



UNITED NATIONS  
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft  
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Swiss Confederation

Federal Department of Economic Affairs,  
Education and Research EAER  
State Secretariat for Economic Affairs SECO



GLOBAL QUALITY  
AND STANDARDS PROGRAMME



# IMPROVING TRADE, CHANGING LIVES

The impact of the Global Quality and  
Standards Programme (GQSP)



The opportunities and challenges stemming from the ongoing digital transformation are rapidly changing the ways in which we live and work, while climate change remains the most pressing issue for humanity. Due diligence laws taking shape in the European Union are crucial for the integration of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) from developing countries into global value chains but are an obstacle, presenting the need for capacity building in developing countries to meet the requirements of these international markets. Quality and standards can help in addressing these global challenges.

Against this backdrop, this brochure introduces a broader publication developed by the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) that takes stock of the achievements of the Global Quality and Standards Programme (GQSP), implemented by UNIDO and funded by the Government of Switzerland through its State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO). The publication presents the innovative programmatic approach of the GQSP, detailing the ways in which the GQSP boosts sustainable industrialization through quality and standards, stimulates economic growth, and reduces poverty, thereby improving lives.

Read the full-length publication [here](#).





# GQSP FACTS & FIGURES

## WHY WE DO IT



**Boost sustainable industrialization**

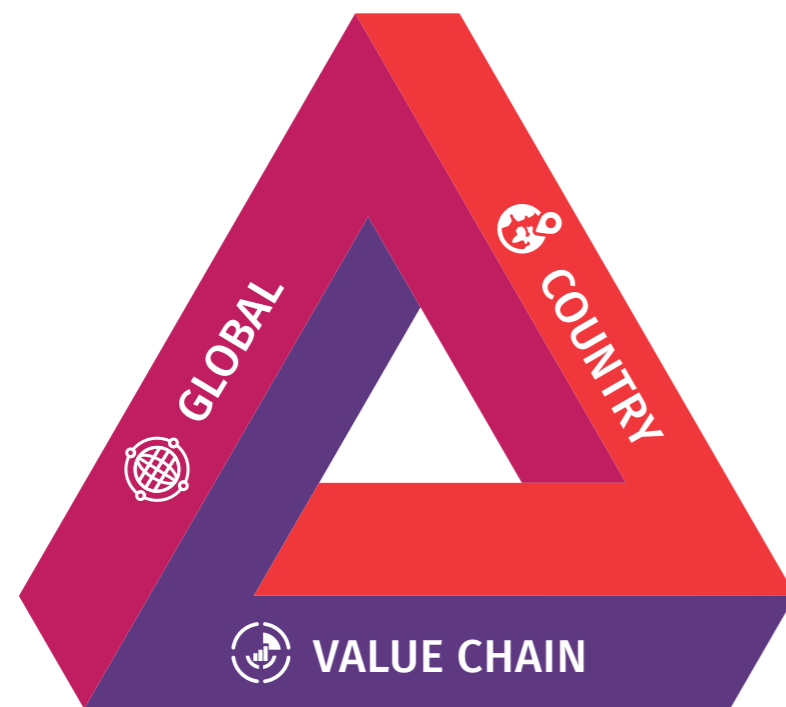


**Stimulate economic growth**



**Reduce poverty and improve lives**

## HOW WE DO IT



**GLOBAL:**

Develop global solutions for common challenges

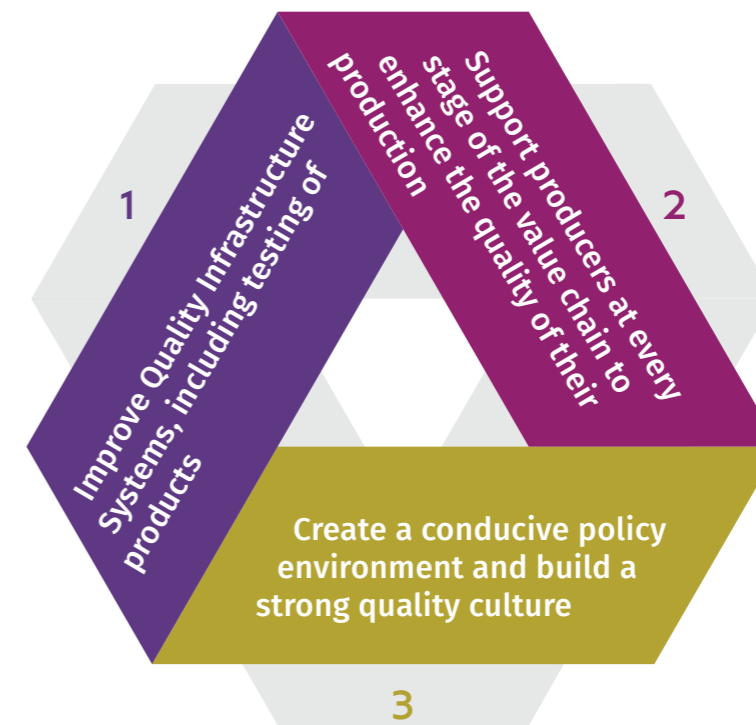
**COUNTRY:**

Holistic, yet tailor-made interventions, aligned with national priorities

**VALUE CHAIN:**

Tackle quality-related challenges through targeted technical support

## WHAT WE DO



**DURATION:** 2017-2027



**BUDGET:** 30 million EUR



**DONOR:**

the Government of Switzerland through its [State Secretariat for Economic Affairs \(SECO\)](#)

# 12 COUNTRIES

Compliance with Quality and Standards

Enhance Competitiveness

# 16 VALUE CHAINS

Best Practices

STIMULATE TRADE

Transversal Solutions

Global Knowledge Management



# Setting the Scene

## AN EVER-CHANGING WORLD

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) constitute the core of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and guide all global, regional and national development endeavors until the year 2030. Adopted in 2015, the SDGs seek to build on the Millennium Development Goals and complete what these did not achieve. Consisting of 17 integrated goals, the SDGs aim to balance the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. The breadth and scope of the SDGs reflect the complexity and scale of the challenges to be addressed in the modern era.



International trade is a powerful tool to overcome challenges and to improve livelihoods as it stimulates economic growth and reduces poverty. Countries that are open to international trade are likely to grow faster, innovate, improve productivity and provide their populations with higher incomes and increased opportunities.

Global trade is growingly embedded within value chains and is increasingly governed by quality and standards requirements, such as the rules established by the World Trade Organization (WTO). Due to their mandatory nature, these technical regulations have the potential to become technical barriers to trade (TBT) that prevent or hinder the flow of goods and services between nations. Despite trade liberalization and globalization in recent years, many exporters from developing countries still face substantial challenges to meet and prove conformity with market entry

requirements, and face TBT that hamper their ability to access markets. Lengthy procedures and border rejections due to non-compliance with market requirements can result in major financial losses for producers, particularly for SMEs. In order to gain and maintain access to international trade and benefit from global markets, standards compliance and proof of conformity are essential.

# The Global Quality and Standards Programme

## AN INNOVATIVE PROGRAMMATIC APPROACH

The Global Quality and Standards Programme (GQSP) aims at reinforcing coherence and developing global solutions for common quality and standards related challenges through knowledge dissemination, while allowing flexibility for needs-specific interventions at country level. The interventions at country level focus on specific value chains in order to provide targeted technical support to overcome compliance challenges and facilitate market access for specific products.

### GQSP COMPONENTS 1 AND 2

## GLOBAL KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

PROMOTING A CULTURE FOR QUALITY

KNOWLEDGE CREATION on a need based approach

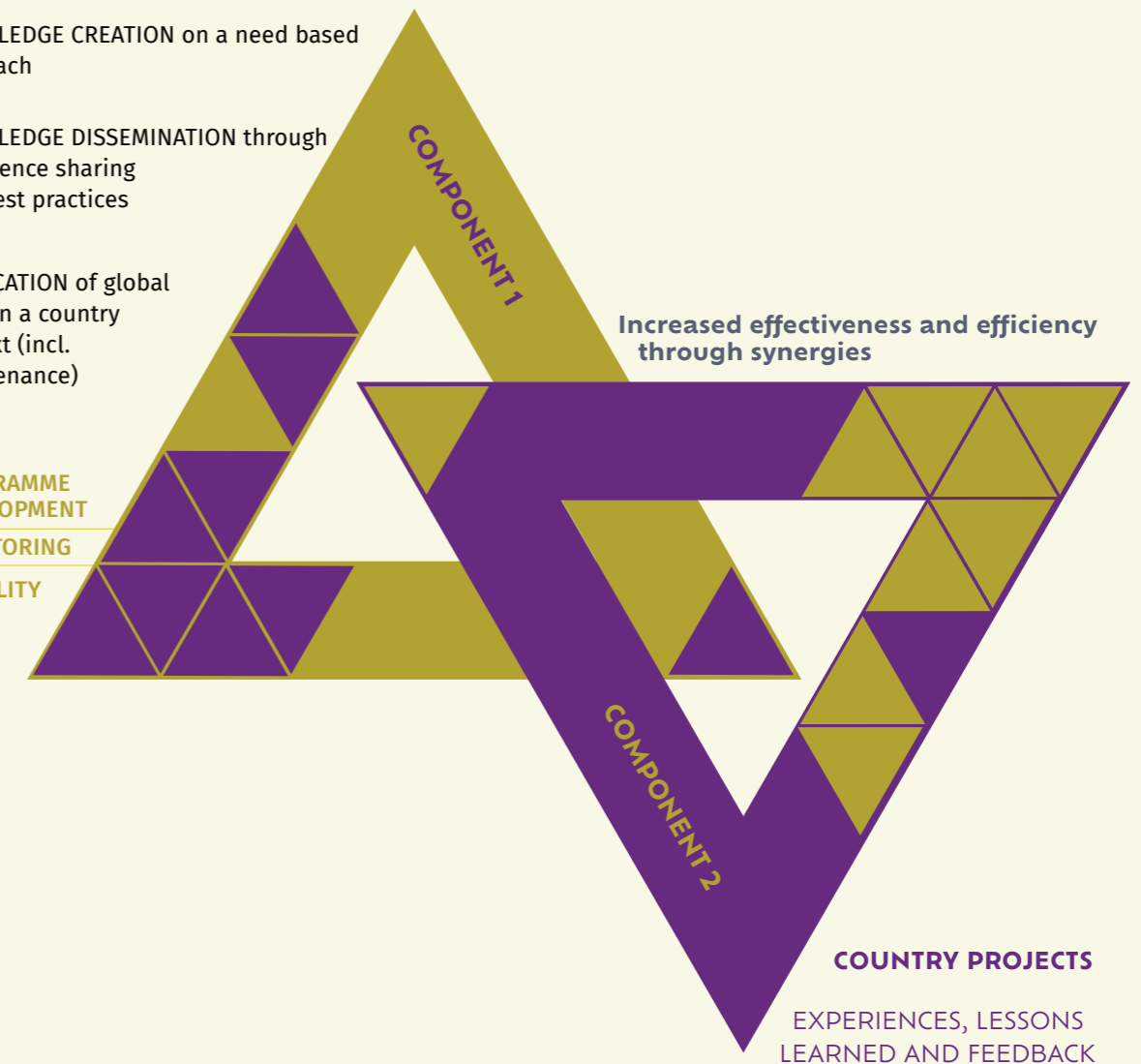
KNOWLEDGE DISSEMINATION through experience sharing and best practices

APPLICATION of global tools in a country context (incl. maintenance)

PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT

MONITORING

VISIBILITY




The programmatic approach of the GQSP is unique in that it consolidates interventions on quality and standards within one programme, adding the benefit of a global component that facilitates synergies and enhances coherence among the interventions, through re-enforcing cross-linkages between countries, to capitalize on experience and

overall knowledge. Through the global knowledge management and country-level interventions components, the GQSP contributes to a number of key conditions and transformational goals, resulting in greater international competitiveness, increased exports and sustainable trade.



## GQSP IN NUMBERS

 **12** countries and **16** value chains

 **3,158** firms and smallholders with improved management practices

 **9,315** actors trained in different technical areas

 **35** global fora organized with more than 6,500 participants

 **70** publications launched (incl. language versions)

 **13** online training courses made publicly available through the UNIDO Knowledge Hub

 **1,400** producers accessed new markets

 **139** quality infrastructure institutions strengthened

**8** National Standardization Bodies

**7** National Metrology Institutes

**9** National Accreditation Agencies

**115** Conformity Assessment Bodies

 **5** global tools developed

 **151** standard-setting processes supported

 **11** ISO handbooks developed (incl. language versions)

# Boosting Competitiveness with Quality and Standards

## QI IN FOCUS

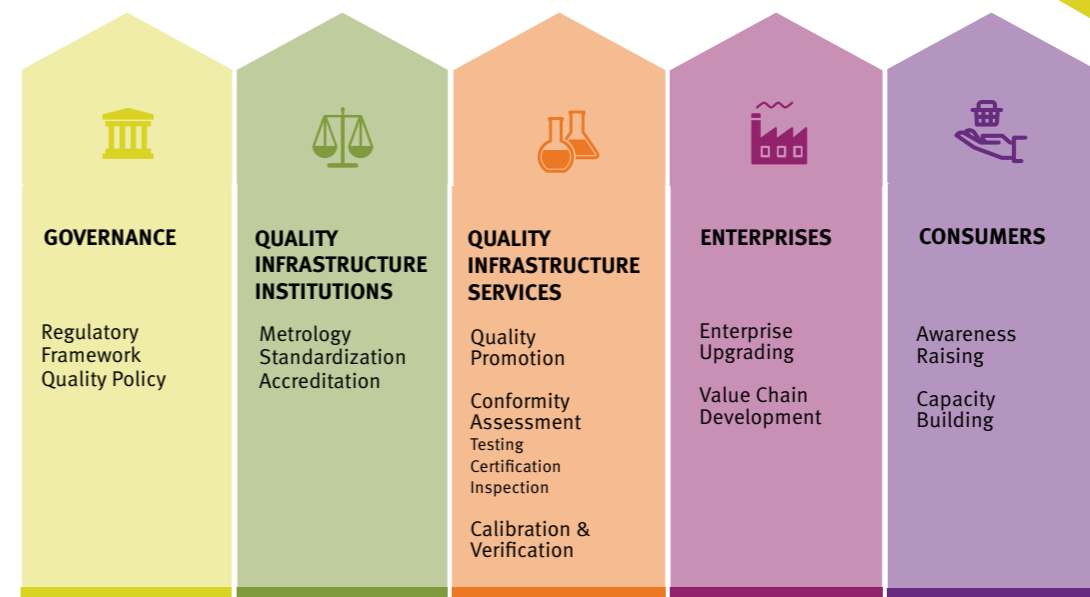
A quality infrastructure (QI) is a system contributing to national policy objectives in areas including industrial development, trade competitiveness in global markets, efficient use of natural and human resources, food safety, health, the environment and climate change. It offers a complete package addressing the needs of a nation's citizens, customers and consumers, and enterprises and other organizations that provide them products and services.

The QI system covers essential aspects such as policy, institutions, service providers, and the value-adding use of international standards and conformity assessment procedures. It relies on standardization, accreditation, conformity assessment, and market surveillance. A QI ensures that these components work in harmony and avoid

the inefficiencies and confusion of overlapping responsibilities and conflicting practices. The ability of developing countries and economies in transition to compete in global markets and participate in international value chains is often hampered by their difficulties in demonstrating compliance with quality requirements and trade rules.

The QSP works to help a total of 12 countries overcome these obstacles by strengthening different QI system components through its targeted interventions. Sectors for GQSP country projects, presented briefly below, were chosen based on country needs in one or a limited number of specific sectors, focusing on strategic value chains with high export potential and competitiveness.

### QUALITY INFRASTRUCTURE SYSTEM



### Addressing pressing megatrends

Through its quality and standards work, the GQSP also contributes to some of the most pressing megatrends that are forcing us to be mindful of the need for people-centric responses. These relate to digital transformation, sustainability and the

COVID-19 pandemic, as well as to the push for gender equality and empowerment of women. The second five-year GQSP phase, which commenced in December 2022, has a broadened context to also include sustainability standards and digitalization.






## ALBANIA




Boosting exports of medicinal and aromatic plants (MAPs) and fruit and vegetables (F&Vs) through strengthening key institutions and capacities of local producers, thereby addressing compliance challenges faced by SMEs.





## GEORGIA



Aligning Georgia's conformity assessment services to the needs of the national production and potential export of F&Vs, in view of accessing foreign markets, particularly the European Union market.

## COLOMBIA



Fostering Colombia's integration into regional and multilateral trade systems by strengthening the National Quality Subsystem (SICAL) in line with the priorities of the chemical value chain and by increasing and improving the capabilities of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) to comply with technical requirements and international standards.




## GHANA



Enhancing the national quality infrastructure while increasing the competitiveness of the cashew, oil palm and cocoa exported from Ghana. These value chains are in line with the Government of Ghana's programmes to industrialize the country, demonstrating the importance of the intervention.




## COSTA RICA





Supporting Costa Rica in achieving and proving compliance with EU regulations in order to take advantage of the commercial opportunities that arise from the Association Agreement (AACUE) for beef and other prioritized products (honey and fruits).




## INDONESIA



Strengthening the quality and standards compliance capacity of SMEs to improve market access to both domestic and international markets through supporting the country to align the demand for and supply of quality services required to prove and verify the quality of selected aquaculture value chains: shrimps, seaweed, pangasius, clarias catfish and milkfish.

## KYRGYZSTAN



Fostering Kyrgyzstan's competitiveness by enhancing the quality and standards compliance capacity along the fruits value chain, thus facilitating market access for local SMEs. As such, the project supported and complemented the implementation of the Development Program of the Kyrgyz Republic for 2018–2022.




## SOUTH AFRICA



Strengthening the quality and standards compliance capacity to facilitate market access for SMEs in the essential and vegetable oils value chain destined for cosmetics, food and health markets. It focuses on oil produced from 5 essential and 5 vegetable indigenous species with high export potential.




## PERU



Improving the export competitiveness of locally produced coffee and cocoa, which are value chains of national importance, through implementing QI services in pilot regions and supporting the implementation of the National Quality Institute's (INACAL's) National Quality Policy plan.




## UKRAINE



Realizing the export potential of the children's furniture and wooden windows value chains in Ukraine by strengthening related quality infrastructure for SMEs and promoting the use of those services among the value chain participants to ultimately facilitate market access.




## PHILIPPINES



Providing support to government institutions and local manufacturers of personal protective equipment (PPE) and other essential goods, such as medical devices and sanitation products, as a response to the major challenges encountered during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020.




## VIETNAM



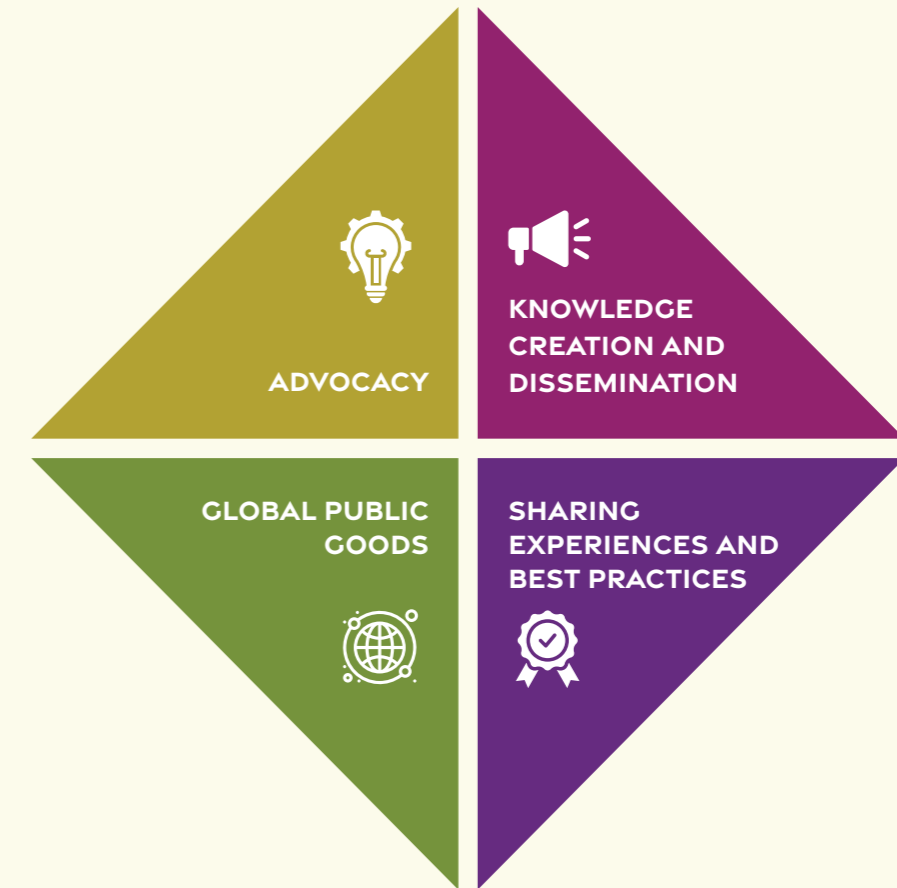
Supporting mango producers along the value chain in the Mekong River Delta to comply with technical regulations and international market requirements in view of strengthening their trade capacity.



# Enhancing Global Knowledge

In line with its efforts to assist countries on their QI journeys, the GQSP places special emphasis on sustainable stakeholder engagement, awareness raising and advocacy, and related dissemination activities in promotion of the tools, publications and other knowledge generated globally. This knowledge is made widely accessible through the [UNIDO Knowledge Hub](#), an interactive online platform that provides news, information and training material to a broad range of stakeholders.

## ENHANCING GLOBAL KNOWLEDGE



### ADVOCACY

Communication and advocacy are particularly important in the context of the GQSP as it is composed of global activities and multiple country projects, and addresses various stakeholders and counterparts. Assuming the role of thought leader in the field of QI in this new digital era, UNIDO has consistently advocated for the important role of quality and standards for digital transformation, sustainability and improved livelihoods, which is also reflected in GQSP publications.

### KNOWLEDGE CREATION & DISSEMINATION

Within the GQSP, special emphasis is placed on knowledge creation as key to tackling quality-related global challenges. This knowledge is disseminated through specialized self-paced online trainings, enabling different stakeholders to independently acquire the requisite technical knowledge to strengthen QI systems.

### GLOBAL PUBLIC GOODS

The global activities of the GQSP exceed the GQSP framework itself and serve as a useful global public good for future quality and standards related work. These tools and methodologies serve as cross-cutting solutions for common quality and standards related challenges.

### SHARING EXPERIENCES & BEST PRACTICES

Study tours and trainings strengthen stakeholder engagement within the GQSP, bringing together representatives from GQSP target countries. These activities establish technical linkages and partnerships between the beneficiary countries as well as Swiss institutions.



## LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

Quality and standards can help in addressing pressing global challenges, enabling global trade integration, bridging the technological divide and contributing to an inclusive digital transformation, while ensuring that the planet is preserved.

With this in mind and building on the success of the first phase of the GQSP (2017–2022), which exceeded expectations and resulted in scaled-up impact for stakeholders in target countries and beyond, the second programme phase of the GQSP (2022–2027) will leverage the efficiency gains and UNIDO's extensive experience in trade facilitation and market access to intensify technical cooperation activities.

UNIDO is proud to continue its work with SECO to assist countries in strengthening their QI, enhancing compliance capacity and creating a conducive policy environment, all while helping them adapt to rapidly changing global circumstances. The GQSP's powerful impact extends beyond improving trade conditions for countries to boosting prosperity, increasing the well-being of people, and protecting the planet.





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