



European Commission on Agriculture (ECA)

36/2 Meeting of the Executive Committee 15 June 2016

Agenda item 5 – Background note 2 Regional Initiative on Agri-food Trade and Market Integration

1. Introduction

The primary goal of the *Regional Initiative on Agri-food Trade and Market Integration (RI-2)* is to support member countries in enhancing the agri-food trade policy environment for small and medium sized enterprises.

The *Initiative* (a) builds the capacity of government officials in the implementation of trade agreements, (b) develops their capacity to create a supportive environment for trade, and (3) supports the capacity of both governments and enterprises to implement international food quality and safety standards.

2. Examples of results achieved so far in 2016

Component 1: Implementation of trade agreements to increase access to new markets

Elements: Capacity development on WTO Agreements

- A comprehensive study of the agricultural trade policies of 12 post-Soviet countries¹ has been released in Russian language, produced in cooperation with members of the Agricultural Trade Expert Network, which was established as part of the RI-2,
- An FAO panel on “*Recent Trends in Agricultural Trade Policy in the Countries of Eastern Europe and Central Asia*” was organized at the International Association of Agricultural Economists conference “*Agricultural Transitions along the Silk Road: Restructuring, Resources and Trade in the Central Asia Region*” in Almaty, Kazakhstan
- The 4th edition of the FAO-UNITAR e-learning course took place in Russian language: “Resolving trade issues through international and regional trade related agreements in the Commonwealth of Independent States”,
- Five-monthly-bulletin of the Agricultural Trade Expert Network in Europe and Central Asia published,
- Training workshop organized on “WTO trade dispute resolution” in Belgrade, Serbia.

¹ <http://www.fao.org/europe/news/detail-news/en/c/395447/>

Component 2: Increased capacity to implement global food quality standards

Elements: (a) Capacity development on phytosanitary and IPPC issues, (b) capacity development on food safety standards, best practices and system architecture, (c) capacity development on sanitary/veterinary control issues, (d) capacity development on geographical indication food quality branding.

- Presentation on “regulation of food safety in Georgia and possible impact on dairy sector” delivered at the National Dairy Congress in Georgia,
- National workshops conducted for the staff for making analyses and assessment in the plant protection field including capacity building for elaboration of the National program in Moldova,
- Support to improvement of brucellosis prevention and control strategy at regional and national level in Armenia,
- National Food Agency capacity for implementation of sustainable national Brucellosis control programme is strengthened and in line with the OIE, FAO and WHO standards in Georgia,
- Capacity building workshops, risk analysis and guidance on Foot-and-Mouth Disease
- Phytosanitary Capacity Evaluation of Phytosanitary Services of Moldova was conducted including capacity building exercises for elaboration of national strategy for Phytosanitary.

Component 3: Supportive policy environment for export diversification

Elements: (a) Export diversification assessments, (b) value chain analysis and policy recommendations for export, (c) export promotion strategies.

- The value chain report of the sheep meat sector has been prepared with recommendations for export improvements and presented at a stakeholder meeting in Kyrgyzstan,
- Country assessment of agri-food sector in Moldova and six benchmarking studies of food promotional programs have been prepared with experience of Chile, Brazil, Austria, Serbia, Estonia, Poland and the EU,
- An inter-regional expert round table organized on "Best practices in export promotion: Experiences in Latin America, Europe and Central Asia",
- Plenary presentation on “Tourism and Rural Development in Uzbekistan” at conference on “Foreign investments, innovative solutions and cultural heritage as factors for development in Bukhara, Uzbekistan”,
- Institutional capacities strengthened in the respective Albanian ministry to ensure approximation to the agriculture and rural development policies in the European Union, i.e. how to implement marketing standards, quality policy – organic/geographic indications.

3. Highlights of expected results for 2016-17

- Investment in the grain sector facilitated through the enhancement of the grain market transparency in Kazakhstan,
- Foster the country's participation in the work of the Agricultural Market Information System (AMIS) in Kazakhstan,
- Regional FAO e-learning course in Russian on “Transparency of agricultural trade policy based on WTO provisions and instruments”,
- Dialogue on export promotion in Kyrgyz Republic (Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan),

- National guides prepared on Good Hygiene practices in Tajikistan and Moldova,
- Report and stakeholder meeting on “The value chain of the bean sector and recommendations for improvement for exports in Kyrgyzstan” (Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan),
- New geographical indications in horticultural sector created, with demonstration effects (Serbia),
- Analysis of agri-food exports of post-Soviet countries with recommendations on value chains to focus on for export diversification,
- Study on the use of antimicrobials in animal food production and the level of antimicrobial resistance (Albania and Moldova),
- Annual joint publication on trade policy changes in 12 Post-soviet countries,
- Regional technical consultation on food safety risk analysis/risk assessment
- Review of market and policies in the meat sector conducted; Public private platforms in the meat, dairy and grain sectors facilitated (Ukraine),
- Training of phytosanitary plant quarantine inspectors on phytosanitary procedures during import and export of plant products,
- Public private platform on dairy policy established and facilitated in Georgia,
- Capacity building workshop on African Swine Fever (ASF) control.