

MANAGEMENT RESPONSE AND IMPLEMENTATION FOLLOW-UP

Midterm Evaluation of Linking Ukrainian SMEs in the Fruit and Vegetables Sectors to Global and Domestic Markets and Value Chains Phase II

Management Response, Action Plan, Results, and Means of Verification

Date of submission of final evaluation report: [April 2024](#)

Responsible manager:	Armen Zargaryan, Programme Coordinator
Responsible chief:	Elena Boutrimova Ernst, Chief of the Office for Eastern Europe and Central Asia (OEECA)
Responsible director:	Ashish Shah, Director of Division of Country Programmes (DCP)
Head IEU:	Miguel Jimenez Pont, Head of the Independent Evaluation Unit

Date of finalization of management response: [June 2024](#)

This document presents the management response to the recommendations of the Midterm Evaluation of the NTF V Programme. The evaluation made 5 key recommendations. The matrix sets out whether ITC agrees, partially agrees, or disagrees with the recommendations and sub-recommendations. It presents the planned (or taken) action points, responsibilities and timelines.

Recommendation 1: In the remaining period of the project, improve the project website, especially with success stories.						
<i>Assigned to: Project Team</i>						
Management Response and Justification:						
The recommendation is:	Accepted:	X	Partially accepted:		Rejected:	[mark the relevant field with "X"]
	Justification: The website is currently being improved. Toward the end of the project cycle the success stories will be produced and added to the website, if budget and time permit.					
Action Plan and Responsibilities:						
Actions	Expected result and means of verification	Responsible office or partner	Contributing office(s) / partner(s)	Implementation deadline	Remarks	
1.1 To update project Web page. A service provider is being selected to update the web page. The update is planned to be completed by the end of Q3	Updated web site	Field office		31 August 2024		
Recommendation 2: In the remaining period of the project, establish contacts with the agricultural extension service, high educational institutions and alike, and implement measures ensuring continued access to the recordings of webinars.						
<i>Assigned to: Project Team</i>						
Management Response and Justification:						
The recommendation is:	Accepted:	X	Partially accepted:		Rejected:	[mark the relevant field with "X"]
	Justification: Will be challenging to achieve in the remaining period given limited resources and time. The recommendation is relevant for the next (potential) project phase.					
Action Plan and Responsibilities:						
Actions	Expected result and means of verification	Responsible office or partner	Contributing office(s) / partner(s)	Implementation deadline	Remarks	
2.1 To reinforce connections. There are established communication channels, the project is in contact with extension services and universities.	Connections reinforced	ITC, field office		Beyond the life span of the current project		

Recommendation 3: In the case of a potential third phase of the project - Continuity of Current Strategies for the Nuts, Wine, and F&V sectors, would be important to foster their competitiveness, resilience, development and sustainability. It is recommended that the proposed third phase includes, *inter alia*, the same components as in Phase II, namely:

- i. Develop and update Roadmaps for all subsectors;
- ii. Training, study tours and direct advisory support, ensuring the coverage of aspects of environmental sustainability, circularity, and CSR;
- iii. Deepening support to BSOs to enhance their capacity to provide relevant services to stakeholders; and
- iv. Strengthening market linkages with new markets (in addition to the EU and the Middle East), involving more SMEs, and including digital presence enhancement and continued support for trade fair participation (with, potentially, a variable approach to experienced companies with longer than 4/5 years of export history with the project). Investigating the option of trade fair participation for the wineries, too.

Assigned to: Project Team

Management Response and Justification:

The recommendation is:	Accepted:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Partially accepted:	<input type="checkbox"/>	Rejected:	<input type="checkbox"/>	[mark the relevant field with "X"]
	Justification: [when "Partially accepted" or "Rejected"]						

Action Plan and Responsibilities:

Actions	Expected result and means of verification	Responsible office or partner	Contributing office(s) / partner(s)	Implementation deadline	Remarks
3.1 To begin designing the project document for the new phase and to start fundraising.	A new project document is developed, and a funding partner is identified.	ITC	Partners in Ukraine	Start 2025	Subject to the situation in Ukraine and interest from the donor community

Recommendation 4: In the case of a potential third phase of the project - Potential new components, including:

- i. policy dialogue, especially related to trade simplification for targeted products to targeted markets;
- ii. support to training of a new cadre of local consultants – with an internship program and study abroad courses,
- iii. assistance with the costs of certification for the companies in the east (near the frontline);
- iv. sector-specific trade facilitation interventions to address the unique needs and challenges of the Nuts, Wine, and F&V sectors and Trade Missions (e.g. to Sweden and Italy) targeting key markets and facilitating interactions with buyers and industry stakeholders and study tours;
- v. development of e-learning tools; and
- vi. assessments to identify post-war rehabilitation needs

Assigned to: Project Team

Management Response and Justification:						
The recommendation is:	Accepted:	X	Partially accepted:		Rejected:	[mark the relevant field with "X"]
	Justification: [when "Partially accepted" or "Rejected"]					
Action Plan and Responsibilities:						
Actions	Expected result and means of verification	Responsible office or partner	Contributing office(s) / partner(s)	Implementation deadline	Remarks	
4.1. The same applies as in Recommendation # 3.						
<p>Recommendation 5: In the case of a potential third phase of the project - Sector-Specific Recommendations include:</p> <p>a. Wine sector, <i>inter alia</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. support wine tourism as a part of the development of rural areas; ii. assist the Ministry of Agriculture and Food in implementing wine register as a part of EU integration; iii. support the development of marketing and information strategy for the brand Wines of Ukraine; iv. support the Laboratory with training; v. support the development of Vision and Action plan for wine associations as well as service portfolio; and vi. training on other value-added products from the grapes and diversification <p>b. Nuts sector, <i>inter alia</i>, together with the UNA, work with the government to improve the regulatory field related to the nuts sector</p> <p>c. F&V sector, <i>inter alia</i>,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. focus on the relocated and new vegetable sector farmers ii. deepen BSO support to address sector-specific challenges and facilitate market linkages; iii. implement targeted trade facilitation interventions tailored to the unique needs of the F&V sector; and iv. support training on Deeper processing of F&V and product diversification <p>Assigned to: Project Team</p>						
Management Response and Justification:						
The recommendation is:	Accepted:	X	Partially accepted:		Rejected:	[mark the relevant field with "X"]
	Justification: [when "Partially accepted" or "Rejected"]					

Action Plan and Responsibilities:						
Actions	Expected result and means of verification	Responsible office or partner	Contributing office(s) / partner(s)	Implementation deadline	Remarks	
5.1. The same applies as in Recommendation # 3.						
<p>Recommendation 6: In the case of a potential third phase of the project - Ensure enhanced coordination and outreach, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Closer coordination with partners (other projects) for trade fair participation and market access initiatives; b. A more transparent, score-based system for the selection of companies supported financially for trade fair participation; and c. Improved outreach and awareness raising, using other associations as vehicles for that, LinkedIn and Instagram and an improved website (with success stories and analytical materials). <p><i>Assigned to: Project Team</i></p>						
Management Response and Justification:						
The recommendation is:	Accepted:	X	Partially accepted:		Rejected:	[mark the relevant field with "X"]
	Justification: [when "Partially accepted" or "Rejected"]					
Action Plan and Responsibilities:						
Actions	Expected result and means of verification	Responsible office or partner	Contributing office(s) / partner(s)	Implementation deadline	Remarks	
6.1. The same applies as in Recommendation # 3.						