

Independent Evaluation Report

Effectiveness and impact of the UNDA project

**“Strengthening the capacity of transition and
developing economies to participate in cross-border
agricultural food supply chains”**

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List of abbreviations and acronyms

ADB	--	Asian Development Bank
ASEAN	--	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
e-SPS	--	electronic sanitary and phytosanitary (certification)
FAO	–	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GIZ	--	The German Corporation for International Cooperation
ITC	--	International Trade Centre
SDG	–	Sustainable Development Goal
UNDA	–	United Nations Development Account
UNDESA	–	United Nations Department for Economic and Social Affairs
UNECE	–	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
UNESCAP	--	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and Pacific
WP.7	–	Working Party 7 on Agricultural Quality Standards

Executive Summary

1. This evaluation analyses the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and impact of the United Nations Development Account (UNDA) project “Strengthening the capacity of transition and developing economies to participate in cross-border agricultural food supply chains”, implemented by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) and the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and Pacific (UNESCAP) between 2014 and 2017. The results of the evaluation will improve the implementation of UNECE projects in the future.
2. The project had a double stated objective: (a) to enhance the understanding and increase the capacity among public and private sector stakeholders to apply standards and best practices for efficient regulation, information exchange and agricultural food quality in the development of national and sectoral strategies, and (b) to strengthen the capacity of policymakers and practitioners to exchange experiences and best practices for facilitating enhanced agricultural food supply.
3. Considering the objective’s alignment to UNECE and UNESCAP mandates, the long experience in agricultural standards setting and trade facilitation, the relevance towards the MDGs (and now for the SDGs), and the thoroughness of the project planning, the project’s relevance is rated *Excellent*.
4. The project had a sound design building on previous experience. The logical chain between outputs, outcomes and impacts has been adequately analysed during the design stage. The activities were implemented delivering the planned outputs with the expected level of quality and timeliness. Some challenges demanded extra efforts in implementation, but they did not negatively influence the achievements and generated the lessons learnt. Performance indicators were satisfactorily set, but outcome results are not measured. Accordingly, the assessment of outcome level results can only generate assumptions about the effectiveness of the project. The effectiveness is therefore rated as *Fully Satisfactory*.
5. Having achieved timely results, with adequate financing, high cost-efficiency in implementing activities (especially by partnering with organizations which partially covered the costs), the activities prove to be *Highly Satisfactory*.
6. The project generated positive results at impact level in all target regions, both intended and unintended. The standards and trade facilitation tools are only a part of the whole trade problematic, along with access to finance, infrastructure, political stability and market regulations. Therefore, the project has a *Highly Satisfactory* impact rating.
7. The project has been relevant at the stage of proposal and continues to be relevant in the near future. The project’s relevance is generated by the importance of agriculture and trade, the requests expressed by the member States, the alignment with the mandates of UNECE and UNESCAP and the long experience of the two organizations with the topics. The project contributed to achievement of two MDGs and would currently address four of the Sustainable Development Goals by trying to solve problems with social, economic and environmental impacts. In order to maximize the relevance and potential impact, the Recommendation 1 could be considered.

8. The standards setting component of the project has been timely implemented, the material used in subsequent workshops, training events, and disseminated online as well. Most of the participants and beneficiaries consider the trainings were highly relevant and intend to integrate the knowledge in future policy or technical work in their respective countries. However, the final event makes an exception, as the project “concluding” element was not prominent. It apparently failed to capitalize on the achievements and to mobilize the stakeholders for common efforts in the future (also see Recommendation 9).

9. The most important asset UNECE and UNESCAP brought to the capacity building activities was their wide expertise and availability of (networks of) experts from around the world. In several cases, the partner organizations covered the costs for meeting participants’ travel as well as meeting and logistics arrangements, contributing to the excellent efficiency. In order to maximize the positive role played by the networks of experts, UNECE could consider Recommendation 2.

10. Recommendations:

Strategic Recommendation 1: In designing future project proposals, envisage a broader integrated approach. Agricultural standards and trade facilitation are just two “links” in the supply chain “from the field to the plate”. As UNECE and UNESCAP have clear mandates, strategic partnerships should be envisaged to cover other areas of improvement (e.g. multilateral development banks could address the issue of micro-financing of small producers and traders; FAO could support improving the productivity of producers; UNEP/GEF could contribute in decreasing the carbon footprint of the production).

Recommendation 2: As a result of activities in Central Asia, an informal standing working group (“Central Asia Working Group”) was established, having an advisory function for UNECE. In order to capitalize on the initiative, a degree of formalization should be envisaged and UNNExT could serve as a model. Similar approaches within UNECE (e.g. International Centres of Excellence on Public Private Partnerships or the Group of Experts on Coal Mine Methane) also prove to be effective models. When establishing such working groups, the approach should also contain retaining mechanisms for good qualified specialists, in order to minimize their fluctuation.

Recommendation 3: Partnerships with national and local stakeholders, as well the UN country teams, is strongly recommended for future projects (linked to recommendation 1). Besides broadening the thematic coverage, the partnerships raise the profile of the projects and help lowering the costs (maximizing the efficiency);

Recommendation 4: Continue the “open process” approach, making available online links to all events, training materials and case studies. They facilitate knowledge exchange and increase trust and interest from all stakeholders.

Recommendation 5: In order to avoid situations when finding appropriate consultants for technical work is difficult or ill-timed, UNECE and UNESCAP should implement a roster of vetted specialists. The roster could be shared by UNECE and ESCAP, eventually by other UN organizations.

Recommendation 6: Continue the Trade Facilitation Survey implemented by UNESCAP. The survey is a very cost-effective way to collect data and to adjust tools and projects to the actual needs of the actors in the region.

Recommendation 7: Continue collecting case studies and create a Best Practice Guide. The Case Studies should focus both on best practices as well as on lessons learnt from failures, and should cover diverse geographic areas as well as topics. The examples and lessons learnt should be compiled in a Best Practice Guide to contribute to better understanding and improvement of supply chains in agriculture.

Recommendation 8: Create a centralized online training platform for standards setting, implementation and trade facilitation.

Recommendation 9: Strengthen the role of the concluding project event in order to increase ownership, sustainability and dissemination of the project results in beneficiary countries and beyond. In cases when a project or its components have any form of continuation, the concluding event is essential to get endorsement from the stakeholders for the new phases.

Chapter 1: Introduction and Methodology

Purpose

11. This evaluation analyses the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and impact of the United Nations Development Account (UNDA) project “Strengthening the capacity of transition and developing economies to participate in cross-border agricultural food supply chains”, implemented by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) and the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and Pacific (UNESCAP) between 2014 and 2017. The results of the evaluation will improve the implementation of UNECE projects in the future.

Scope

12. The project was funded by the UN Development Account (UNDA), which is a capacity development programme of the UN Secretariat aiming at enhancing capacities of developing countries in the priority areas of the UN Development Agenda. The resources come from the Secretariat’s regular budget and currently has a biennial budget of US\$ 19 million funding around 28 projects. The implementation of UNDA projects is performed by 10 entities of the UN Secretariat: The Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), the five UN five Regional Commissions, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN Habitat) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

13. The project was executed under the 9th Tranche of the Development Account. The project that is being evaluated – “14/15AE: Strengthening the capacity of transition and developing economies to participate in cross-border agricultural food supply chains” with the total funding of US\$440,000 is one of the 59 projects that belong to tranche 9: "Supporting Member States in designing and implementing strategies and policies towards sustainable, equitable and inclusive development". This theme is closely aligned to the Rio +20 outcomes, and the Development Account's overall objective of 'enhancing capacities of developing countries in the priority areas of the UN Development Agenda'.

14. The project had a double stated objective: (a) to enhance the understanding and increase the capacity among public and private sector stakeholders to apply standards and best practices for efficient regulation, information exchange and agricultural food quality in the development of national and sectoral strategies, and (b) to strengthen the capacity of policymakers and practitioners to exchange experiences and best practices for facilitating enhanced agricultural food supply.

15. The target countries were Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Serbia and Kosovo (UNECE region) and Bangladesh, Nepal, Lao PDR, Cambodia and Myanmar (UNESCAP region). The evaluation will consider the whole duration of implementation – May 2014 – December 2017.

Methodology

16. The methodology for this evaluation is based on the Terms of Reference provided by UNECE (Annex 1), the UNECE Evaluation Policy and the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) Standards for Evaluation in the UN System comprising the ancillary Code of Conduct and the Ethical Guidelines. Gender considerations were also covered by the evaluation to the relevant extent, taking into account guidance provided by the UNEG United Nations Evaluation Group on the matter. Given the short time since the completion of the project, the evaluation criteria “impact” as envisaged in the ToR cannot be assessed. Instead, the evaluation focus on the potential impact the project outputs might trigger in the mid-term future.

17. The evaluation consisted of a desk review of relevant documents (Project Concept Note and Project Document, Annual and Final Reports, workshop materials, the Terms of Reference and Work Plan of the Working Party on Agricultural Quality Standards (WP.7) and other materials available for online consultation. An online-questionnaire¹ collecting feedback from people involved in activities implementation and beneficiaries of trainings was also utilized. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with people involved in the project management from UNECE in Geneva and UNESCAP in Bangkok, as well as with some partners.

18. After collecting the data, the analysis involved qualitative analysis software sorting the information according to the evaluating questions. The next step identified the intervention logic, and tried to establish causalities between intervention components and the achieved results, according to theory based evaluation principles and experimentally using elements of the Process Tracing² methodology.

19. The evaluator synthesized the results of analysis and supplementary materials in a policy-oriented synthesis report, systematically covering the evaluation purpose, the agreed questions, and the specified criteria (relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and potential impact), to produce valid and credible conclusions and recommendations. The recommendations should be used by UNECE to improve the planning and implementation of projects, to maximize the impact of its work and to set further improvements for similar projects.

20. The duration of the evaluation was of 20 working days during the period from December 1st, 2017 – March 31st, 2018. The evaluation activity has been performed by an independent evaluator³ with socio-economic background, having expertise in implementation, monitoring and evaluation of international development projects (including with the UNECE), and experience with policy design and capacity building related projects in UNECE member States.

21. In the evaluating process, the evaluation criteria to be assessed according to the Terms of Reference (Relevance, Efficiency, Effectiveness and Impact) received one of the following ratings: “*Excellent – Fully Satisfactory – Partly Satisfactory - Partly Unsatisfactory – or Unsatisfactory*”. The evaluator split each

¹ Available at <https://kwiksurveys.com/s/5YCtjntP>

² Process Tracing offers a rigorous method appropriate for ex post evaluations, without the requirement for baseline or counterfactual data

³ The independent evaluation was conducted by Mr. Marius Birsan, and was carried out in close cooperation with the UNECE Programme Management Unit

evaluation criteria in sub-criteria (e.g. relevance was split in two criteria with similar weighting: *strategic relevance* of the UN organizations' mandates, contribution to global goals and *relevance of the project design*, where the problem analysis based on member States' requests, the logic framework and the stakeholder analysis played the central role). Each sub-criteria was noted on a scale from 1 to 5, generating an aggregate score for each main evaluation criteria.

Chapter 2: Background information

22. As the world population is growing fast, so is the demand for food and agricultural products. New technologies in food safety develop in order to meet demand in terms of quantity and quality. In parallel, improved standards and trade flows enabling the agriculture industry to keep up with the growing demand are required. Market access issues are key obstacles to achieve supply-demand equilibrium, and standards setting bodies are challenged to deliver at an accelerated pace.

23. The challenge of how to feed the increasing world population in the future – in a sustainable, cost-effective and environmentally friendly way – generates an agricultural revolution. According to Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the world's population is expected to grow to almost 10 billion by 2050, boosting agricultural demand – in a scenario of modest economic growth – by some 50 percent compared to 2013. Income growth in low- and middle-income countries would hasten a dietary transition towards higher consumption of meat, fruits and vegetables, relative to that of cereals, requiring commensurate shifts in output and adding pressure on natural resources.

24. Agriculture played and continues to play a key role, feeding the world's populations and producing what we need to survive and thrive. Sustainable agriculture is achieved through efficient use of farmland, of natural seeds and by avoiding overuse of chemicals. Standards can be valuable tools to bring this to attainment by providing guidance and best practice for machinery, tools and farming methods. The standards in agriculture also provide a common international language, widening opportunities for cross-border trade of food and farm animals. Thus, not only enjoy a good-quality end product that is safe to eat, consumers also have a wider choice available.

25. The agricultural sector was the main pillar for employment around the world until year 2000. As countries develop, the share of the population working in agriculture decreased. After 2000, the services sector became the most important employment sector. Worldwide, the percentage of people employed in agriculture (persons of working age engaged in any activity in agriculture, hunting, forestry and fishing) dropped from 41.8% in 1991 to 28.7% in 2016 (ILOSTAT database). However, the percentage varies among regions. In East Asia and Pacific⁴, the employment in agriculture is still high - from 55% to 29%, in Europe and Central Asia⁵ – from 24% to 16%. In comparison, in OECD countries the employment decreased from 9% to 4.7% in the same period (see Fig. 1).

⁴ Excluding high-income countries in the region

⁵ idem

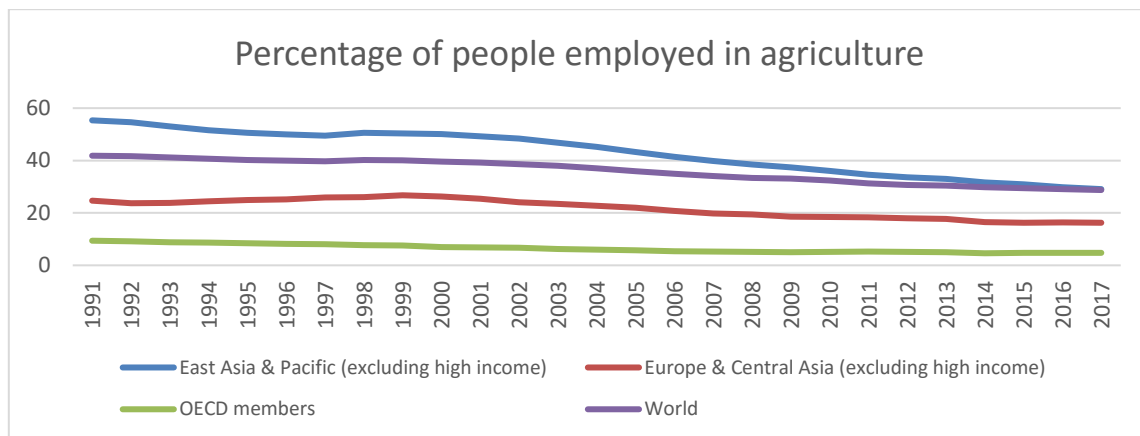


Fig. 1: Percentage of people employed in agriculture in selected regions and worldwide. Source: ILOSTAT

26. Although employment in agriculture decreased, the number of workers in this sector reached over one billion in 2009⁶. Agriculture provides a livelihood for approximately 30 percent of the world’s active workforce. Considering that the large share of workers engaged in agriculture are lower income people, the changes in the sector have a major impact on welfare throughout much of the world.

27. International food trade has existed for thousands of years. Until the last century, food was mainly produced, sold and consumed locally. Since then, increasing quantities of food is moving across borders due to a combination of social, economic and technological reasons. Transportation has improved greatly, and preservation methods, such as freezing, have been created. In the economic expansion after the Second World War, more people had more money to travel where they discovered new food habits in other parts of the world. Mass migrations of people between countries and continents also contributed to the changes in eating patterns. The amount of food traded internationally has grown exponentially, and a quantity and variety of food never before possible travels the globe today.

28. Food supply chains have lengthened as the physical distance from producer to the consumer has increased and the consumption of processed, packaged and prepared foods has risen (except for the most isolated rural communities).

29. Especially in developing and transition economies and in rural and border regions, agriculture and agricultural trade plays a central role for sustained social and economic development. These countries and regions have low comparative advantages to attract investments in services or high technologies. However, agriculture trade remains an often under-utilized potential source for welfare.

30. Cross-border trade of agricultural goods is complex and depends on many factors often beyond countries or governments’ control (e.g. external influence of climatic conditions or world food prices, or the perishable nature of the goods). The production is obstructed by lack of capital and business skills, inefficient production models, inadequate technical and transport infrastructures. The trade of agricultural products is additionally hampered by red tape and insufficiently coordinated control agencies. These barriers slowing down cross-border trade and makes it more expensive. As a result, inefficiencies in the agri-food supply chains not only lead to income losses but also food losses and insecure food supply.

⁶ <http://www.fao.org/docrep/015/i2490e/i24x90e01b.pdf>

31. The international community has been trying to address some of these issues, particularly those linked to core structural and regulatory aspect. A range of tools, standards and best practices was developed and implemented by many countries and organizations. The developing and transition countries are not fully aware of or not able to apply most of the tools. Most of the best practices material is not centralized, and often requires additional effort for analysis and implementation.

32. The importance of agriculture and related topics was highlighted along the time by all global agreements related to sustainable development. The first UN's Millennium Development Goal was "Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger". The halving of the proportion of undernourished people in the developing regions is recorded as a success (2015 vs. 1990), as well as the fact that one in seven children worldwide are underweight, down from one in four in 1990⁷. The increased attention was further recognized during the Conference on Sustainable Development held in Rio de Janeiro from 20 to 22 June 2012 (Rio+20), where agriculture and food security were under focus.

33. The global community adopted in 2015 the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), by which all countries committed to implement activities and achieve a comprehensive set of targets. Amongst the 17 Goals, several are directly linked to agriculture and food production, and agri-food trade: SDG 1 (No Poverty), SDG 2 (Zero Hunger), SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), SDG 12 (Responsible Production and Consumption), SDG 14 (Life below Water) and SDG 15 (Life on Land). In order to achieve the targets, creating functional and broad partnerships is critical, thus (SDG 17 - Partnerships for the Goals is equally relevant.).

Chapter 3: Project Design - Relevance

34. Through its Economic Cooperation and Trade Division, UNECE develops global agricultural quality standards to facilitate international trade⁸. The standards encourage high-quality production, improve profitability and protect consumer interests. Governments, producers, traders, importers, exporters and international organizations use UNECE standards internationally. They cover a wide spectrum of agricultural products: fresh fruit and vegetables (FFV), dry and dried produce (DDP), seed potatoes, meat, cut flowers, eggs and egg products. All interested parties can take part in developing UNECE standards, from producer, trade and consumer associations, as members of national delegations.

35. According to its Terms of Reference (ECE/EX/22⁹, 2015), the Steering Committee on Trade Capacity and Standards oversees and guides the development of international norms and standards, procedures and best practices for reducing transaction costs associated with export and import processes and increasing the efficiency, predictability and transparency of trade regulations and procedures. It replaces the former Committee on Trade, and is convened once a year in a session that is open to all relevant international organizations and other stakeholders.

36. In 1949, UNECE established the Working Party on Agricultural Quality Standards, aiming at developing, interpreting and promoting the practical application of internationally agreed commercial

⁷ The Millennium Development Goals Report 2015, UNDP

⁸ E/ECE/1434/Rev.1

⁹ https://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/trade/SCTCS_2015/ECE-EX-22E.pdf

quality standards for agricultural produce. The Working Party (WP.7) adopted its current terms of reference (document ECE/TRADE/C/WP.7/2007/12) at its November 2007 session. WP.7 acts within the framework of the policies of the UN and the UNECE, and is subject to the general guidance of the UNECE Committee on Trade. The WP.7 is assigned with the implementation of the work under the UNECE Trade sub-programme covering commercial quality standards for agricultural produce. The activities of WP.7 and its specialized sections are primarily of a technical nature and complement policy-related work undertaken by other international bodies.

37. The objective of the project is aligned with UNECE's work mandate (as defined in the current Work Plan): to facilitate greater economic integration and cooperation among its 55 member States and to promote sustainable development and economic prosperity. The mandate should be achieved through (I) policy dialogue, (II) negotiation of international legal instruments, (III) development of regulations and norms, (IV) exchange and application of best practices as well as economic and technical expertise, and (V) technical cooperation for countries with economies in transition.

38. The UNECE Strategic Framework 2014 – 2015¹⁰ foresees the following Expected Accomplishments (EA) for the UNECE sub-programme: (a) adoption and increased implementation by member States of ECE recommendations, norms, standards, guidelines and tools for trade facilitation and electronic business; (b) adoption by member States of ECE recommendations, norms, standards, guidelines and tools for regulatory cooperation; (c) Adoption and increased implementation by member States of ECE recommendations, norms, standards, guidelines and tools for agricultural quality standards; and (d) enhanced national capacity of member States for trade policy development and implementation. The project's objectives contribute to achievement of all EAs.

39. Among the broad mandate of UNESCAP, the Trade and Investment Division (currently Trade, Investment and Innovation Division) focuses on assisting developing and transitioning countries in the region to understand and implement regional and multilateral trading and investment systems, in order to facilitate a more effective participation in the global economy. In the Second Session of the Division (2009), the guidelines for facilitating intraregional trade (E/ESCAP/CTI(2)/1) outlines a set of six key activities to further advance intraregional trade facilitation. The activities were design to create a conducive environment for trade businesses in general. This objective complements UNECE' Trade Division, in order to broaden the coverage of common goals.

40. In addition, UNESCAP is mandated to implement the resolution 68/3 on "enabling paperless trade and the cross-border recognition of electronic data and documents for inclusive and sustainable intraregional trade facilitation" including developing a regional arrangement on cross-border paperless trade and information exchange. Established by UNESCAP and UNECE, the United Nations Network of Experts for Paperless Trade and Transport in Asia and the Pacific (UNNEXt) – a community of knowledge and practice for experts from developing countries and transition economies from Asia and the Pacific – contributes to implementation of electronic trade and transport systems for trade facilitation. The initial work programme focused on four priority areas, mainly related to trade. Building on the previous successes, the working programme expanded with three new focus areas, among which also the "Agricultural Trade Facilitation" is one of them.

¹⁰ https://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/OPEN_UNECE/02_Programme_Planning_and_reporting/A.67.6.prog.17.e_ECE-SF-2014-2015.pdf

41. The project document analyses the roles UNECE and UNESCAP play in both thematic areas – setting agricultural quality standards and their implementation, and trade facilitation - outlining the extensive know-how. UNECE’s WP.7 is specifically endowed to perform standard setting on agricultural products (fresh fruit and vegetables, dry and dried produce, meat and seed potatoes), building on a long experience. Both organizations implemented a similar project between 2008 and 2012 (UNDA 6th Tranche), with positive results.

42. The project has been designed to deliver for the expected accomplishments of the respective sub programmes of both UN agencies: four in the case of UNECE and three in the case of UNESCAP. The project envisaged to implement activities in four sub-regions (Western Balkans, Central Asia, South Asia and South East Asia), and the countries choice was demand-driven.

43. The relevance of the project has been clearly defined from the onset, as the project document detailed the problem (through the problem analysis tree) mirrored with an analysis of the objectives. This approach linked the needs of the sub-regions to the proposed activities and the resulting solutions. A thorough stakeholder analysis has also been performed, adding to the accuracy of the proposed solutions.

44. Relevant Facts and Key Results:

- UNECE (through its WP.7) has a long experience with setting and promoting commercial quality standards for agricultural produce;
- UNECE serves as a focal point for trade facilitation recommendations and electronic business standards, covering both commercial and government business;
- UNESCAP has the mandate to promote cooperation among 53 member States to achieve inclusive and sustainable economic and social development in Asia and the Pacific. UNESCAP has experience with trade facilitation issues especially through the network of specialists organized in UNNExT;
- The project addresses the needs of the member States as described in the background chapter, and claimed to contribute to achievement of the MDGs 1 and 8. The current relevance for the SDGs is higher;
- The objective of the project is aligned with UNECE’s Work Plan and with UNECE’s mandate and objectives;
- The activities were designed and implemented “demand driven”, as member States requested explicit support in building capacities;
- The project design and focus proved to be very relevant (topic- and time wise) in the target regions; therefore, strong and highly motivated partners were involved in the activities.

45. Considering all the above facts (alignment to UNECE and UNESCAP mandates, the long experience in agricultural standards setting and trade facilitation, relevance for the MDGs and now for the SDGs, and the thoroughness of the project planning) the project’s relevance is rated *Excellent*.

Chapter 4: Project Implementation – Effectiveness and Efficiency

Project Implementation - Efficiency

46. The project's objective was to improve the knowledge and awareness among the major stakeholders of the agri-food supply chains in the selected target countries of international standards and best practices. The activities have been implemented between May 2014 and December 2017, with no variance compared to the plan. Being a capacity building project implemented under UNDA modality, a broad range of partners have been brought together in order to support the objectives of the project. From the UN System, UNDP Offices in the region and the Regional Office in Istanbul, WTO, UNCTAD, International Trade Centre and FAO (with several sub-committees) were involved. Other partners included GIZ Offices in the region, ASEAN, ADB and many national institutions (ministries and ministerial departments, academia, industry organizations, a.o.).

47. The target countries of the capacity building activities were grouped in four sub-regions: Western Balkans (eight countries) and Central Asia (four countries) - for UNECE - respectively South-Asia (seven countries) and South-East Asia (nine countries) - for UNESCAP. Six other countries were involved by providing experts. In addition to the target countries, beneficiaries from 30 other countries attended various workshops or training events.

48. As stated in the ToR, the project was conceived as an agricultural trade facilitation project. Due to an internal restructuring in UNECE, the project was redesigned by including a standard setting component. The revamped project comprises of two parts: the part focusing on agricultural trade facilitation - assigned to UNESCAP, and a part on quality standards for cross-border trade - assigned to UNECE according to the prevailing expertise.

49. UNECE and UNESCAP had implemented between 2008 and 2012 the UNDA project (6th tranche) entitled "Enhancing the capacity of developing countries to implement international standards for commercial agricultural products to improve their trade competitiveness" and had held regional promotion and capacity-building workshops. The current project built on the previous results: the capacity building achieved had created "positive dynamics" in the work on standards and their application. Continued efforts were needed to ensure that the formed capacity was maintained in national environments (retention mechanisms and amelioration were necessary).

50. The design stage of the project included a thorough analysis of the intervention logic. Besides a simplified logical framework (including assumptions and risks), the analysis included a result-based work plan and a result based budget. The activities have a logic interlinkage and should contribute to achieve the objective. Most of the indicators attached to the activities are clear, but the baselines were not defined and the measuring methodology is also unclear. For example, the indicator IA2.1 "Increased exchange of information on best practices and lessons learned on improving agricultural supply chains through the regional network of experts" is difficult to measure without a proper baseline value and a measurement methodology.

51. The project document contained a well-designed "stakeholder analysis and capacity assessment tool". The governmental agencies and the private sector representatives were appropriately listed and the

analysis comprised of criteria such as form of involvement in the project, capacity assets and gaps, desired outcomes and stakeholder weight.

52. The final report of the project (March 2018) summarizes the achievements as “government officials and other key stakeholders from the beneficiary countries [...] received comprehensive, targeted and practical capacity-building, training and assessment material for a sustainable agricultural development beyond the project’s life cycle” (page 3). The actual achievements of the *expected accomplishments* are:

53. Expected Accomplishment 1 (EA1): “Enhanced understanding and increased capacity among public and private sector stakeholders to apply standards and best practices for efficient regulation, information exchange and agricultural food quality in the development of national and sectoral strategies to improve access to sustainable international agricultural food supply chains and increase export opportunities”. Four activities were planned in order to achieve this EA1:

54. Activity 1.1: UNECE and UNESCAP compiled and systematized knowledge referring to agricultural standards in a collection of information and training materials. Eight training materials or modules are made available on the websites of both organizations. Additionally, some materials have also been translated in languages of the region and printed (e.g. posters – see Annex 4). Links to relevant information of partnering organizations (ITC, FAO Codex Alimentarius, OECD and EU material) are also posted on the UNECE website.

55. Activity 1.2: A Guide on Facilitating Compliance for Food Safety and Quality for Cross-border Trade was created with broad input from UNNExT and ministries in the ESCAP region. It contains practical tools to facilitate compliance with food safety requirements related to cross-border trade. Additionally, a needs assessment survey for electronic Phytosanitary Certification System (e-SPS) was created in Malaysia.

56. Activity 1.3: Demand driven, four country-based case studies were created: two in the UNECE region and two in the UNESCAP (e.g. UNESCAP-UNNExT Case Study – “Agricultural Trade Facilitation: Turkish Risk Based Trade Control System TAREKS” and “Electronic Phytosanitary Certificate Exchange for Agricultural Products in Indonesia”). At the request of the benefiting countries, the case studies contain recommendations feeding into internal reform processes of both public and private sector actors.

57. Activity 1.4: In both regions, UNECE and UNESCAP organized nine regional events as workshops or trainings, while UNECE organized additional three training events within the framework of regular training and intergovernmental sessions. In the trainings and workshops 894 people have been presented experiences from the regions, standards and tools. The training efforts resulted in accelerated adoptions of standards and procedures, with potential results beyond the project’s life cycle.

58. Expected Accomplishment 2: “Strengthened capacity of policymakers and practitioners to exchange experiences and best practices for facilitating enhanced agricultural food supply chains”.

59. Activity 2.1: two regional workshops dedicated to policy makers were organized in each of the two regions - UNECE (Ireland) respectively UNESCAP (Indonesia), in the second half of 2017. These workshops capitalized on the whole work performed as part of the project and benefited from dedicated training materials, case studies and networks of specialists. The agendas, list of participants and materials uploaded on the UNECE and UNESCAP websites indicate the workshops had relevant coverage for interested beneficiaries and the variety and quality of information was appropriate. An example of an

immediate outcome of the UNECE organized workshop is that an informal standing working group was created in Central Asia aiming at having an advisory role in UNECE 's activities.

60. Activity 2.2: The project's concluding event (organized in September 2017 in China) was conceived as an event where public and private sector experts from the four sub-regions were invited to "review the project's outcomes and deliverables to ensure continuity, integration into national agendas and support for follow-up actions". Although the topics discussed are fully relevant both thematically (standards and electronic certification) and regionally, the project's concluding element was not prominent. No outcome document has been created and no follow up actions has been agreed, failing to raise the stake of the current project's achievements.

61. The internally managed satisfaction surveys (questionnaires filled in by seminars and workshop participants) were centralized by the project staff. In total 204 participants responded to the satisfaction survey. The final report summarises that 98 percent of the surveyed participants considered that the workshops had increased their knowledge on trade facilitation and agricultural trade matters. Moreover, 83 percent of participants intended to use the knowledge and skills acquired to formulate or implement agricultural trade facilitation policies. Currently there is no monitoring system implemented to follow up on the mid-term behaviour of the respondents.

62. At the outcome level, the activities under Expected Accomplishment 2 contribute to an intensified dialogue between regional players; the informal group in Central Asia was established and the experts in the Western Balkans cooperate with more regularity. In the UNESCAP target countries, the UNNExT network disseminated the training material and increased outreach and sustainability. The UNNExT Advisory Group on Agriculture Trade Facilitation further strengthened the collaboration and information exchange. An assessment of the "increased" collaboration or the progress compared to the initial situation is anecdotal and cannot be methodologically proven.

63. One of the main added values of a capacity building project is knowledge generation and dissemination, where the modern communication technology plays a crucial role besides the direct dissemination during the events. The project document had a provision that "all training modules, recommendations and Guide will be made available on UNECE's and UNESCAP's as well as UNNExT's websites". This intention has been implemented and is appropriate for dissemination at lower costs. Making the knowledge available on websites of implementing and partner organizations is also considered as contributing to increased sustainability of the project. However, posting information on the website is unidirectional, and UNECE and UNESCAP do not know who exactly in what way used the knowledge.

64. The capacity building workshops provided to the involved countries hands-on guidance on how to implement measures in order to comply with international agreements on trade and food standards. In addition, the project supported countries in their implementation of paperless measures for agricultural trade facilitation. Ministries of Agriculture from Pakistan, Lao PDR, Timor-Leste and Nepal requested continued support to implement electronic sanitary and phytosanitary certification. This will lead to agricultural trade facilitation, reduction of transaction time and costs while also enhancing food safety.

65. One of the most notable outcomes of the activities is the adoption by the Uzbek national authorities and the private sector of 80 UNECE standards in less than one year. Currently, the national actors are in

the process of implementing measures (through a series of workshops and a training centre) based on the knowledge received during the workshops.

66. An additional sign for continued relevance and need for support in capacity building was the availability and interest of broad stakeholders, expressed by positive feed-back and requests for continued support: public organizations, private sector, academia and NGOs at all levels.

67. At the implementation level, the challenges were to make the knowledge relevant to the specific needs of the member States (Activity 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3) and to select the right beneficiaries to be trained (1.4). Additionally, organizational challenges occurred (conflicting agendas of partners, difficulties in finding appropriate consultants). These challenges generated the lessons learnt presented in Chapter 7.

68. At the policy level (Activity 2.1 and 2.2) and for reaching the objective, the first challenge was the coordination among government agencies (including trade facilitation-related agencies) and line ministries. The second challenge was to find the right decision makers to participate in the capacity building activities. This challenge derives from the governance model of the transitioning countries, where the volatility of decision makers is high and the predictability of the policy making process (determinant for planning, management and regulation) is low. Both challenges were acknowledged as risks in the project document and considered throughout the implementation.

69. Relevant Facts and Key Results:

- The project used in the planning stage lessons learned from a previous UNDA project;
- Most of the activities have been implemented according to the plan, between September 2014 and December 2017; the beneficiary countries were countries from Western Balkan, Central Asia, South Asia and South East Asia;
- eight training materials and modules were generated; one case study and one need assessment was created; 894 people were trained in twelve workshops/ trainings;
- As a result of capacity-building activities, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan requested priority agri-sector analyses - the first and the second studies performed in the Central Asian sub region. In December 2017, Uzbekistan adopted 80 UNECE standards;
- New requests for capacity-building activities from the target region of this UNDA project (four countries in UNESCAP region through support letters from the Ministries) as well as from other regions (Caribbean) have been addressed to UNECE by December 2017 (Central Asia, South Asia and Caribbean). The demand was addressed to the relevant Unit in UNECE and UNESCAP;
- The appropriate dissemination channels have been employed, and the knowledge reached the targeted technical and policy-making audience.
- The workshops collected information on post-behaviour through questionnaires, with predominantly positive indicators. However, a monitoring system to understand and commensurate the mid- and long-term effects of how this information has been used is not in place;
- Bot expected accomplishments were fully achieved, as almost 900 people now have increased understanding and capacity on standards and regulations, and policy makers and practitioners increased the information exchange.

70. The project had a sound design building on previous experience. The logical chain between outputs, outcomes and impacts has been adequately analysed during the design stage. The activities were implemented delivering the planned outputs with the expected level of quality and timeliness.

Performance indicators were satisfactorily set, but outcome results are not measured. Accordingly, the assessment of outcome level results can only generate assumptions about the effectiveness of the activities set, and the general rating is *Fully Satisfactory*.

Table 1: Intended Outputs vs. Actual Outputs and Outcomes

Objective: To strengthen the capacity of selected target countries with economies in transition and developing countries to improve the planning, management and regulation of cross border agricultural food supply chains in order to support enhanced competitiveness and improved food security.			
	Planned Activities	Actual Outputs	Comments on Actual Outputs
<p><u>Expected Accomplishment 1:</u></p> <p>Enhanced understanding and increased capacity among public and private sector stakeholders to apply standards and best practices for efficient regulation, information exchange and agricultural food quality in the development of national and sectoral strategies to improve access to sustainable</p>	<p><u>Activity 1.1.</u> Develop and publish training materials/modules on minimum quality requirements for the export of agricultural produce (set 1), the technical and legal infrastructure necessary to ensure consistent quality exports and increase countries' prospects to participate in cross-border agricultural trade (set 2). The exact content of the two sets will be determined in the preparatory phase of the project. The training modules will pool standards and best practice material available at UNECE as well as material from other international organizations (including OECD, FAO, EU) and combine it with new modules on other prerequisites for successful cross-border agri-food trade including risk mitigation, legislative requirements etc.;</p> <p><u>Indicator IA1.1:</u> Increased number of decision makers from government agencies and private sector who understand international standards and best practices for sustainable agricultural food supply chains.</p> <p>Achieved: eight training materials and modules created; one case study and one need assessment created; 894 people trained in nine workshops and trainings.</p>	<p>Inventory of available material was completed in Dec. 2014 – for set 1 and 2.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Set 1: Preparation of material (set 1) - February 2015 - September 2015 - Set 2: Preparation of material (Set 2) - January 2016 - The compilation of UNECE training material on best practices and international instruments for enhancing agricultural supply chains was finalized in late 2015. A strategic partnership with another international organization (ITC) was expected to help develop the web platform and disseminate the material to a wider audience (the first part of the material going online in early 2016). <p>Links for training material can be accessed in Annex 4.</p>	<p>The content of the two sets was designed in the preparatory phase of the project.</p> <p>The training modules blend standards and best practice material created by UNECE with materials from other international organizations (including OECD, FAO, EU).</p> <p>The training material combines new modules on additional elements for successful cross-border agri-food trade (e.g. risk mitigation, legislative requirements etc.)</p> <p>Posters depicting quality standards in dried fruits were printed in English and Russian, and have been translated into Kyrgyz, Uzbek and Tajik languages.</p> <p>The training material on paperless trade is based on practical examples. Electronic sanitary and phytosanitary certification was identified as an area where developing countries required assistance and technical materials.</p>

international agricultural food supply chains and increase export opportunities.	<p><u>Activity 1.2.</u> Develop a guide (set of recommendations) for the assessment of shortcomings in agriculture supply chains and the improvement of trade efficiency to help countries increase their access to cross-border agricultural trade using international standards and best practices.</p> <p><u>Indicator IA1.2:</u> Increased number of new trade facilitation tools, instruments and international standards in use or planned for use to more efficiently plan and manage agriculture supply chains, as evidenced by policy and procedural changes</p>	<p>A Guide on Facilitating Compliance to Food Safety and Food Quality for Cross-border Trade in Asia and the Pacific was created</p> <p>Needs Assessment Survey and User Requirement Study for Electronic Phytosanitary Certification System – The Experience of Malaysia – was achieved.</p>	<p>The Guide was peer-reviewed by UNNExT experts, representative of Ministries of Agriculture in the region and other stakeholders.</p>
	<p><u>Activity 1.3.</u> Prepare a series of country-based case studies which analyses priority agri-food supply chains in selected countries, show how the application of standards and best practices can improve these supply chains and draft a prioritized implementation action plans for subsequent reform processes. The studies will provide concrete examples and lessons learnt that will be integrated into the capacity-building workshops of the project.</p>	<p>A case study on priority agri-food supply chain (Tajikistan - dried apricots), started in December 2014, was completed in May 2015 and translated into Russian.</p> <p>UNESCAP produced a case study on e-SPS implementation in Malaysia (presented at the training workshop in Bangkok in November 2016). A second UNNExT case study on the Turkish Automated Quality Control System was prepared.</p> <p>UNECE’s second case study analysed the export of dried grapes (a priority agricultural export produce) from Uzbekistan. While based on the UNESCAP/UNECE business process methodology, it has an in-depth focus on conformity assessment and standards to maximize its use for possible future interventions by UNECE experts.</p> <p>Planned:</p>	<p>Based on the result of the first case study and coupled with an on-going project in Tajikistan (“Enhanced Competitiveness of Tajik Agribusiness Project (ECTAP)” financed by the European Union), UNECE experts were invited to assist with conformity assessment and technical implementation issues (e.g. the set-up of a testing facility based on specifications in UNECE standards).</p> <p>Uzbekistan expressed interest to request a priority agri-sector analysis, which became the second in the Central Asian sub region (official request was expected in the course of January/February 2016). In December 2017, Uzbekistan adopted 80 UNECE standards.</p> <p>Albania, Maldives/Bhutan and Laos Case Studies have been cancelled due to administrative reasons in partner countries. Instead, demand-driven case studies have been performed.</p>

		<p>UNECE Case study Albania, May 2015</p> <p>UNESCAP Case study Maldives/Bhutan, 2016</p> <p>UNESCAP Case study Laos: 2016</p>	
	<p><u>Activity 1.4.</u> Organize four sub-regional capacity-building workshops focusing on product specific, priority agricultural supply chains in the project’s target countries/sub regions for policy makers, traders and producers, to share the findings of the case studies and the set of recommendations as well as good practices and initiatives on international standards and best practice. The workshops are expected to focus on how to apply international standards and best practice to the countries’ priority agricultural supply chains.</p>	<p>(1) The first capacity-building activity for western Balkan countries (ECE target region) was held together with UNECE’s international symposium and Specialized Section on meat to maximize impact and reduce costs. It focused on the role of international instruments in providing safer and traceable products in cross-border meat supply chains;</p> <p>(2) The first capacity-building activity for Central Asia (UNECE target region) was held back to back with the annual session of UNECE’s Specialized Section on Dry and dried Produce and co-organized with the Ministry of Economy of Turkey in Izmir (2015) both to reduce costs and increase exposure;</p> <p>(3) Symposium “Public meets/meats private - Private sector - food safety verification programs and Public sector - international standards” was organized in Geneva (Sept 2015);</p> <p>(4) UNECE: Balkan sub-region – Albania, end April/beginning May 2015. The workshop targeted key partners in the country and trained them in the cross border trade of nuts, dried fruit and meat (with support of a bilateral aid project between the German Ministry of Agriculture and its Albania counterpart). This resulted in the establishment of a sector specific working group in Albania consisting of</p>	<p>- The Western Balkans Workshop was delayed from Nov 2014 to March 2015 due to partner’s late financing (FAO REU earmarked the funds) and administrative reasons (“Umoja” rollout).</p> <p>In Central Asia, UNECE collaborated with UNDP and GIZ to identify best-suited beneficiaries.</p> <p>As a result of (2) and (3) a regional follow-up workshop was organized together with a UNDP Aid for Trade project, GIZ and Hilfswerk Austria in May 2016.</p> <p>Result of (2): two donor agencies involved with the Izmir workshop (GIZ and Hilfswerk Austria International) decided to support the development of a Central Asian regional standard for dried apricots (Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan especially for the Fergana valley) based on the UNECE Standard and with assistance of UNECE experts.</p> <p>(4) The working group in Albania is tasked to set up a standardization and export control scheme (based on UNECE standards) with the help of UNECE experts to increase export/import quality of agricultural produce as well as trade volumes.</p> <p>(5) The survey of the Tashkent workshop indicated that 100% of surveyed participants considered the workshop as useful and had obtained new knowledge and skills in export promotion. Close to 98% indicated that they were</p>

		<p>the national agricultural specialists, academia, and other stakeholders.</p> <p>(5) National experts from public and private sectors from the target region Central Asia (Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Kazakhstan) were further trained in the cross-border trade of nuts and dried fruit at a workshop jointly organized with UNDP and supported by the donor agency GIZ (11-13 July 2016, Tashkent, Uzbekistan).</p> <p>(6) The second capacity-building activity for western Balkan countries and Central Asia (ECE target region) focused on meat supply chains was held together with UNECE’s international symposium on food safety in meat supply chains and Specialized Section on meat to maximize impact and reduce costs. It focused on the role of international rules and regulations (public and private) aimed at increasing the trade of safe and traceable products in cross-border meat supply chains.</p>	<p>likely or certain that they would apply the newly acquired knowledge in their work.</p> <p>As a result of the workshop (5), Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan decided to adopt the UNECE standard for dried apricots and develop jointly UNECE related training materials, which will be used by farmers, producer associations or traders. The Tajik Standardization Agency indicated in late 2016 that it would use this material to train their inspection service.</p> <p>Donor agencies active in Tajikistan (including Hilfswerk Austria) will support the implementation phase of the adoption of aforementioned international best practice with funding from the European Union (starting from 2017 for 3 years). In addition, a project to strengthen the food safety capacities of this sector in Tajikistan based on the present UNDA projects’ results (led by ITC) will be presented for multi-year funding to the WTO’s STDF facility.</p>
<p>Expected Accomplishment 2:</p> <p>Strengthened capacity of policymakers and practitioners to exchange experiences and best practices for facilitating enhanced</p>	<p><u>Activity 2.1.</u> Organize two regional workshops for national policymakers and stakeholders in agri-food supply chains focusing on the policy priorities of the regions. The workshops will help extend (under the umbrella of UNNExT) or establish advisory groups on the development of integrated strategies combining improved quality of agricultural produce, better governance, regulatory compliance, improved electronic information exchange and enhanced and simplified processes. The groups will liaise with policy makers in their own countries and the region and help</p>	<p>A seminar on new trends in international meat trade organized as part of the Specialized Section session (Aug 2016, Geneva) enhanced the capacity of national experts from selected Balkan countries in international best in electronic SPS-certificates for meat, sustainability standards, and eating quality research.</p> <p>The capacity of developing countries to implement paperless trade systems to facilitate cross-border agricultural trade, particularly through electronic certification was further</p>	<p>- UNESCAP together with UNNExT experts and partners will develop tools and resources for e-SPS implementation.</p> <p>- the workshop built the capacity of private and public sector stakeholders in implementing</p>

agricultural food supply chains	<p>further promote the project’s deliverables and their integration into national and regional agendas.</p> <p><u>Indicator IA2.1</u>: Increased exchange of information on best practices and lessons learned on improving agricultural supply chains through the regional network of experts</p>	<p>developed in a regional training organized in Bangkok (Nov 2016).</p> <p>A cross-border agricultural trade for sustainable development was organized by UNESCAP, UNECE and the Agriculture and Food Marketing Association for Asia-Pacific (AFMA) – Bangkok (Nov 2016).</p>	<p>agricultural quality standards, food safety and related export control systems for horticultural produce, effective post-harvest technologies, and business process analysis for supply chain optimization.</p>
	<p><u>Activity 2.2</u>. Organize a concluding international workshop with the participation of public and private sector experts from the UNESCAP and UNECE target and pilot countries to review the project’s outcomes and deliverables to ensure continuity, integration into national agendas and support for follow-up actions.</p>	<p>Planned:</p> <p>UNECE and UNSCAP: September/October 2017</p>	<p>The concluding workshop has been held in Tianjing (China) in November 2017.</p>

Project Implementation - Efficiency

71. The project document envisaged a total budget of 440.000 US\$. According to the plan, 22.7 percent was allocated to cover consultants' cost and 61 percent to cover the costs of seminars and workshops. Due to the mentioned redesign of the project in the beginning (see paragraph 48), project funds were received later than initially scheduled, but the final delay in delivering the outputs was minor.

72. The actual figures reported are slightly different, and reflect normal adjustments for a project implemented for more than three years: 97 percent of the total budget was spent, with a cost structure of 15.5 percent for consultants and 72 percent for workshops and events. These proportions show a proper financial planning for the content activities.

73. In twelve trainings/ workshops, 849 people were directly exposed to information and knowledge transfer (an average of 441 US\$ per beneficiary). Additionally, 24 other partners contributed financially (with more than 240.000 US\$) or in-kind when organizing workshops, seminars and other events. The cost-efficient organization and pooling of expertise with regular activities proved to be an efficient way to maximize impact and knowledge-transfer at an acceptable cost.

74. The assistance of UN country teams proved to be of great value in the planning, logistics and content development phases of the work delivered. In addition, the UN country teams facilitated access to decision-makers and stakeholders at national and regional levels. Collaborating with the national and local stakeholders as well the UN country teams is highly recommended also in future projects.

75. Using online tools and platforms is also increasing the efficiency. Making available online links to training materials, case studies and other relevant research papers facilitates the knowledge transfer at a very low cost. This approach increases the transparency, making the stakeholders more trustful on the approach and increase the demand for cooperation.

76. The initial allocation of financial resources and personnel was appropriate considering the objectives. The unplanned additional financial and in-kind contributions allowed to increase the number of workshops and ensure larger outreach and coverage of the project (from four planned to nine implemented).

77. Relevant Facts and Key Results:

- The initial budget amounted 440.000 US\$ with an implementation rate of 97%;
- Generally, the project achieved the planned objectives within the allocated timeframe;
- The financial and personnel resources were appropriate compared to the initial objectives;
- The partner organizations in many cases covered the costs for meeting participants' travel as well as meeting and logistics arrangements. Partners also contributed with funds or in-kind in implementing activities. These two aspects kept the costs lower than initially envisaged, increasing the efficiency.

78. Having achieved timely results, with adequate financing, high cost-efficiency in implementing activities (especially by partnering with organizations which covered partially the costs), the activities prove to be *Highly Satisfactory*.

Chapter 5: Potential Impact

79. The project was designed to fit in with regular inter-governmental work, building on available expertise, networks, experts and on-going work. This design ensured that participants could integrate the knowledge into regular activities and continue to benefit from expertise and tools developed by the project's platform. Moreover, this allowed strengthening lasting networks of experts including participants from beneficiary countries. Per sub-region, the impact of the project can be summarized as follows:

Western Balkan area:

80. The uptake and adoption of standards, and their integration into national legislation increased in the meat and the fresh fruit and vegetables sector (in Albania, Croatia, Montenegro, Serbia and Kosovo¹¹). First steps have been made in the dried fruit sector and experts will start to work with UNECE in this area as well. Due to the possible accession to European Union, the capacity and implementation of standards will continue producing positive effects. Aid agencies work on the integration of UNECE tools into their operational programs in the region

Central Asian area:

81. From the beginning, three countries in Central Asia - Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan - expressed interest in integrating the project's outputs into their national development reform plans. The adoption of international standard on dried apricots, for example, motivated the industry in the three countries to work together towards pooling production based on the same principles, following the same standards and improving the quality of local and export trade. The Central Asia Working Group created a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on regional cooperation for promotion of UN ECE commercial standards. The MoU is envisaged to be signed in 2018 by state agencies such as Uzstandard, Kyrgyzstandard and Tajikstandard.

82. This success sparked new collaboration to be expanded into other produce groups (fresh fruit and vegetables, other dried fruit types and meat in the near future). New stakeholders joined the group by creating national technical groups in each of three countries. This generates a larger network and enables focusing on implementing standards on more products. Training material developed under the present project was adapted and translated with support from standardization agencies in the three countries. The working group became a reference in finding solutions to issues in cross-border trade, training and use of international best practice.

83. The government of Uzbekistan adopted 80 UNECE standards in 2017 on Fresh fruit and vegetables, nuts and dried fruit. Based on the training received during the workshops, the next declared step is to implement further measures through a series of workshops and through a training centre. The Government requested UNECE to participate as co-organizer and adviser in two workshops in 2018.

84. In Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan, authorities have also adopted UNECE's international tools and translated information material into their national languages to facilitate their use and application. The GIZ Regional Program "Trade Facilitation in Central Asia"¹² have already requested UNECE for help for further activities in 2018. The support will be delivered through "National Trade Facilitation Committees" (one of the three

¹¹ References to Kosovo shall be understood to be in the context of Security Council resolution 1244 (1999)

¹² https://www.giz.de/de/downloads/2014-2016_Factsheet_DEU.PDF

GIZ project components) to the private sector in order to increase the usage of trade facilitating services and to involve in policy development.

South East and South Asia Region

85. Following the regional UNECE-ESCAP workshop in Bangkok (November 2016 - where UNECE presented tools for cross-border agricultural trade), several participating agencies, organizations and national governments initiated similar programs: The Bureau of Agriculture and Fisheries Standards of the Philippines, the ADB's Core agriculture support program (CASP) phase II (2011-2015), the Agricultural and Food Marketing Association for Asia and the Pacific (AFMA).

86. UNESCAP and UNECE have been requested to participate as resource organizations in several capacity-building and training events initiatives. The analysis of cross-border trade within the Great Mekong Subregion countries and the trade of safe and quality produce will be part of a series of capacity building workshops and case studies in 2018. AFMA asked UNESCAP/UNECE to present UNECE instruments and their implementation relevant for sustainable business practices in cross—border food trade.

87. Electronic certification contributes to development of more efficient agricultural supply chains and reduce trade transaction costs. Most countries in the Asia-Pacific region are seeking to adopt electronic sanitary and phytosanitary certification. UNESCAP's ongoing work on paperless trade facilitation measures for agricultural trade coordinated with the objectives of the project. The work done on certification under the project has also synergies with UNESCAP's recently concluded Framework Agreement on Facilitation of Cross-border Paperless Trade in Asia and the Pacific, with long-term positive effects.

88. The project provided member States with guidance on how to further harmonize procedures and standards in line with international best practice, in order to better facilitate trade in agricultural products. This has been done both through materials on standards, and through the nine trainings and two case studies implemented.

89. Several countries in the UNECE target region adopted more standards and guides than ever before. They also implement nationally organized training centres to ensure the harmonized implementation of these instruments. Towards the end of the project, there were over 95 adoptions in the target regions (e.g. fresh fruit and vegetables standards in the Balkan region, nuts and dried fruit standards in Central Asia) and more in the regions participating at their own expenses.

90. The demand for capacity building continues to grow within governments, UN country teams and donor agencies. Short after the closure of the current project, UNECE received four requests for continuation of capacity building and setting up training centres dedicated to the implementation of standards. The requests came from Central Asia and the Balkan sub-region, and the requesting entities are ready to cover the costs. Amongst the UNESCAP target countries, letters of support and requests for further technical assistance were received from four countries as an outcome the work on e-SPS implementation started under this project.

91. Demand driven, UNECE and UNESCAP conceived a follow-up project focused on the link between producing and keeping quality of agricultural produce throughout the supply chain, in order to reduce food losses. This will be achieved through quantification and prevention of the losses, addressing the gaps, developing mobile App tools for tracking goods and by linking partners to distribute non-exportable and keeping food as much as possible in the human consumption chain. The cooperation will continue with several of the beneficiary countries in the UNECE and the UNESCAP regions who expressed specific support.

At the time of writing, cooperation will focus on further standards implementation and training support to Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan and to the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

92. Unintended effects at impact level are also observable. The closer collaboration of the regions and the mutual transfer of knowledge and best practice resulted from the joint effort to find solutions on common technical issues, (e.g. on the analysis of regulatory and procedural barriers to trade, better food quality and preventions and reduction of food loss). The countries of the Greater Mekong Sub-region are sensitized at high level on food safety and food quality not only for export but also for domestic markets and regional trade.

93. The participation of Asian countries in UNECE's intergovernmental standard development work has increased, and countries are starting to replicate best practice presented under the project particularly in Thailand, the Philippines and Viet Nam through the adoption of standards and guidance materials as the basis for their national legislation and trainings UNECE is considering the development of an e-quality certificate capitalizing on UNESCAP's work and achievements on e-certification.⁸⁰ Spill over effects reached beyond the target area. Through UNECE's network of experts, the results of the present project are found relevant for a large project in the Caribbean financed by United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). The project implementers - *International Executive Service Corps (IESC)* asked UNECE for support with the tools and best practices developed and the knowledge transferred under the present UNDA project. The first activities in this area will start in 2018.

94. Relevant Facts and Key Results:

- The project increased awareness of all stakeholders in the target region on agricultural and food trade relevance and issues. It triggered cooperation both at political and technical level;
- Standards and tools have been adopted in several countries, with prospects of facilitating regional and international trade;
- More partners are ready to adopt and implement standards and tools created by UNECE and UNESCAP;
- Standards play an important role in trade facilitation, but it only constitutes a part of the whole process. The positive results do contribute to strengthen the capacity of transition and developing economies to participate in cross-border agricultural food supply chains, but a holistic approach should address issues like financing, infrastructure and market regulations.
- The project generated some unintended results at impact level: closer cooperation on new topics of target countries, new work areas for UNECE and UNESCAP and broader geographical uptake, beyond the interest region

95. The project generated positive results at impact level in all target regions, both intended and unintended. The standards and trade facilitation tools are only a part of the whole trade problematic, along with access to finance, infrastructure, political stability and regulated markets. Therefore, the project has a *Highly Satisfactory* impact rating.

Chapter 6: Gender Equality

96. The project document made reference to the gender thematic (page 14 of the Project Document), considering that "... [w]hile only a few women are actively involved in national trade facilitation activities; the opposite is the case in the agricultural sector where a high percentage of women is involved in all stages of the supply chain. Gender concerns will therefore be addressed in the case studies, the training materials and due attention will be given to women's participation in the capacity-building workshops".

97. Under the activities set 1.4 "Organize 4 sub-regional capacity-building workshops", the project recorded nine workshops and training events. In the related section of the final report, an appropriate comment is made: "... particular attention was paid to the inclusion of women farmers and traders and one workshop (Thessaloniki) was dedicated to this purpose. Gender balance was striven for in all workshops organized by UNECE, while the ESCAP organized events collected no data. Most of the workshops addressed and included the particular concerns of the young producers and traders and their role in the sustainable agricultural trade".

98. No other mention is made related to the topic throughout the project documentation or reporting flow. The acquired data (internal workshop questionnaires and final report) suggest the topic was indeed present in almost all trainings and workshops. Overall, out of the 894 participants of the capacity-building activities, 508 were women.

99. UNECE and UNESCAP should continue this approach with similar future projects, as women (along with young and elderly) are particularly affected in the developing and transitioning countries, and their vulnerability is accentuated during crisis times. The agriculture production is acting as a safety net for the vulnerable population, and creating capabilities among this target group is critical. Besides ensuring women participation within trainings and conveying tailored-made information, women empowerment should also be backed up by enhanced support towards access to arable land and (micro)finance, issues to be addressed through subsequent projects.

Chapter 7: Conclusions and Recommendations

87. The project has been highly relevant at the stage of proposal and continues to be relevant in the near future. The project's relevance is generated by the importance of agriculture and trade, the requests expressed by the member States, the alignment with the mandates of UNECE and UNESCAP and the long experience of the two organizations with the topics. The project contributed to achievement of two MDGs and would currently address four of the Sustainable Development Goals by trying to solve problems with social, economic and environmental impacts. In order to maximize the relevance and potential impact, the Recommendation 1 could be considered.

88. The project has been properly designed with complementing activities related to agricultural standards setting and trade facilitation. The activities had defined performance indicators, but with no baseline data and with unclear assessment methodology. Some challenges demanded extra efforts in implementation, but they did not negatively influence the achievements and generated the lessons learnt.

89. The standards setting component of the project has been timely implemented, the material used in subsequent workshops, training events, and disseminated online as well. Most of the participants and beneficiaries consider the trainings were highly relevant and intend to integrate the knowledge in future

policy or technical work in their respective countries. However, the final event makes an exception, as the project “concluding” element, the final event, was not so prominent. It apparently failed to capitalize on the achievements and to mobilize the stakeholders for common efforts in the future (see Recommendation 9).

90. Being a capacity building set of activities, the sustainability is high given the quantity and quality of knowledge created and disseminated and the number of beneficiaries trained. The UNECE member States are being stimulated to adopt the standards, processes, regulations and recommendations in their national frameworks, creating a positive impact of the project.

The requests UNECE and UNESCAP received from the member States and other organizations to continue this work further underlines the constructive effect of the project. The requests came not only from the target regions, but also from others, recognizing the relevance and impact of the achievements.

91. The most important asset UNECE and UNESCAP brought to the capacity building activities was their wide expertise and availability of (networks of) experts from around the world. In several cases, the partner organizations covered the costs for meeting participants’ travel as well as meeting and logistics arrangements, contributing to the excellent efficiency. In order to maximize the positive role played by the networks of experts, UNECE could consider Recommendation 2.

Lessons Learnt

92. As the project team overcame the challenges mentioned in Chapter 3 (paragraphs 53bis and 54), some lessons learnt were generated:

93. Given the full agendas of the international organizations, scheduling joint events is a challenge. The project team carefully chose the dates for events and spread them geographically and temporally and avoid congestion. It also allocated sufficient time for the substantial, organizational and administrative preparation of events. Individual countries’ institutions posed the only challenges; the potential delays were solved through slight re-shifting of activities and funds as well as through alternative partnerships with other organization from within and outside the UN system.

94. A certain flexibility in planning and implementing activities in partnership with other organizations is necessary. In several instances, conflicting agendas, internal procedures or limitations prevented timely execution of workshops. The flexibility allowed the other organizations overcome the impediments so they could eventually fulfil the obligations.

95. The project team faced challenges in identifying competent consultants to draft case studies, manuals or guidelines. The immediate solution was to resort to the UNNExT network to help identify the most competent consultants. In the future, UNECE and UNESCAP could implement a roster of vetted specialists (see Recommendation 5).

Additional lessons learnt originate during the project implementation:

96. Shifting focus on parallel running activities (e.g. preparing training materials and negotiations with partners) minimized delays generated by administrative changes in UNECE (the implementation of the new Enterprise Resource Planning - “Umoja”). This lesson is applicable as long as the personnel resources are provided and do not endanger other project activities.

97. The early inclusion of the private sector in the capacity-building activities is a positive aspect, given the increasing role the private sector would play in achieving the SDGs. The private sector will have an important role in financing and could bring expertise and process efficiency the public sector is lacking of. Their involvement proved to be an important trigger for public administration to adopt policies, standards and procedures. Ultimately, the private sector will employ the standards and tools on a regular basis and will ensure continuity of the results after the end of the project.

98. In the beginning of the project, some training materials were designed with more text content. This aspect made translation and adoption more difficult. After receiving suggestions from beneficiaries, the training materials were simplified with a focus on visual elements, thus increasing usability.

Recommendations

99. *Strategic Recommendation 1:* In designing future project proposals, envisage a broader integrated approach. Agricultural standards and trade facilitation are just two “links” in the supply chain “from field to the plate”. As UNECE and UNESCAP have clear mandates, strategic partnerships should be envisaged to cover other areas of improvement (e.g. multilateral development banks could address the issue of micro-financing of small producers and traders; FAO could support improving the productivity of producers; UNEP/GEF could contribute in decreasing the carbon footprint of the production).

100. *Recommendation 2:* As a result of activities in Central Asia, an informal standing working group (“Central Asia Working Group”) was established, having an advisory function for UNECE. In order to capitalize on the initiative, a degree of formalization should be envisaged and UNNExT could serve as a model. Similar approaches within UNECE (e.g. International Centres of Excellence on Public Private Partnerships or the Group of Experts on Coal Mine Methane) also prove to be effective models. When establishing such working groups, the approach should also contain retaining mechanisms for good qualified specialists, in order to minimize their fluctuation.

101. *Recommendation 3:* Partnerships with national and local stakeholders, as well the UN country teams, should continue for future projects (linked to recommendation 1). Besides broadening the thematic coverage, the partnerships raise the profile of the projects and help lowering the costs (maximizing the efficiency);

102. *Recommendation 4:* Continue the “open process” approach, making available online links to all events, training materials and case studies. They facilitate knowledge exchange and increase trust and interest from all stakeholders.

103. *Recommendation 5:* In order to avoid situations when finding appropriate consultants for technical work is difficult or ill-timed, UNECE and UNESCAP should implement a roster of vetted specialists. The roster could be shared by UNECE and ESCAP, eventually by other UN organizations.

104. *Recommendation 6:* Continue the Trade Facilitation Survey implemented by UNESCAP. The survey is a very cost-effective way to collect data and to adjust tools and projects to the actual needs of the actors in the region.

105. *Recommendation 7:* Continue collecting case studies and create a Best Practice Guide. The Case Studies should focus both on best practices as well as on lessons learnt from failures, and should cover diverse geographic areas as well as topics. The examples and lessons learnt should be compiled in a Best Practice Guide to contribute to better understanding and improvement of supply chains in agriculture.

106. *Recommendation 8:* Create a centralized online training platform for standards setting, implementation and trade facilitation.

107. *Recommendation 9:* Strengthen the role of the concluding project event in order to increase ownership, sustainability and dissemination of the project results in beneficiary countries and beyond. In cases when a project or its components have any form of continuation, the concluding event is essential to get endorsement from the stakeholders for the new phases.

Annex 1: Terms of Reference

TERMS OF REFERENCE

UN DEVELOPMENT ACCOUNT PROJECTS IN UNECE

“Strengthening the capacity of transition and developing economies to participate in cross-border agricultural food supply chains”

I. Purpose

The purpose of this evaluation is to review the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and impact of the UN Development Account project “Strengthening the capacity of transition and developing economies to participate in cross-border agricultural food supply chains” (hereinafter “Project”). The results of the evaluation will improve the implementation of UNECE projects in the future.

II. Scope

The evaluation will assess the extent to which the objective, expected accomplishment and indicators of achievement established in the logical framework of the project document were achieved. The evaluation will consider the impact of the project on the capacity of all target countries (UNECE region: Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Serbia, Kosovo¹³:UNESCAP region (Bangladesh, Nepal, Lao PDR, Cambodia and/or Myanmar) to integrate into cross-border agricultural supply chains. The evaluation will cover the entire time of the project delivery (from Q2 2014 to Q4 2017).

The project was initially conceived as an agricultural trade facilitation project. Owing to an internal restructuring in UNECE, the project was split into two parts: one focused on agricultural trade facilitation and implemented by UNESCAP and one re-designed to focus on quality and quality standards for cross-border trade, implemented by UNECE. As a result of this re-design, project funds were received much later than initially scheduled which delayed the delivery of outputs. In the evaluation, this should be considered.

III. Background

In 2014, the Economic Cooperation and Trade Division of UNECE together with UNESCAP Trade, Investment and Innovation Division launched a project under the United Nations Development Account (UNDA). It was a continuation of previous successful collaborations in the capacity building for enhanced agricultural trade and trade facilitation in the UNECE and UNESCAP regions through other UNDA projects. A complimentary approach to these two aspects was taken to include both normative work on produce quality and safety and its practical implementation as well as trade facilitation and electronic tools to further facilitate trade in agricultural commodities. Particular attention during the project implementation was given to ensure sustainability of the project beyond its life span through additional fund raising, collaborating with donor agencies and other international organizations as well as the development of training material.

UNECE led the overall execution of the project, with UNESCAP as cooperating and implementation partner. The beneficiary countries were in four target sub-regions of the two Regional Commissions: Western Balkans, Central Asia, South Asia, and South East Asia. All project workshops were opened to member states of all Regional Commissions and drew

¹³ References to Kosovo shall be understood to be in the context of Security Council resolution 1244 (1999)

participation from at least 10 countries around the world in addition to the beneficiary countries (including New Zealand, Australia, Kenya, Brazil, South Africa, Afghanistan, Chile, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, Tanzania)

The objectives of the project were to:

- (a) Enhance the understanding and increase the capacity among public and private sector stakeholders to apply standards and best practices for an efficient regulation, information exchange and agricultural food quality in the development of national and sectoral strategies to improve access to sustainable international agricultural food supply chains and increase export opportunities.
- (b) Strengthen the capacity of policymakers and practitioners to exchange experiences and best practices for facilitating enhanced agricultural food supply

IV. Issues

The evaluation should review the following aspects of the project implementation and results:

Relevance:

- How relevant was the project to the objectives of UNECE and UNESCAP regular programme of works?
- How relevant was the project design to the needs of the targeted countries, and beneficiary sub regions?

Effectiveness:

- Was the project design and implementation appropriate for meeting the project's objective?
- To what extent were the expected accomplishments of the project achieved? What were the challenges to achieving the objective of the project and the expected accomplishments?

Efficiency:

- Did the project achieve its objectives within the anticipated budget and allocation of staff resources?
- Were the activities implemented according to the planned timeframe?
- Were the available resources appropriate to the scale of the project and planned results?

Impact

- To what extent has the project strengthened the capacity of transition and developing economies to participate in cross-border agricultural food supply chains?
- To what extent has the project had a notable impact beyond the original stated objective?

The evaluation will assess how gender considerations were included into the project design, execution and results. It will make recommendations on how gender can be included in the design of future projects.

V. Methodology

The methodology for evaluation will include the following:

- 1) a desk review of all the relevant documents obtained from Project files including:
 - official records (including progress reports);
 - reports on the questionnaires administered to participants of training workshops in project development, finance and business planning (as well as the raw data from these questionnaires);
 - case studies, published material, training programmes/materials and

seminars/workshops programmes compared with the logical framework of the Project

- documented output of the activities and monitoring reports as well as any other relevant report
- conclusions and recommendations of case studies

- 2) A questionnaire will be developed by the evaluator for dissemination to representatives from e.g. trade and agricultural ministries, standardization agencies, trade facilitation related agencies, trade associations, donor agencies and collaborating international organizations in the main target countries –UNECE region (Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Serbia, Kosovo¹⁴) and ESCAP region (Bangladesh, Nepal, Lao PDR, Cambodia and/or Myanmar).
- 3) Selected interviews via skype/ phone with key stakeholders of the project (informed by UNECE and UNESCAP offices).

All material needed for the evaluation, will be provided to the consultant. UNECE and UNESCAP project staff will be contacted to obtain clarifications and any missing data).

The evaluation consultant will write a report of maximum 40 pages (excluding annexes).The report will summarize the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation in line with the requirements for evaluations in UNECE. The report will include an executive summary (2 pages) which will briefly summarize the evaluation results.

VI. Evaluation Schedule

- Desk review of all documents provided by UNECE to the consultant: 27 November - 4 December 2017
- Delivery of inception report including design of survey – 15 December 2017
- Feedback on inception report by project manager and the Programme Management Unit: 21 December 2017
- Start of survey and analysis: 22 December 2017 – 19 January 2018
- Follow-up skype/ telephone interviews: 19 – 26 January 2018
- Delivery of draft report: 1 February 2017
- Comments back to the evaluator after review by project manager and the Programme Management Unit : 15 February 2018
- Delivery of the final report – 28 February 2018

VII. Resources

The evaluation will be conducted by an independent external evaluator. The evaluator will be managed by the project manager who will provide support to the consultant by

¹⁴ References to Kosovo shall be understood to be in the context of Security Council resolution 1244 (1999)

ensuring the provision of all necessary documentation needed for the desk review. The staff member will answer queries, guide the evaluator on the appropriate recipients for the questionnaire, and for follow up interviews, and ensure that the necessary communications with these recipients are introduced by the secretariat. The Programme Management Unit will provide advice and support to the project manager for designing the evaluation methodology and reviewing the draft report.

The requirement for an external evaluation is specified in the project document. The resources available for this evaluation are USD 9,000. The payment of USD 9,000 will be made upon satisfactory delivery of work on 28 February 2018.

VIII. Intended Use/Next Steps

The evaluation will be implemented in line with the UNECE Evaluation Policy (2014). Following the receipt of the final report, UNECE will develop a management response and action plan for addressing recommendations made by the consultant.

The findings of the evaluation will inform follow up actions and initiatives required to continue activities and further projects in the areas covered by the Project; disseminate the knowledge created and enhance its use. The evaluation is also expected to provide guidance on how to further enhance the impact of the Project. The advice provided may include recommendations on how to continue cooperation and increase capacity on agricultural quality and trade related issues among the United Nations Regional Commissions. The outcomes of the evaluation will also contribute to the broader lessons learned of the UNDA, by being made available on the UNECE public and internal websites.

IX. Criteria for Evaluators

Evaluators should have:

- An advanced university degree or equivalent background in relevant disciplines
- Specialized training in areas such as evaluation, project management, social statistics, advanced statistical research and analysis.
- Demonstrated relevant professional experience in design, management and conduct of evaluation processes with multiple stakeholders, survey design and implementation, and project planning, monitoring and management.
- Demonstrated methodological knowledge of evaluations, including quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis for end-of-cycle project evaluations.
- Fluent in written and spoken English. Knowledge of another language (for example Russian) may be desirable depending on the countries included in the project (for the purpose of being able to seek inputs from national authorities in their native tongue).

Evaluators should declare any conflict of interest to UNECE before embarking on an evaluation project, and at any point where such conflict occurs.

Annex 2: List of Documents Reviewed

- "Strengthening the capacity of transition and developing economies to participate in cross-border agricultural food supply chains" concept paper and project document, May 2014;
- Annual Progress Report June - December 2014
- Annual Progress Report - January - December 2015
- Annual Progress Report - January - December 2016
- The Final Report covering the entire duration of the project (2018)
- Inception Report of the final evaluation of the UNECE-led UNDA project on the implementation of Agricultural Quality Standards
- UNECE Support Guide for Conducting Evaluation – May 2014
- The project's UNECE web-site: <https://www.unece.org/info/open-unece/pmt/regular-budget/1415ae-strengthening-the-capacity-of-transition-and-developing-economies-to-participate-in-cross-border-agricultural-food-supply-chains.html>
- The project's UNECE web-site: https://www.un.org/development/desa/da/individual-project-view-public/?project_id=1162&wpnonce=af950dcfd7
- UNECE Web-site: <http://www.unece.org/trade/agr/welcome.html>
- UNESCAP Web-site: <http://www.unescap.org/our-work/trade-investment-innovation>
- UNNExt web-page: <https://unnnext.unescap.org/>
- UNDA web-sites: <http://www.un.org/esa/devaccount/projects/active/tranche.html>
- Other relevant documents: brochures, guidelines, expert's reports, web-sites, etc.

Annex 3: Questionnaire for face-to-face and online interviews

Evaluation of the UNDA Project in UNECE

“Strengthening the capacity of transition and developing economies to participate in cross-border agricultural food supply chains”

Questions Guideline – January 25th, 2018

Stakeholders – UNECE and UNESCAP relevant staff, Experts on food supply chains, etc

How would you rate the **Relevance** of the project towards the scope?

- How relevant was the project to the objectives of UNECE and UNESCAP regular programmes of work?
- How relevant was the project design to the needs of the targeted countries, and beneficiary sub regions?
- What is the relevance of the activity in the context of SDGs?
- To what extent are the objectives of the activity still valid? How can the activity be replicated in the UNECE/UNESCAP region or in other regions?

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Were the actions to achieve the results **Efficient?** (*Have things been done right?*)

- Did the project achieve its objectives within the anticipated budget and allocation of staff resources?
- Were the activities implemented according to the planned timeframe?
- Were the available resources appropriate to the scale of the project and planned results?
- To what extent the resources were used economically? How could the use of resources been improved?
-

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Were the actions to achieve the results **Effective?** (*Have the right things been done?*)

- Was the project design and implementation appropriate for meeting the project's objective?
- To what extent were the expected accomplishments of the project achieved? What were the challenges to achieving the objective of the project and the expected accomplishments?

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Are the results **sustainable?** Will the results lead to benefits beyond the life of the existing project?

- To what extent will the major achievements/outputs of the project continue after its completion?
- How likely is the stakeholders' engagement and partnerships forged as a result the project to continue after its completion, be scaled up, replicated or institutionalized?
- To what extent will the benefits of the activity continue after its completion, without overburdening recipient countries and stakeholders?

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What is the **impact** of the project? What are the enduring changes induced by the project and its results?

- To what extent has the project strengthened the capacity of transition and developing economies to participate in cross-border agricultural food supply chains?
- To what extent has the project had a notable impact beyond the original stated objective?

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Further questions to clarify **cross-cutting issues**, as per HRGE in Evaluation guidance:

- Who is benefiting and who is not? (male/female, age groups, different socio economic groups)
- How effectively have equality and gender mainstreaming been incorporated in the design execution of the Programme?

- To what degree are approaches such as a human rights based approach to programming, gender mainstreaming and results-based management understood and pursued in a coherent fashion?

- How would you describe the cooperation with the counterparts (Governments, International Organizations, national institutions, other international technical entities)? Has the partnership strategy been appropriate and effective?

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Other relevant questions:

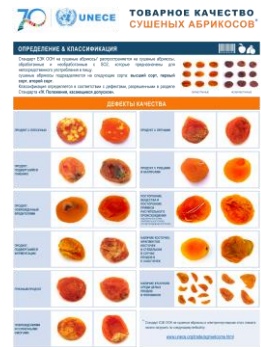
- What was the role other international and national agencies (e.g. FAO, WHO, European Commission) played into the implementation of the project?

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Annex 4: Links to informative materials created by the project

EA1:

Dried Apricot Poster: <http://www.unece.org/tradewelcome/steering-committee-on-trade-capacity-and-standards/tradeagr/brochures-and-publications/dried-apricot-poster.html>



“Guide on Operating a Seed Potato Certification Service” and to “Guide on Seed Potato Lot Inspection”:

http://www.unece.org/trade/agr/standard/potatoes/pot_e.html

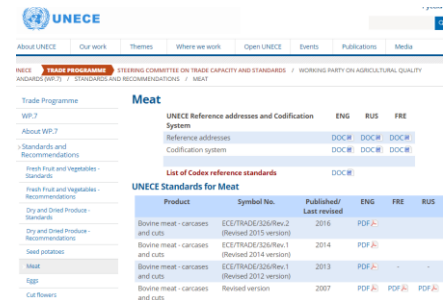
Link to ESCAP Training on Tackling Agricultural Trade Costs in Asia and the Pacific

<http://www.unescap.org/resources/tackling-agricultural-trade-costs-asia-and-pacific>



Links to UNECE web-pages containing international tools for agri trade:

<http://www.unece.org/trade/agr/standard/fresh/ffv-standardse.html>
<http://www.unece.org/trade/agr/standard/dry/ddp-\\standards.html>
http://www.unece.org/trade/agr/standard/meat/meat_e.html



Guide on Facilitating Compliance for Food Safety and Quality for Cross-border Trade:

<http://www.unescap.org/resources/facilitating-compliance-food-safety-and-quality-cross-border-trade-asia-and-pacific>



List of workshops organized under EA1:

UNECE:

Workshop -Meet/Meat the Challenge, Geneva, Switzerland, 29 September 2014

<http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=34062>

Agri-Food Supply Chains in Cross-Border Trade of Nuts and Dried Fruit, Izmir, Turkey, 1 – 3 July 2015

<http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=38239>

Workshop -Public meets/meats private – Private sector – food safety verification programs and Public sector – international standards, Geneva, Switzerland, 28 September 2015

<http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=40070>

Workshop on Cross-Border Trade of Nuts and Dried Fruit, Tashkent, Uzbekistan, 11-13 July 2016,

<http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=42531>

Workshop - Meet/Meat 2016 Updates, Trends and new developments, Geneva, Switzerland, 29 August 2016

<http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=41423>

Sustainable Cross-border Trade of Fresh Fruit and Vegetables, Thessaloniki, Greece, 22-24 March 2017

<http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=45371>

Sustainable Cross-border Trade of Fresh Fruit and Vegetables: Quality—Food Safety—Sustainability, Tashkent, Uzbekistan, 10-13 July 2017

<http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=45835>

ESCAP:

Workshop on Promoting Cross-border Agricultural Trade for Sustainable Development, 28-30 November 2016, Bangkok, Thailand

<http://www.unescap.org/events/workshop-promoting-cross-border-agricultural-trade-sustainable-development>

Workshop on Implementation of e-SPS and Automation for Agriculture Trade Facilitation, 1-3 November 2016, Bangkok, Thailand

<http://www.unescap.org/events/workshop-implementation-e-sps-and-automation-agriculture-trade-facilitation>