



ANSI-USAID Standards Alliance Year One Plan

August 2013



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INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The Standards Alliance was announced by USAID in 2012 as a new funding facility designed to provide capacity building assistance to developing countries, specifically related to implementation of the World Trade Organization (WTO) Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) Agreement. The main objectives of the program, which will inform the activities include:

- Increased understanding of WTO TBT principles
- Implementation of the Code of Good Practice for the Preparation, Adoption and Application of Standards
- Improved transparency in the development and/or modification of technical regulations
- More robust and transparent engagement with the private sector in standards development and use

In May 2013, USAID and ANSI entered into a partnership which will coordinate private-sector subject matter experts from ANSI member organizations in the delivery of training and other technical assistance to interested Standards Alliance countries. The ANSI-USAID agreement covers a planned 5-year initiative, funded 50% by USAID and 50% by ANSI and other private sector partners.

Engagement under the Standards Alliance will leverage existing agreements and dialogues between the U.S. and participating countries, with the goal of integrating the activities more efficiently with overall U.S. trade policy. For example, assessments conducted at the beginning of each participating country's engagement will reference existing infrastructure such as:

- WTO TBT Committee
- Free Trade Agreements (FTAs)
- Trade and Investment Framework Agreements (TIFAs)
- Commercial Dialogues
- Regional organizations including the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), Pacific Area Standards Congress (PASC), Pan-American Standards Commission (COPANT) and others

The following mission statement describes the overall structure and content under the ANSI-USAID cooperative agreement for the Standards Alliance. This statement includes known stakeholders, partners and experts to be engaged, as well as types of activities to be conducted in the first year (June 2013 – May 2014) of the Standards Alliance, and will be updated yearly for each year of the initiative.

Relevant experts in the U.S. government and private sector were consulted in the development of this mission statement, and once final, a public version will be made available on the Standards Alliance website (standardsalliance.ansi.org, launch date TBC in August 2013).

Country-specific work plans:

In order to establish a long term strategy for engagement in each participating country/region, ANSI will develop an individual work plan for each country. These plans will focus on gradual results that build on each other throughout the program duration, and will be based on the outcomes of the initial activities in Year One. In addition to lists of activities and expected outcomes, the country plans will also include background information such as: relevant U.S. engagement (FTA's, regional organizations, etc); existing assistance programs; specific trade concerns; priority industry sectors; and other details.

Updates to the mission statement and work plans for future program years will each benefit from input from interested parties (either U.S. partners or participating/prospective countries). ANSI will issue a public notice in March/April of each program year requesting input for the work plans to be finalized in June.

COUNTRIES/ECONOMIES OF FOCUS

Selection Process

The project will include activities in up to 10 countries representing a variety of geographical regions and levels of economic development. In order to solicit interest from potential countries, the Standards Alliance has been promoted widely by USAID and the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) at WTO meetings. Interested countries were invited to submit a brief application including areas of interest for training/cooperation and as much detail as possible regarding priority industry sectors and technical topics. The application provided by USAID requested countries to select from among four (4) training/assistance areas:

- Implementing an effective TBT inquiry point
- Improving the standards development process
- Strengthening the legal and regulatory framework for standards
- Private sector outreach and communication

In consultation with U.S. government and private sector stakeholders, ANSI reviewed the applications with consideration of bilateral trade opportunities, available private sector expertise that may be leveraged, demonstrated commitment and readiness for assistance (receptive partners for engagement), and potential development impact.

A list of countries and/or regions for engagement in the first year is included below. As this document is updated each year, additional countries will have the opportunity to submit their interest in participating, and U.S. stakeholders will have the opportunity to submit suggested countries that should be engaged. ANSI will review these submissions during the input period, and will consider additional countries based on resource availability and the factors described above.

Participating countries/regions for Year One

Where a region is listed, the primary focus of engagement will be on issues that apply across the region. Country-specific activities may also be considered as appropriate and as resources permit.

- Central America (CAFTA-DR, Panama)
- Colombia
- East African Community (Kenya has submitted an application)
- Indonesia
- Mexico (application is expected)
- Middle East/North Africa (Morocco has submitted an application, anticipate application from Jordan)
- Peru
- Southern Africa Development Community (Zambia, Malawi and Lesotho have submitted applications)
- ASEAN (applications are expected from Vietnam and Philippines, regional activities will address application from Malaysia where possible)
- Yemen (cooperation with the Gulf Cooperation Council is expected)

As a first step, ANSI will communicate with each of the countries listed above about the status of their engagement in the Standards Alliance.

DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES

This section describes potential activities or models for engagement under the ANSI-USAID agreement. Additional activities may be identified through discussion with the country partners and stakeholders in the U.S. A list is provided below, and additional details on each item follow.

1. Needs assessment
2. Engagement with the TBT inquiry point
3. Workshops or other information exchanges
4. Studies
5. Online tools
6. Guest researcher or staff exchange opportunities
7. Mentoring for the implementation of standards

1. Needs Assessment

Before drafting and finalizing a country work plan under the Standards Alliance, ANSI will conduct a needs assessment with each participating country. This needs assessment will be based on background research, in-country consultations, and consultations in the U.S. In-country, ANSI will meet with the national standards body, trade ministry, line ministries/regulators, and other government and private sector organizations. In the U.S., consultations will include government and private sector stakeholders (e.g. U.S. government agencies such as USTR and regulators, trade associations and other industry groups) to gain more insight on perceived opportunities and challenges in the participating countries. The needs assessment will also identify other existing technical assistance and cooperation programs

already underway in the country which relate to the objectives of this program. Based on this needs assessment, ANSI will work with the local partners to develop a work plan for the country.

ANSI will follow a similar procedure for all needs assessments conducted, adjusting as needed based on known information and relationship with the participating country. This procedure will include tasks such as:

- Review the country's Standards Alliance proposal and make note of details such as: priority industry sectors or products of interest; local ministries either mentioned or implied in the proposed activities; U.S. government agencies either mentioned or implied in the proposed activities; other U.S. organizations either mentioned or implied in the proposed activities.
- Collect background information on the current landscape in the country, including: specific trade concerns, information on the U.S. trade relationship, existing technical assistance and cooperation programs (both U.S. and foreign such as European), and priority sectors for the U.S.
- Conduct consultations with relevant U.S. stakeholders to gain more insight on the background information described above and to identify any priority issues, industry sectors, or topics for cooperation. The U.S. consultations will include:
 - USTR
 - U.S. Department of Commerce, National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) and International Trade Administration (ITA)
 - Regulatory agencies mentioned or relevant to the country's proposal
 - ANSI members and other private sector organizations, especially in the sectors identified as priorities by either the participating country or the U.S.
- Conduct in-country consultations with a variety of stakeholder organizations to gain more insight on perceived opportunities and challenges in the participating county, and to lead toward the development of a work plan of agreed-upon activities. The in-country consultations will be arranged with assistance from the local partner agency, USAID facility, or other partner as identified by ANSI and USAID, and will include:
 - The national standards body and inquiry point (if separate agencies)
 - Trade ministry
 - Ministries mentioned in the proposal or counterparts to relevant USG agencies
 - Regulatory coordination agency (OMB-type) if applicable
 - USAID staff or facilities in the country/region
 - Private sector organizations or supporting partners

During the in-country consultations, ANSI will review with the local partners the proposed activities and discuss other items such as: goals/objectives of the engagement (external from the activities proposed); desired outcomes (what does success look like?); who is best suited to perform agreed-upon activities (ANSI, USAID, other).

The primary objectives of the in-country consultations include:

- Collect information about participants' background and their current roles and responsibilities within their respective agencies
 - Identify challenges or problem areas within the Standards Alliance initiative that are important to participants and could potentially be addressed through collaboration
 - Identify existing or planned regulatory priorities
 - Identify knowledge gaps
 - Identify potential stakeholders or partners not yet engaged
 - Assess factors that would influence willingness to actively participate, and determine interest in assuming a leadership role or other responsibilities
 - Assess preferences for format and frequency of periodic meetings and on-going collaboration
 - Identify a primary point of contact that will agree to the work plan and coordinate local input to ANSI
 - Refine proposed activities based on actual goals and desired outcomes
 - Introduce known U.S. priorities and discuss potential additional activities
 - Begin to identify preliminary timeline for engagement
- At the conclusion of the consultations, ANSI will present the results of the needs assessment to the local partners and USAID and lead the development of a written work plan outlining program activities for the country that may be used and updated for up to three (3) years.

2. Engagement with the TBT inquiry point

Towards the first category of assistance listed on Standards Alliance applications, ANSI and USAID will partner with the U.S. TBT inquiry point at the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) to develop and implement effective inquiry point training and exchange. The type of engagement with each participating country/region will depend upon the maturity and experience of the local inquiry point and past engagement with the U.S. or other WTO members.

In order to respond most efficiently to the requests for inquiry point assistance, ANSI will work with NIST to arrange 2-3 regional training programs in the first year (2014), incorporating as many individual requests as possible. In addition, 1-2 bilateral exchanges either at NIST headquarters or in-country may be scheduled with inquiry points that were not included in regional programs or that require specific or advanced engagement.

For both the regional training programs and the bilateral exchanges, NIST staff will lead the development of the agenda with the partner country/region, develop the content and presentations for the training, and conduct any necessary pre-training surveys to assess inquiry point capacity. ANSI and/or USAID will facilitate other logistical considerations for a 2 ½-3 day training program including selecting and negotiating with a venue, translation and interpretation, printing of materials, inviting and registering participants.

To the extent possible, ANSI and USAID will strive to schedule inquiry point exchanges and/or training so that NIST staff may participate directly (travel funding provided). If/when this is not

possible due to scheduling or travel constraints, ANSI will seek recommendations from NIST regarding qualified consultants who may complete the work instead.

Through the training programs and bilateral exchanges, ANSI and NIST will also collect information about the IT-related capacity of participating inquiry points, and provide input towards a potential statement of work for the development of a generic database to be used for an electronic notification system to be used by inquiry points. This notification system would be based on existing services such as the WTO's TBT Information Management System (<http://tbtims.wto.org/>) and Notify U.S. (<https://tsapps.nist.gov/notifyus/data/index/index.cfm>), and could ideally be implemented in multiple Standards Alliance countries.

The tentative plan for inquiry point engagement in the first year of the Standards Alliance includes the following activities:

- Bilateral exchange with Kenya, in coordination with ANSI needs assessment consultations (October 2013 TBC)
- Regional inquiry point training for East African Community (EAC) (February 2014 TBC based on needs assessment outcomes)
- Regional inquiry point training for Southern African Development Community (SADC) (late Q2 2014)
- Regional inquiry point training for ASEAN (late Q3 2014)
- 1-2 bilateral exchanges in the U.S. to be scheduled based on availability and the outcomes of needs assessment consultations and training programs

3. Workshops or other information exchanges

The workshop or seminar format may be used to conduct training modules, discuss priority topics, or conduct information exchange. In order to demonstrate impact, knowledge assessments will be conducted before and after training sessions to monitor understanding of the core principles. Examples of the types of training and/or workshops that may be conducted include, but are not limited to:

- Introductory or "basic training" on core principles such as the WTO TBT Agreement; the Code of Good Practice for the Preparation, Adoption and Use of Standards (Annex 3 of the TBT Agreement) and its implementation; effective engagement in and use of international standards; leveraging input from the private sector
- Train-the-trainer sessions to help ensure that the public and private sectors continue to understand the issues and continuously develop improved approaches and solutions.
- Specific industry priorities (for example, a workshop could cover the standardization activities in the U.S. and participating country for a given sector such as textiles)
- Information exchange on regulatory priorities if a participating country has indicated an intent to regulate in a high priority sector or area of interest
- Conformity assessment policies and practices, and a risk-based approach

4. Studies

ANSI will work with the local partners and experts in the U.S. to develop studies that may be used as reference guides and tools for building capacity in specific sectors or subjects. For instance, in working to improve industry capacity to contribute to standards activities, case studies from other U.S. or international corporate experience can serve as an additional tool during training.

In addition, case studies may be commissioned to examine target areas for cooperation in a defined area of standardization; establishing mirror committees for international standards activities; incorporating public comment during regulation or standardization; and other areas that reflect the core objectives of the Standards Alliance. The studies could then be translated and made available for multiple participating countries.

5. Online tools

To foster transparency and provide easy-to-use tools for industry to access the requirements that impact market access, ANSI maintains the StandardsPortal (www.StandardsPortal.org) as an online resource for global trade. The StandardsPortal currently contains basic information about the U.S. system and the key organizations involved in standards and conformity assessment, as well as links to other resources for accessing standards, regulations, and other requirements. The website also currently holds similar information for China, India and Korea. This tool can be expanded to include accessible information on the systems for standards and regulations in participating countries, and existing information may also be translated to accommodate additional languages (U.S. information is currently available in English, Mandarin Chinese, and Korean.)

In addition, online tools may be requested to assist participating countries improve their capacity in other areas such as e-rulemaking and inquiry point operation. As noted above, ANSI will partner with NIST to examine opportunities for an electronic notification system deliverable for inquiry points. In addition, ANSI will partner with the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to identify opportunities for similar e-rulemaking tools that may be delivered.

6. Guest researchers and staff exchange

Training and other information exchange may be reinforced through staff exchange or guest researcher opportunities. Many existing programs offered by U.S. organizations and agencies may be utilized, including among others:

- ANSI's International Guest Researcher Program (IGRP) – designed to facilitate information sharing and staff-level relationship-building between ANSI and our partners around the globe. This program creates an opportunity for interested professionals to conduct research or to work on projects in ANSI's offices in Washington, DC for periods ranging from two months to one year. Guest researchers are expected to have the support of their home organizations. IGRP participants work on projects or undertake research that brings mutual benefit both to their home institute and to ANSI.
- NIST's Foreign Guest Researcher Program offers scientists from around the globe the opportunity to work collaboratively with NIST scientists. Foreign guest

researchers at NIST fall into three categories: those supported by their home institutions; researchers supported through bilateral programs or international organizations; and direct scientist-to-scientist collaboration or support. More: <http://www.nist.gov/iaao/intlafr.cfm>

- The Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC)'s International Extended Training Exchange Program
- The State Department's International Visitor Leadership Program – Through short-term visits to the United States, current and emerging foreign leaders in a variety of fields experience this country firsthand and cultivate lasting relationships with their American counterparts. See more at: <http://exchanges.state.gov/non-us/program/international-visitor-leadership-program-ivlp#sthash.oMTnMm25.dpuf>

7. Mentoring for the implementation of standards

In priority sectors identified by the U.S. and/or participating country, additional assistance may be provided regarding a particular standard or set of standards. These engagements may serve as practical implementation of the concepts covered through training or other activities listed above. This mentoring could include direct exchange between a standards developer and local agency or industry, education for practitioners or assessors, guidance for a technical committee, or other assistance. ANSI will leverage expertise from its member organizations to identify priority sectors and targets for collaboration. Outcomes may include implementation of trade-friendly requirements in participating countries, increased cooperation and participation in international standards activities,

YEAR ONE PLAN

The first year of the Standards Alliance will be largely focused on conducting needs assessments and finalizing country work plans. A list of planned activities for year one provided in the following section, and a preliminary schedule to indicate sequencing of events is provided at the end of the section. As the program progresses, additional activities may be identified based on private sector interest/expertise or outcomes of initial activities.

1. U.S. Launch Ceremony (Washington, DC)

To formally announce the Standards Alliance and promote the initiative among U.S. experts that will be invited to participate, a public launch ceremony will be held in the Washington, DC area.

The proposed date for the launch event is Thursday, September 26, during the week of a proposed visit to Washington, DC by a Peruvian delegation under the Standards Alliance, and immediately preceding World Standards Week. If this date is not convenient for principal speakers, another date may be proposed taking into account likelihood of attracting appropriate constituents from the standards and conformity assessment community.

ANSI will organize and host the launch event at its headquarters in Washington, DC, space permitting.

2. Public outreach and communication

Throughout Year One, ANSI will promote the program among the U.S. public and private sectors, with the primary goals of identifying expertise that may be leveraged in delivering the assistance to participating countries. Working with USTR and USAID as appropriate, ANSI will meet with organizations individually or in conjunction with other activities, including, but not limited to:

- U.S. Department of State – meet with country desk officers and in-country representatives in the course of conducting needs assessments and workplan development
- National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) – meet with leadership and TBT Inquiry Point staff to discuss inclusion of these topics in the program’s activities
- U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) – meet with leadership to discuss agricultural and medical device-related topics that have been proposed
- Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) – meet with leadership and international staff to discuss regulated product sectors that have been proposed
- U.S. Trade and Development Agency (USTDA) – meet with leadership to discuss possible overlap of activities in participating countries
- ANSI Member Forums – brief forums of companies, standards developers and other organizational members of ANSI and identify specific sectors/regions of expertise

In addition, in the beginning of Year One, ANSI will launch standardsalliance.ansi.org as a public website with information about the Standards Alliance. The website will be updated frequently as new countries and activities are identified.

Expected outputs: Publicly available website, identification of interested U.S. experts and organizations to participate in Standards Alliance activities

3. Needs assessment for each participating country

ANSI will conduct the needs assessments for each participating country/region in Year One, scheduling consultations in-country and in the U.S. as needed. As described above, the needs assessment results will inform the work plan that ANSI and a local partner agree upon.

Expected outputs: Country work plans for ten (10) countries/regions

4. Inquiry Point Exchange

As described above, ANSI will partner with NIST to develop and implement effective inquiry point exchange on a regional basis.

Expected outputs:

- Bilateral exchange with Kenya, in coordination with ANSI needs assessment consultations (October 2013 TBC)
- Regional inquiry point training for East African Community (EAC) (February 2014 TBC based on needs assessment outcomes)

- Regional inquiry point training for Southern African Development Community (SADC) (late Q2 2014)
- Regional inquiry point training for ASEAN (late Q3 2014)
- 1-2 bilateral exchanges in the U.S. to be scheduled based on availability and the outcomes of needs assessment consultations and training programs

5. Introductory exchanges on TBT principles with existing USAID facilities

In participating countries where an existing USAID project has the capacity and interest to conduct initial Standards Alliance activities, ANSI will work with the USAID facility, USTR, and other experts to participate in and deliver introductory exchanges on best practices and TBT principles.

Expected outputs:

- [Good Regulatory Practices: Shared Experiences of the United States and Indonesia](#)
June 20-21, 2013 Jakarta, Indonesia
Exchange on interagency coordination and public consultation, with identification of areas for further cooperation.
- Exchange on experiences in standardization and regulation
August 6, 2013 Lima, Peru and August 8, 2013 Arequipa, Peru
- Training/information exchange on metrology and legal metrology
August 29, 2013 (TBC)
Lima, Peru and a second city
- Training/information exchange on conformity assessment
September 10-12, 2013 (TBC)
Lima, Peru and a second city

PRELIMINARY SCHEDULE

The timeline illustrated below represents tentative dates for known activities in the categories described above. Additional activities may be added according to the agreed-upon country plans.

Key:

	U.S. Launch Ceremony
	Public outreach/communication
	Needs assessment
	Inquiry Point Exchange
	Existing USAID facility activity

	06/13	07/13	08/13	09/13	10/13	11/13	12/13	01/14	02/14	03/14	04/14	05/14
USA												
Central America												
Colombia												
EAC												
Indonesia												
Mexico												
MENA												
Peru												
SADC												
Vietnam/ASEAN												
Yemen												

MEASURES OF SUCCESS

Each country work plan will include specific desired outcomes and metrics of success for the activities proposed in that country. In addition, over the life of the Standards Alliance the following overall measures may be used:

- Understanding of the WTO TBT measured through a comparison of knowledge assessments conducted before and after training sessions, communication frequency between inquiry points, and/or number of comments raised during bilateral or multilateral interaction.
- Implementation of the Code of Good Practice (Annex 3 of the TBT Agreement) by central government and other standardizing bodies.
- Transparency measured by the number and/or percentage of proposed technical regulations that are notified to the WTO Secretariat, and through comparison with baseline rates.
- Increased engagement in international standardization measured by participation levels in organizations such as the International Organization for Standardization (ISO), International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC); and others.
- Increased consultation with the private sector through workshops, stakeholder comments opportunities, responses to stakeholder questions, etc.
- Progress in areas of trade concerns between the U.S. and partner governments, potentially including reduced compliance costs and/or greater market access for U.S. and domestic firms.