

3.7 Sourcing inspection services

Some donors, destination countries and governmental bodies require that goods are inspected when they arrive in country, to ensure they have not been damaged in transit and that the goods entering the country match the customs declaration (shipping documents) and respect the quality standards imposed by the country.

There is a limited number of companies that provide inspection services and their rates are usually based on their local branches' fees, transport fees and laboratories' fees. These rates will often lack transparency and are hard to pass on to donors if they have not been pre-agreed in an approved budget, so it is important to include an assessment of the needs for inspection services in the review of the project design phase (see IQM guidance documents for more details on this). SGS and Intertek are the two major inspection service providers in the world.

Wherever possible, ensure that the inspection process is managed by either the selling or the shipping party, as they will manage the relationship with the service provider more effectively.

Inspection controls can also be required at departure. They are usually best managed by the selling party, but this is not always permitted, and donors or governments may have appointed independent inspection agents to sample and test some shipments.