Piloting and Ongoing Implementation of the WTO TBT/SPS Notification Alert System (ePing) in Uganda

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Background

– Government of Uganda through Ministry Trade, Industry and Cooperatives (MTIC) collaborated with United Nations Department of Economic & Social Affairs (UN DESA) to pilot the ePing in Uganda.
Background

– Joint **MTIC/UN DESA** Kampala workshop (July 2015):
  - ePing was presented to stakeholders (public/private);
  - Stakeholders reviewed the functionalities of ePing
    ✓ *Proposed new functionalities* (*Discussion forum, tagging notifications as favourites*, etc.);
  - Hands-on familiarization training on the ePing was conducted by **DESA Team**.

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Mechanism used to disseminate notifications in Uganda before introduction of ePing
Challenges with mechanism used to disseminate notifications before introduction of ePing

- Weak communication link between members of National TBT/SPS Committee & stakeholders in the sectors they represent
  - Fragmentation of notifications flow to Members of respective Sector Associations!!
- Stakeholders receive all notifications including those not relevant/affect their products/exports
  - Relevant notification = Product(s) + Export destination
Transition from current notifications dissemination mechanism to implementation of ePing in Uganda: Phase I - IT Implementation

- Tested existing & new ePing functionalities;
- Provided feedback to ePing development team to enable refinement of existing ePing features;
- Uganda proposed additional functionalities (January 2016)
Transition from current notifications dissemination mechanism to implementation of ePing in Uganda: Phase II - Development of notifications workflow & establishment of ePing user groups

- **Aim**: ensure that mechanism for **processing notifications** & **review of texts** of notified draft TBT & SPS measures, **supported** and **facilitated** by the ePing, is **present** and **functioning**;

- Users groups being established to implement notifications workflow.
  - E.g. Manufacturers, Organic, Flowers, Fisheries
Transition from current notifications dissemination mechanism to implementation of ePing in Uganda: Phase III (current)-Training Stakeholders

- Training on transparency procedures of TBT & SPS agreements;
  - To build capacity for processing notifications & review of draft notified TBT/SPS measures
- Training in using ePing functionalities;
- Training on how to register in ePing;
- Registration of stakeholders in ePing to begin receiving SPS or TBT (or both) notifications through email alerts.
Transition from current notifications dissemination mechanism to application of ePing in Uganda: Achievements To-date

- **247** stakeholders registered & using the ePing;
- **4** Regional Trainings for stakeholders:
  - *Eastern* region (March 16);
  - *Northern* region (May 16);
  - *Western* region (June 16);
  - *Central* region (June 16).

- **District Local Governments (Marketing, Commercial, Veterinary and Production Officials);**
- **District level Enterprises & Private sector associations and Institutions.**
Transition from current notifications dissemination mechanism to application of ePing in Uganda: **Achievements To-date**

- Flowers sector (July 2016)
- Organic stakeholders (June 16);
- Fisheries sector (June 16);
- Manufacturers (February 16);
- Notification of **1 District Ordinance on Maize to TBT and SPS Committees:**
  - G/TBT/N/UGA/564 (TBT Art. 3.2);
  - G/SPS/N/UGA/3.
Transition from current notifications dissemination mechanism to application of ePing in Uganda: Feedback from ePing trainings

1. Notifications not reaching the final users;
2. Stakeholders in the regions not aware about TBT & SPS transparency procedures;
3. Demand for more sensitization & training on the ePing & transparency procedures;
4. Stakeholders recognized the importance of TBT & SPS notifications & transparency procedures in relation to production and exports;
5. Demand for regional training on the TBT and SPS agreements.
Other ePing related Events Uganda has participated in

- Hosted a delegation from USAID East Africa Trade & Investment Hub: discussed plans to support implementation of ePing in other EAC Partner States (August 16);
- Trained stakeholders in Rwanda on SPS & TBT Transparency procedures & ePing (Sept. 16);
- Info Session on ePing at the sidelines of June 2016 TBT Committee meeting jointly organized by WTO, UN & ITC;
Other ePing related Events Uganda has participated in

- 2016 Belgium High-Level Development Cooperation Forum workshop on Capacity Building experiences in LDCs focusing on the LDC portal & ePing (April 16)
- Training participants of 2015 Follow Up Session of Advanced Course on the TBT Agreement on ePing (March 16).
Lessons learnt from Piloting and ongoing Implementation of ePing in Uganda

1. Two-day training not adequate to cover SPS & TBT Agreements, transparency procedures & all functionalities of ePing;

2. Important to address sustainability in the longer term right from the beginning, during & at the end of donor supported initiatives like ePing;
Lessons learnt from Piloting and ongoing Implementation of ePing in Uganda

4. Critical for donors to **collaborate & coordinate** in provision of **technical assistance** to avoid duplication, pull resources together to take advantage of **economy of scale** & leverage on synergies.
Proposals for Promoting ePing & obtaining Feedback from users

- **Introduce & maintain** an agenda item on ePing in regular meetings of National TBT/SPS Committee;
- Need for **more training, promotion, awareness** after the **launch** of the ePing by WTO Secretariat
- Include ePing in **programmes** of:
  - National TBT or SPS trainings/workshops/seminars;
  - Regional TBT or SPS trainings/meetings/workshops/seminars;
  - WTO TBT Committee’s Special Meetings on Procedures for Information Exchange.
A section of participants attending ePing Regional Training in Northern Uganda
A section of participants attending ePing Regional Training in Western Uganda
An SME producing milk & milk products contributing during the ePing Regional Training in Western Uganda
Organic mangoes in Northern Uganda
Thank you for your attention