



Background

The FAO Regional Initiative on Agrifood Trade and Market Integration focuses on strengthening national and regional capacities in Europe and Central Asia to deal effectively with the challenges posed by greater trade integration. It does this by developing better evidence on trade implications, improving the capacity of the countries to use this evidence, facilitating neutral forums and dialogues on trade agreements, and supporting design and implementation of appropriate trade policy at country level. As part of the initiative, FAO has launched a project, supported by the Multi-Partner Programme Support Mechanism (FMM), on Trade-related Capacity Development in Eastern Europe and Central Asia ultimately aimed at improving market access and diversifying export markets for agricultural and food products from countries in the region through capacity development.

The transformation of agricultural markets as a result of political and economic transition in the post-communist countries was accompanied by the process of globalization and deepening trade integration both within the region and with external trade partners. The majority of the post-communist European and Central Asian countries have joined the WTO after the socio-economic transformation of the early 1990s. This created new opportunities for the countries to increase their participation in global agricultural trade, and for the region to play an increasingly important role as a supplier of agricultural commodities to international markets, thus taking increasing advantage of the considerable potential of the countries to expand their agricultural production.

To support the countries' efforts in greater integration with international markets for agri-food products FAO is implementing a Regional Initiative for Improving Agri-food Trade and Market Integration in Europe and Central Asia. As part of the initiative, FAO has launched a Multi-Partner Programme Support Mechanism (FMM) on Trade-related Capacity Development in Eastern Europe and Central Asia ultimately aimed at improving market access and diversifying exports of agricultural and food products from the region. Part of the project aims to develop the capacities of Ministries of Agriculture and other relevant institutions to implement WTO agreements to fulfil their trade obligations and introduce measures that would allow the agricultural sector taking greater advantage of trade opportunities.

Georgia has been a member of WTO since 14 June 2000. The Ministry of Agriculture is contemplating reforms of the agricultural support measures and has therefore requested FAO's assistance in mapping the possible new measures against the rules of the WTO Agreement on Agriculture for domestic support and the criteria used for different categories of support. This will allow the Ministry to make informed decisions about introducing any changes to the current agricultural policy measures, ensuring their consistency with the WTO obligations.

The project therefore aims to strengthen the Ministries' capacities in this area by providing technical support and training for the trade policy analysis and classification of different agricultural programs and policy measures according to the WTO rules. This activity will



contribute to CPF Output 1.1 “The MoA capacity on WTO compliant domestic support measures and agricultural agri-food policy relevant data collection, analysis, application and dissemination improved to design, monitor and implement quality policies and support programmes ensuring the equal livelihood opportunities to both men and women.”

Expected outcomes

The workshop will make participants more familiar with the rules and requirements of the WTO Agreement on Agriculture with regard to domestic support, the processes for interacting with the WTO Committee on Agriculture, and the possibilities for accommodating new agricultural policies in Georgia within the domestic support rules of the WTO.

The work in groups will be organized to enhance participants’ understanding of the AoA and improve the knowledge and skills of specialists responsible for formulating and analysing agrarian policy in Georgia in accordance with the WTO rules and country commitments.

Participants

Specialists of the Ministry of Agriculture of Georgia and representatives of other ministries involved in designing, implementing or analysing domestic support policies and programs will be invited to participate.