities to compete on the global market. The Swedish strategy for development cooperation with MENA countries 2010 – 2015 indicates that the objective of the sector “Regional economic integration” is “more regional trade and the development of regional markets”. The strategy further says that “to achieve the objective, support shall be provided to develop harmonised structures and regulatory frameworks in the trade sector, focusing especially on international standardisation, including the climate area, mutual approval of products, competition issues, consumer protection and trade in food. The focus shall be on capacity development.”

Sida, the National Food Agency and Swedac invite you to nominate candidates.

Lena Ingelstam
DIRECTOR OF PARTNER- SHIPS AND INNOVATION
Sida

Stig Orustfjord
DIRECTOR GENERAL
National Food Agency

Merih Malmqvist Nilsson
DEPUTY DIRECTOR GENERAL
Swedac
**Programme objectives**

From the development perspective, the overall objective of the programme is to provide the training and support required to ascertain that:

- The systems and structures for food safety and trade in food and agricultural products in the participating countries have been reformed in accordance with international rules and best practice and with social accountability
- Regional co-operation within the area of food safety and trade in food has been strengthened

The main objective is therefore to enable organisational change where participants will be given the opportunity to use the knowledge and experiences provided by the programme to contribute to the development of the national and regional systems for food safety and trade in food.

The specific results that the programme aims to achieve for the participants are the following:

- Participants have increased knowledge about the different parts of modern systems for safe food and trade in food and agricultural products
- Informal networks are established between present and former participants on national and regional levels
- Participants have finalised their change projects

The programme aims at providing the experience and the knowledge on how to develop, maintain and, in practice, work with national systems for food safety and trade in food, specifically focusing on:

- International trade based on the WTO SPS (sanitary and phytosanitary) Agreement
- The WTO TBT (Technical Barriers to Trade) Agreement
- The relationship between the WTO TBT and SPS Agreements.
- An introduction to the new WTO agreement on Trade Facilitation and its relation to the SPS agreement.
- Food legislation and inspection, principles for food safety, animal health, plant health, additives and residues in contact with food and feed, GMOs and seed, risk analyses etc.
- EU system for food safety, as well as other systems applied in the region and differences between these
- International standards within the food sector (Codex Alimentarius, International Animal Health Organisation, International Plant Protection Convention)
- Labelling of food
- Quality concept, ISO 22000
- HACCP training
- System and structures for food safety and trade in food and agricultural products, as well as conformity assessment, accreditation, inspection systems and structures, laboratory testing and certification, reference laboratories.

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The objective of the training is to contribute to create increased knowledge about how to adapt national rules and practices to achieve a positive development in the food safety sector. This, in turn, will form the basis for sustainable economic growth by means of access to the global market, which will benefit the national economic and social development towards democracy and equality.

Additionally, the knowledge about the national systems for food safety and trade in food, Sida’s international training programmes are designed to encourage development and change processes within the organisations/institutions related to the sector. The objective of the programme is to contribute to such change processes in the countries.

With the aim to further support these processes, the training programme shall foster the establishment of networks between the participants. Former participants in similar training programmes shall also be invited to participate in these networks, as well as other interested individuals or organisations. The fostering of regional co-operation has been taken into consideration in all parts of the programme to the extent the programme can influence the development.

The basis is that there is strong interest in the countries to learn from experiences in other countries. Another point is that it is an advantage if there are several actors from the same country within different parts of society, who can establish know-how and experiences within the sector. It is therefore seen as an advantage if there are several participants from the same country in the programme.

**BENEFITS**

- Heads of departments and central decision makers have been informed of the benefits of modern systems and structures for food safety and trade in food and agricultural products
- Decisions on necessary reforms have been taken
- Enhanced co-operation between national and regional actors has been achieved

National actors and functions are strengthened in relation to international best practice within the area of food safety and trade in food and agricultural products.

**www.sida.se/itp**
Programme structure

The programme is composed of five interrelated phases.

Phase I
The first preparatory phase takes place before the participants arrive in Stockholm. The phase includes the invitation process and selection of institutions and participants besides identification of problem profiles that shall form the basis for the change processes the participants shall work on throughout the programme to benefit the respective country and institution. The phase further includes visits by the programme organisers to the invited countries to establish the necessary commitment towards the programme and the upcoming change process. It will be emphasised that a precondition for participating in the programme is that the necessary commitment towards the programme and the change projects is well established amongst the relevant decision-makers.

Phase II
Phase II takes place in Stockholm and Uppsala and lasts four weeks. The participants will be provided with information on issues related to food safety and trade in food, according to the principles of the WTO SPS Agreement. Additionally, the phase will cover further elaboration on the problem profile and design of the change process that is to take place during Phases III – V.

Phase III
Phase III is of six months duration and covers project work at home base where the change process is developed with support from the programme experts. The projects shall be need driven and developed in close co-operation with the relevant institutions nationally and regionally. Co-operation with former participants and co-operation across borders with participants from other participating countries is encouraged. Particular emphasis will be given to regional co-operation.

Phase IV
Phase IV is a one week workshop, where all participants meet in one of the participating countries to present their projects and the progress of implementation and where experiences will be exchanged.

Phase V
Phase V is the final phase of the programme. The participants shall then continue the work on developing the projects but shall emphasise on the implementation of the projects. The programme experts will finally visit each of the countries to support in the final implementation and assess the results of the change process.

The total duration of the programme will be 14 months, Phase I not included.

TEACHING
Lectures, seminars and group work will take place daily within the framework of a 40 hour working week. Lectures during Phase II will be given by professionals from the National Food Agency, Swedac and other relevant Swedish and international institutions and companies.

Study visits will be organised to all key institutions. Participants are strongly encouraged to contribute actively in the training and discussions. Participants will be provided with literature according to the structure of the programme. The number of participants is limited to 25 in order to ensure a close working relationship between the participants and the lecturers.

MANAGEMENT AND STAFF
The programme is planned and implemented by the Swedish Board for Accreditation and Conformity Assessment, in co-operation with the Swedish National Food Agency.

TIMETABLE

WHERE:
Phase II will take place in Stockholm and Uppsala.
Phase IV will be conducted in one of the participating countries, location to be announced.

WHEN:
The programme runs from February 2017 to April 2018.

DURATION:
14 months.
Admission requirements

INVITED COUNTRIES
The following countries and regional organisations are invited to nominate candidates:
Algeria, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestine, Tunisia, Yemen, AIDMO, and League of Arab States.
Applications from other countries will not be considered.

TARGET GROUP
Only candidates nominated by the appropriate organisations and in accordance with national rules will be considered.

The programme is intended first and foremost for those involved in the decision-making process regarding food safety and trade in food in the country, in accordance with international agreements and requirements and their support functions. Participants will typically come from ministries of health and agriculture and their institutions, and ministries dealing with requirements on goods on the national markets, international trade, industry and commerce, conformity assessment bodies (standardisation bodies, certification bodies, testing laboratories, inspection bodies, metrology institutions or laboratories) and from accreditation bodies or national focal points for accreditation.

LANGUAGE REQUIREMENTS
The training programme will be organised and conducted in English. Candidates from countries where English is not an official language should do a language test with an official body in the home country, unless other documentation to support her/his ability can be provided.

HEALTH REQUIREMENTS
As the training programme consists of international travels and work away from home in a new environment, good health and full working capacity is required. It is therefore recommended that candidates undergo medical examination before filling in the Medical Statement in the Application form.

COSTS
The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) will cover all costs, including air tickets, related to all programme phases except personal expenses, visa fees or any local airport taxes and departure fees.

VISA
The participants are responsible for obtaining all the necessary visas for their stay during the training programme. The visa should be valid for the whole period of the programme and the passport should be valid for three months longer than the entry visa. Inquiries should be directed to the respective Embassy/Consulate of Sweden or other Schengen representation entities as soon as possible after admission to the programme.

For more information, please visit the Sweden Migration Board website www.migrationsverket.se/english.

ACCOMMODATION
Participants will be accommodated at hotels in single rooms with bath/shower and WC. Information on accommodation for Phase IV, the regional follow-up seminar, will be provided during the interim period.

INSURANCE
All participants are covered by a group insurance during the training periods overseas. This insurance includes costs for medical care in the event of emergency illness or accident. Medical and dental check-ups are not included. The costs for the insurance are covered by Sida. Participants travelling outside Sweden on their free time are not covered by the insurance.

APPLICATION PROCESS
The application process consists of three steps in order to be completed:

1. Fill in the attached application form
   a) The applicant must be nominated by a relevant organisation/institution or authority.
   b) The nominating organisation is required to explain reasons for nominating the participant.
   c) The supervisor of the applicant must give her/his signature to confirm that the applicant can participate in the whole programme, five weeks away from home.
   d) Include a recent photograph.
   e) Fill in required information and documents.

2. Fill in the attached Project Information Sheet in accordance with the instructions in the form.

3. Submit the application form and Project Information Sheet to a Swedish Embassy or Consulate in the applicant’s country or, if there is no Swedish Embassy or Consulate, send it electronically to the Program Secretariat at itp-sps.application@swedac.org. Both men and women are encouraged to apply, as the programme aims at equal gender representation. Due to the character of the programme, family, relatives or friends are not allowed to accompany participants to either phase of the program. Selected participants will be contacted for an in-depth interview with a member of the selection committee, in order to ensure the relevance of the participant’s organisation and that the language requirements are met. Once final selections have been made, all applicants will be notified of the outcome of the process. Once accepted the applicant must confirm participation.

Closing date for applications:
› 5 October 2016.
As part of Sida’s work with capacity and institutional development Sida offers international training programmes (ITP) for participants from low-and middle-income countries in priority areas. ITP’s methodology takes account of the desire to develop and reform that the participants’ organisations have expressed in their application to the program.

The programmes cover areas of strategic importance to the social, environmental and economic development of co-operating countries and are based on identified priorities and needs. In the long-term perspective, the programmes shall contribute to institutional strengthening and capacity development in the co-operating countries.

The Swedish Board for Accreditation and Conformity Assessment (Swedac) is a Swedish government authority for quality and safety. Swedac is directly under the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and also reports to the Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation.

Swedac’s work, nationally and internationally, lays a foundation for the trust between countries that is needed for a functioning global free trade and economic growth.

Swedac has the following functions as a government authority:

• National accreditation body and notifying authority under the EU harmonized technical legislation.
• GLP-authority for chemicals.
• Regulator for legal metrology and precious metals.
• Coordinator of market surveillance in Sweden.
• Advisory authority in the area of conformity assessment for all Swedish regulators and the Swedish government.

In all of its areas of responsibility Swedac is active in international cooperation with the aim to promote free trade without technical barriers to trade and to contribute to quality and safety of products and services all over the world.

Within its area of core expertise and knowhow, Swedac actively supports other countries throughout the world through training programmes, technical assistance projects and study visits.

In this programme Swedac cooperates with AQS AB, which is an independent enterprise providing consultancy services in international development cooperation. AQS AB has carried out several national quality infrastructure programmes and also designs and delivers training programmes in World Trade Conformity, Food Safety and National Quality Infrastructure. Many of these have been developed and delivered in cooperation with Swedac.

NFA is the central supervisory authority for matters relating to food, including drinking water. The NFA has the task of protecting the interests of the consumer by working for safe food of good quality, fair practices in the food trade, and healthy eating habits. Fair practices in the food trade imply that the consumer can rely on the labelling as regards, for example, the composition, weight, keeping qualities and origin of the food. The NFA is directly responsible to the government.