



MSG Green Trade Project

Voluntary Sustainability Standards (VSS) assessment of Kava Value Chain in Solomon Islands

17 October 2023

Background

1. The Melanesia Spearhead Group (MSG) green trade project is funded by 12th tranche of the UN Development Account and implemented by UNCTAD in close collaboration with the MSG secretariat.
2. The project activities focus on developing green trade promotion policy as an integral element of their national sustainable development strategies.
3. In late 2021, UNCTAD reached out to members of the MSG to select an agricultural product for the Voluntary Sustainable Standards (VSS) assessment
4. After consulting with relevant agencies on this, Solomon Islands chose Kava as the agricultural product for the VSS assessment.
5. Following that, a local consulting firm (OrgClinic) was hired to undertake the activities of the project for 9 months from April 2022 – December 2022.

Objectives

To enhance the capacity of the four MSG countries to identify and strengthen synergistic linkages between green trade promotion into their sustainable development in a regionally collaborative manner.

- i. Transparency in trade regulations of member states and export market
- ii. Access to niche markets including “sustainable markets”
- iii. Regional and international economic cooperation

Project Outcomes

(i) First National Workshop

- a) A hybrid workshop held on 30 June 2022 in Honiara at the Mendana Hotel.
- b) Inform participants on MSG Green Trade, Non-Tariff Measures (NTM) and VSS initiative and the activities involved.
- c) Identify key stakeholders to collaborate with during the NTM and VSS activities.



Project Outcomes

(ii) Non- Tariff Measure (NTM) data collection

1. NTM data update

- Legislations that may contain NTMs for SI for international trade in goods were identified and collected.
- NTMs data completion were completed in Q2 2023
- Under the MSG Green Trade Project, NTMs for SI were up to 2021 regulations. The findings were as follows:
 - ✓ 64 regulations introduced NTMS(both principal and subsidiary legislation)
 - ✓ 388 NTMs were identified and classified
 - ✓ Most regulated sectors: Plants & plant products, fish, animals & animal products
 - ✓ Least/non-regulated sectors: Land transport, telecommunication equipment & pesticide
- UNCTAD has updated the NTMs data with regulations from 2021 to 2023 and has published it.

Project Outcomes

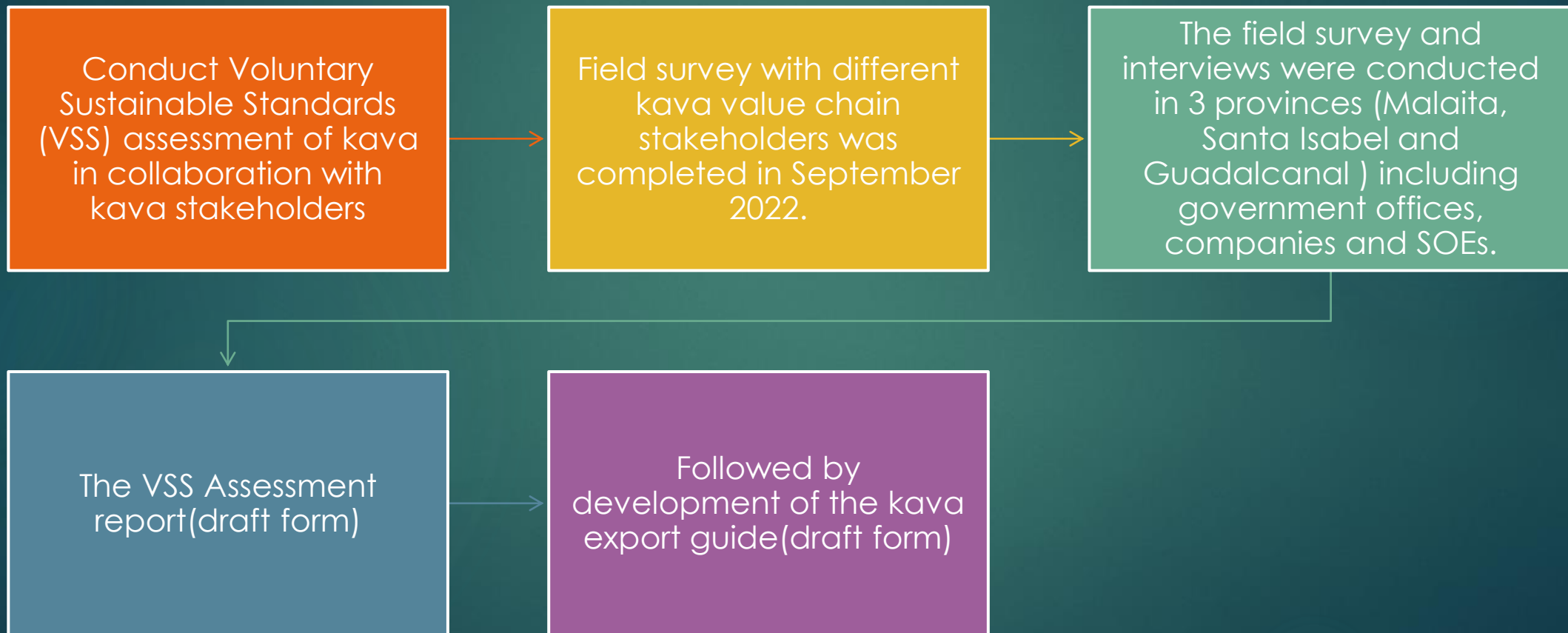
(ii) Non- Tariff Measure (NTM) data collection

2. Support for WTO transparency provisions

- WTO SPS & TBT Notification session conducted by UNCTAD on 24 July 2023
- Stakeholders trained :MHMS(Food Safety Unit), MAL(Biosecurity), SICED, MCILI(Consumer Affairs), PACER Plus NC, MFAET(DET)
- 3 Notifications completed
- Next steps: respective stakeholders to complete their internal review before submission to MFAET to notify WTO.

Project Outcome

iii. Voluntary Sustainable Standards(VSS) Assessment of Kava



Project Outcomes

(iv) Second National Workshop

- A hybrid workshop took place on 19 and 20 June 2023.
- A joint workshop by MSG Green Trade, IMPACT & SAFE Project.
- Attended by government officials and private sector representatives including producers and exporters of kava and other agricultural commodities.
- Review and validate the progress made over the past year under the MSG Green Trade Project.
- The consultant presented on the voluntary sustainability standards (VSS) assessment report on kava and the unveiling of the Solomon Islands kava export guide.



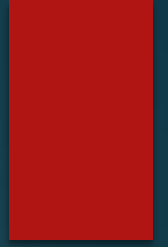
Lessons Learned

1. Revise the Pure Food Act (Food Control) Regulations
2. There is a need to develop Good Agriculture Practices (GAP) .
3. Publish trade-related regulations in a more systemic manner

Way forward

1. Finalize the National Kava Quality Standards and Kava Regulations
2. Review the existing Pure Food (Food Control) Regulations and include the developed National Kava Quality Standard and if needed, the Kava Regulations.
3. Establish a monitoring mechanism to ensure compliance with the Pure Food Act.
4. Follow international developments to update the National Kava Quality Standard based on the Regional Kava Standard.
5. Develop the GAP code for kava: Look at international standards and develop the draft code, while keeping local practices in mind
6. Conduct stakeholder consultations to validate the applicability of the GAP code. This includes leveraging the experience and knowledge of certified farmers

Way forward



10. Establish or designate a national management body, that should supervise and pursue the development of the GAP code, maybe extending it to other commodities.

11 .Conduct trainings to familiarize farmers and producers about the benefits and compliance with the GAP code, eventually combining it with other VSS.

Participating and Coordinating Agencies

- ❑ Ministry of Health & Medical Services
- ❑ Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock
- ❑ Ministry of Commerce, Industry, Labour and Immigration
- ❑ Ministry of Foreign Affairs and External Trade
- ❑ Solomon Islands Chamber of Commerce
- ❑ Kava Industry Working Group
- ❑ Commodity Export Marketing Authority
- ❑ Kava farmers/producers

Supporting Organisation

- ❑ FAO
- ❑ SPC
- ❑ UNCTAD
- ❑ Phama Plus
- ❑ WTO
- ❑ PIFS