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Ref: _____ PIU

15 November 2017

Your Excellency,

Subject: Project “Innovative Business Development for local sustainable economic growth”, Promotion of innovation in fresh fruits sector in Moldova, with support of the Norwegian MFA and Government of Romania
Progress Report

Reference is made to the contribution agreement between UNDP Moldova and the Government of Romania for the project “Innovative Business Development for local sustainable economic growth” effective 02/06/2016, special initiative to promote innovation into private sector companies active in the HVA field.

I am pleased to submit herewith the final Narrative and Financial Donor Report for the abovementioned project for the period **June 2016 – November 2017**.

The Narrative report summarizes the progress of the project for the above-mentioned period, and provides an overview of the achievements, challenges, lessons learned, financial status and way forward. The Interim financial Donor Report covers the period the signature of the cost sharing agreement through 15 November 2017.

I thank the Romanian Government for its contributions to UNDP and look forward to strengthening our partnership in support of the development in Moldova.

Dafina Gercheva
UN Resident Coordinator
UNDP Resident Representative

Key attachments:
Project Final Report
Interim Financial Donor Report for entire project implementation period
MICS Manual for Technological support and transfer

H.E. Mr. Daniel Ioni
Ambassador of Romania to the Republic of Moldova



GUVERNUL ROMÂNIEI



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FINAL REPORT

**Innovative Business Development for local sustainable economic growth;
special initiative to promote innovation into fresh fruits sector**

15 November 2017

Reporting Period	June 2016 . November 2017
Donor(s)	Government of Romania, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Norway
Country	Republic of Moldova
Project Title	<u>Innovative Business Development for local sustainable economic growth</u>
Project ID (Atlas Award ID)	00080999
Outputs (Atlas Project ID and Description)	00090471 Innovative Business for Local Development
Implementing Partner(s)	Ministry of Economy, Moldova Fruct Association of fresh fruit producers and exporters
Project Start Date	June 2016
Project End Date	June 2017, extended until November 15, 2017
2014-2017 Annual Work Plans Budget	Budget 1,626,678 USD, of which: ~ UNDP (Regular) . 90,000 USD ~ Other - Donor (Government of Romania) - 100,000 USD - Government of Norway . 1,420,169USD - Orange - 16,509 USD - Special Activities - 9,447 USD
Unfunded budget	0.00 USD
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I. Executive summary

During the implementation of this special initiative, Project team managed to implement all planned activities and the achieved results are important and with high potential for further replication in the sector. The trainings and consultancy component of the project was fully implemented with important knowledge transfer to a large number of SMEs in the fresh fruits production sector. The project team, with support of the local Association of producers and exporters, initiated the implementation of the training modules to promote innovation into the fresh fruit sector. Overall **11 trainings on innovation** were organized for the benefit of more than **55** fruit producers and about **400 direct beneficiaries**. The direct cash support component for technological transfer was also fully implemented and monitoring of the innovative projects was performed. The project managed to match the financial contribution of the selected innovative SMEs to adopt innovative solutions to existing technological and non-technological challenges, with **5 matching grants** provided in 2016. The first results of the technology transfer are encouraging. The project team also managed to actively support fresh fruit producers and exporters to be present at the **major trade fairs** in the region, in particular at the 2016 Indagrafood Bucharest, WorldFood Moscow and Fruit Logistica in Berlin, as well as contributed to the organization and planning of several study visits for sharing knowledge and increase the capacity of the local producers to absorb innovative ideas and concepts related to both production and post-production of fresh fruits. At least one major export contact was initiated/signed with Auchan Romania, for the export of Moldovan fresh produce to the Romanian market. The project also ensured productive synergies with other projects, donors and local counterparts, thus making joint investment and cost-sharing possible for the benefit of the local producers and their association. It developed and successfully tested alternative financing to spur **local consumption** and increase fresh fruits intake in kids in public schools and kindergartens. The Government of the Republic of Moldova, with support of the Moldova Fruct Association and UNDP, initiated the process of development and implementation of the **National Programme of Fresh Fruits in Schools** to cover about 350,000 kids in public educational system.

II. Background

Overall innovations' state of play in Moldovan fresh fruits sector

Overall Moldovan SMEs have rather limited access to innovations, including finance to innovate, knowledge-sharing networks, among others. This stems from an **underdeveloped legislative framework, inefficient usage of available resources, lack of coordination among various actors, wide spread of responsibilities between different entities, lack of comprehensive M&E framework to monitor and evaluate progress in promotion of innovations**. At the micro-level, access to finance is also a major constraint, coupled with the lack of knowledge on innovation and innovation mainstreaming into the existing or new business models. All such overarching impediments are described and analysed in the current [Innovation Strategy \(2013-2020\)](#).

As it regards the **fresh fruits sector** the situation with the promotion of innovation is no different, companies struggling to:

- access capital for innovative projects and investments in harvesting and post-harvesting technologies and knowledge,
- under-developed innovation infrastructure,
- lack of knowledge and capacity to develop and implement innovation in technologies, products, and internal business processes.

Along the same lines, the [National Strategy for the development of Agriculture and Rural Development](#) (2014-2020) points out on an extensive list of development challenges for the

agri-business and fresh fruits producers and exporters. **Specific challenges** range from water management, waste management, planning of harvesting, and storage of fresh produce, knowledge sharing for increased quality of fresh produce, certification, and mechanisms to promote exports. **Local SMEs have no other option than to innovate and invest in smart and innovative solutions to uptake modern technologies and knowledge to increase competitiveness.**

A lack of national statistical evidence on promotion of innovations in the fresh fruits sector up until now made it difficult to set specific baselines, and national statistics are yet insufficient in reflecting the de-facto situation in the promotion of innovations in business development process; in this context, the Project focussed on developing a specific set of performance indicators to be achieved and constantly monitored during and after project implementation.

III. Goal, objectives and key project components

Goal: To spur innovations in fresh fruits sector SMEs in the Republic of Moldova

Objectives:

O.1. Promote and support knowledge transfer, exchange of knowledge and best practices for production and export.

O.2. Technology transfer, particularly for technologies with high degree of innovation and applicability to local context

O.3. Export promotion and participation to trade fairs and study visits to promote local fresh produce

KEY COMPONENTS OF THE PROJECT

At the operational level the Project aims to reach the set objectives via the implementation of three key sets of activities/components, focusing on (a) training and consultative support to promote innovations, (b) provision of matching grant support to selected innovative sector SMEs to facilitate uptake of innovative practices and ideas and technologies and (c) support to SMEs and their association in the promotion of fresh produce at local, regional and international levels.

Component 1. Knowledge sharing

Component 2. Technology transfer

Component 3. Export promotion

The **approach** adopted by UNDP is to promote innovation only through competitive selection of SMEs and conditional inclusion in the project, mainly through financial contribution by companies and active participation based on a specific metrics for performance. In particular, the Project expects at least 20% contribution from the selected companies towards the cost of their participation to trainings and other knowledge sharing activities and at least 40% of contribution in cash towards the technological support component. Given the limited resources, the project also makes use of synergies with other initiatives, projects run by other donors, public programmes and increasingly pays attention to consistent fundraising activity and alternative financing mechanisms.

IV. Progress Review

In the reporting period, i.e. June 2016 to November 2017, the Project achieved important positive and scalable results.

In particular, the following has been achieved, compared to the targets initially set within the project:

- a) **Active participation at trainings on innovation and tech transfer for at least 100 active members:** app. **409 people (34 women and 375 men)** have advanced their knowledge and skills as a result of the trainings provided by project, including participants from the left-bank of the Nistru River (the Transnistria region). The upcoming monitoring visits by Project and Association will permit for the identification of the SMEs that are de-facto applying the acquired knowledge into their daily conduct and modernizing their business models. The project team is regularly applying standardized questionnaires to evaluate the level of interest and applicability of the knowledge shared with beneficiaries.
- b) **Financial direct contribution of at least 20% of producers and Association towards the implementation of training activities (for app. 50 active members):** app. 80 %, equivalent of app. 92k USD contribution of the members and Association towards the cost of the trainings on tech transfer and innovation; such a high level of contribution is possible through support of the Association of producers Moldovafruct, which is actively promoting innovation, both in terms of products, services and internal business processes.
- c) **Financial direct contribution of at least 40% of producers and Association towards the implementation of technological transfer activities and direct cash support for innovation (for app. 10 active members):** app. 74% of collected contribution of 5 SMEs-winners of the 2016 competition, equivalent of 143k USD, total contribution of Project being 50k USD. Details on the achieved results are presented below.
- d) **Usage of technologies and cumulated knowledge at the level of at least 30 companies (through organization of demo spots):** 5 demo-spots were established, on the basis of the 2016 MICS awardees, and either already organized demonstrative trainings or will do so in spring of 2018. During the harvesting and post-harvesting period, such spots were used for trainings and demonstrative activities.
- e) **Active participation to trade fairs and exchange visits, increase of exports at least 5%:** more than 30 producers and exporters participated to major planned trade fairs, UNDP supporting joint country booth(s), over 100 contacts established during each of the organized fairs and over 20 potential contractual arrangements discussed and documented. In particular, to mention efficient participation to Indagrafood in Bucharest and Fruitlogistica in Berlin, both important regional and international trade fairs for fresh fruits. One export contract was already signed with Auchan Romania for exports of Moldovan fresh produce (plums and table grapes) to EU market. The first shipments (of app. 220 tons) were successful and Project will continue monitoring the implementation of such contract. About 20 new contracts are under negotiation. Based on data of the Moldova Fruct Association, overall exports to EU markets in terms of plums and table grapes constitute 23,870 tones (data as of 31 October 2017), including 16997 tone of plums and 6873 tons of table grapes. The new exports to Romanian market could reach approximately 10% of the total previous reported exports. As the results of participation to WorldFood Moscow exhibition, Moldovan producers established new contracts, to include: Magnit retail - 2000 tons of apples, 800 tons of plums and app. 600 tons of table grapes; Lenta retail - 1500 tons of apples.
- f) **Further exploring innovative approaches to market and product diversification and export promotion:** Project staff supported the Association Moldova Fruct and its members with the diversification in products. The fresh cut technology was brought in the country and two producers were supported in terms of knowledge and technology for production and distribution of fresh cut. At same time, Project supports producers

with tapping into the alternative financing area, by the prospective creation of the first export group for premium produce and the first equity crowdfunding campaign for producers to raise equity of foreign markets.

Below is a more **detailed description** of the implemented activities and results achieved by project component:

Component 1

In order to implement the first component, UNDP provided direct support to Moldova Fruct



Association for the organization of a series of trainings and workshops for producers and exporters on a closed list of prioritized topics of interest related to promotion of innovation, knowledge and technology transfer for harvesting and post-harvesting periods. Such trainings were also used to collect additional feedback from producers and exporters, so that Project can adapt to the fast

changing conditions on the market. Below is a short presentation of key conducted trainings, number of beneficiaries and key achieved results in terms of knowledge exchange. The Association will further continue with the implementation of such trainings in the up-coming period from its own resources. Moreover, the companies that received direct cash support for technology transfer (see Component 2) created, with the support of the Association and UNDP, specific demonstrative spots to share knowledge within the Association and to potential new members/producers aspiring to innovate. In 2016 and 2017, **11 specialized trainings** were organized by the Association with the support from the project, with financial contribution of the Association and its members. In 2017, demonstrative activities were organized on the platform of the Association and most innovative companies/producers.

List of conducted trainings:

Topic	Direct beneficiaries/participants	Results
Modern technologies in harvesting of apricots (12 July 2016)	175 members/33 participants	Seven participants decided to establish intensive orchards of apricots, with an estimated surface of up to 25 ha. Project will monitor progress and further support producers.
Modern storage technologies for apples. 2 seminars (9-10 August 2016)	175/58 participants	12 participants applied modern technologies and adapted their storage technologies using acquired innovative ideas.
Innovation in harvesting of apples (1 July 2016); also broadcasted on https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R0iXLPrs9jU	175/34 participants	9 participants started to implement new innovative ideas for harvesting; one innovation award provided by the project for the purchasing of a multifunctional harvesting

		platform that is used for demonstrative and productive purposes (sMC-Cominvest+ Ltd, see below)
Modern technologies for irrigation . 2 seminars (2-3 August 2016); broadcasted also on ABC of Farmer on https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7YM1KG0YShM	175/51 participants	9 participants started to implement the innovative ideas in modernizing their irrigation systems. Project to monitor and report on achieved results and increase in productivity.
The characteristics of cherry production in different technologies (15 June 2017)	175/67 participants	12 farmers plant cherry orchards in intensive growth technology on an area of 115 hectares
Advanced technologies in mineral nutrition of fruit crops. Quality control of fruit by application of plant nutrition elements (9 August 2017)	175/50 participants	36 farmers apply the learned innovations
Innovative solutions from Bayer for the effective protection of fruit trees (15 August 2017)	175/51 participants	32 farmers apply the learned innovations
Mechanizing the process of harvesting apples (7 September 2017)	175/43 participants	5 members are negotiating contracts for the multi-functional apple harvesting platforms; one multi-functional platform was purchased through MICS mechanisms and is used for productive and demonstrative purposes (see section below)
Chemical thinning as a modern technology for yield planning in apple orchard (12 April 2017)	175/22 participants	15 members are applying Chemical thinning

Component 2


The direct cash support component was fully implemented in the reporting period. Project made use of the available resources and mobilized additional resources in order to ensure financing, on a highly competitive basis, of individual/simple innovative projects. In the reporting period Project received 16 eligible applications, out of which **5 innovative projects** (on 4 distinct LOTs of technologies) were supported on a conditional, competitive and matching basis. Project is closely monitoring the implementation of such innovative projects by SMEs. The specific areas of technological support are described below and were developed and validated with the Association, the Government and end-beneficiaries:

- **Lot 1. Combating the damage caused to cherries and similar commodities by rain/hail and other exogenous factors.**

- **Lot 2. Reducing the deterioration of apples during the harvesting process.**
- **Lot 3. Modernization of the crops' fertilization and irrigation process**
- **Lot 4. Automatization of the products' traceability process**

Winning private sector companies are supposed to share know-how with other companies and participate to planned UNDP events for networking and sharing of experience. On the basis of such companies, demonstrative spots are in process of being created by the Association and closely monitored by UNDP to ensure that knowledge is shared and all members of the Association and aspiring companies have the possibility to share knowledge and learn about the modern technologies and innovative solutions.

The **winning projects** are:

Name of awardee	Title of the project	Short description of the innovative project	Key achieved results
Farmprod Ltd	Combating the damage caused to cherries and similar commodities by rain /hail and other external factors.+	The innovation consists of the installation and usage of anti-hail and anti-rain protection systems, that increase quantity and quality of the harvesting, which in return leads to higher competitiveness and better export potential. The technology has great up-scale potential, particularly for super-intensive orchards.	The awardee imported the technology, made all preparatory works to install the anti-hail system and net(s) on a surface of 6 ha of cherries (super-intensive orchard). The nets will be installed in Spring 2018. The technological solutions reduces the risks of damage by about 90%, as well as increases the overall quality of the fresh produce.
			
„FRUIT NURSERIES” Ltd	Modernization of fertilization process through the innovative irrigation system in apple orchards.+	Innovation is in combined modern fertilization method used for apple orchard. The savings from using a modern irrigation system amount to app. 25% compared to a traditional one. Moreover, the new system ensured more qualitative harvesting and more efficient usage of fertilizers, which reduced pollution and improves	The awardee purchased and installed a fertilizer system on a surface of 22 ha of apples (super-intensive). The technology of introducing fertilizers through the drip irrigation system in orchards shows a high degree of mechanization and automation of operations in the production and leads to

		overall quality and standards of the fresh produce.	significant savings of fertilizers and water. First demonstrative activities were conducted by the producer/Association.
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„MC-Cominvest” Ltd	%Reduction of the apples alteration during the harvesting season+	Innovation is in the usage of new ultra-modern harvesting multi-functional platforms.	Multi-functional platform imported, installed and fully functional, servicing about 56ha of super-intensive orchard of apples. Several demonstrative activities already organized. It substantially increases speed and quality of the harvesting process, while also reducing the damage to fresh produce. The productivity of the platform is about 20% higher compared to other available/traditional platforms. First demonstrative activities were conducted by the producer/Association.
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<p>Delectar Ltd</p>	<p>Modernization of the crops' fertilization and irrigation process+</p>	<p>Innovation is in the building of a modern irrigation and fertilization system using ultra-modern approaches to increase efficiency and reduce pollution.</p>	<p>Pumping and fertilization station for the irrigation system was built and fully operational. Awardee estimates that harvesting quantities will double as the results of the implementation of the new technology/method. The company registered the Fertilizer Storage and Usage certificate. All cumulated experience and knowledge was shared with interested members of the Association. First demonstrative activities were conducted by the producer/Association.</p>
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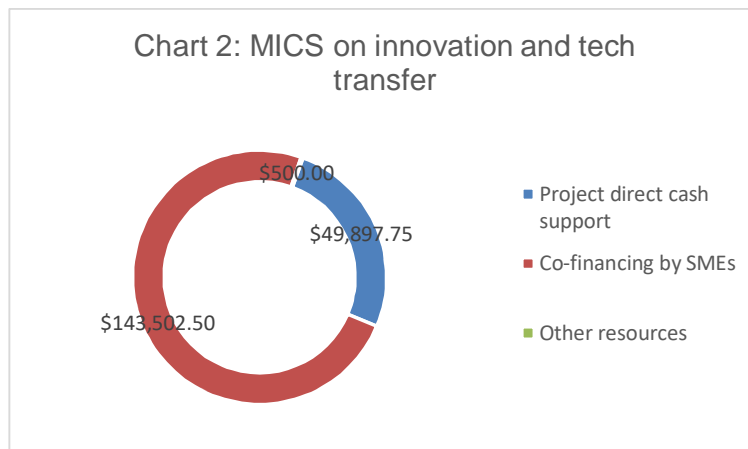
<p>„EvroRos tAgro” Ltd</p>	<p>Combating the damage caused to cherries and similar commodities by rain /hail</p>	<p>Innovation is the development and installation of a modern anti-hail, anti-rain and protection film for super-intensive orchards</p>	<p>The system of anti-hail and anti-rain was acquired and installed. Its major advantage is the special conditions it provides for producers to invest into specific varieties of apples and cherries that are especially sensible to</p>
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	and other external factors.+		variations in temperature, rain, hail and other risks. The supplier of equipment trained the staff of the company and interested members of the Association on how to use the installation(s).
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The selection of the innovation projects by SMEs was conducted on the basis of UNDP rules and regulation and in conformity with the approved Moldova Innovation Challenge Scheme Manual (MICS, hereto attached) and its standard implementation procedure. Please find more details on the selection process in the attached **MICS Manual**.

Projects were co-financed by UNDP Moldova in a distribution of 60/40%, with a maximum cash contribution of up to 10,000 USD per project (*Chart 2*).



The 2016 awardees organized first sessions of demonstrating how to use the new modern equipment and technologies. The Association provided support in the organization of such **demo activities in 5 locations**. Selective links to conducted trainings are below:

- <http://agrobiznes.md/foto-in-moldova-a-ajuns-prima-platforma-de-recoltare-mecanizata-a-fructelor.html>
- https://www.facebook.com/stirilectc/videos/1945767885638306/?hc_ref=ARRutFVnf-kejz3HQpx1TAN5ndA5A2K-6kowAte4ahlIM_jLujwZZzMQAtlrwLh3S8
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R0iXLPs9jU>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NFcun-vZ4Zg>

The monitoring of the implementation of such projects was performed. Impact evaluation is not conducted for the named projects given the small number of observation units and impossibility to delimitate the specific impact of the cash support on economic performance of incumbents (turnover and labor productivity). Nevertheless, UNDP is currently conducting a [Randomized Controlled Trial in Moldovan SMEs](#), in a pool of 104 companies, to evaluate impact of MICS-based cash support. The results of such Trial are extendable to all SMEs, therefore usable as acceptable proxy to estimate the impact on fresh fruit producers, at the level of turnover, jobs created and labour productivity. The final results of the Trial will be available in April/May 2018.

As part of the larger UNDP project that aims to spur innovation into SMEs, on the basis of the UNDP Business Innovation Lab, the Project tested the collaborative innovation approach to support innovation into SMEs on the example of companies from fresh fruits sector. The set challenge was to consistently contribute to increased fresh fruits consumption in public schools and kindergartens through collaborative innovation and introduction of a new product/idea that is acceptable and attractive for kids. Such [pilot initiative](#) was launched after UNDP supported two competitive collaborative projects that produce innovative fresh cut snacks using local produce. Direct cash support for technological up-take was provided to private sector on same matching conditions. More details on the innovation in processing and servicing kids are placed [here](#). After the successful piloting, the Association Moldova Fruct and UNDP continued to work together on the possible up-scale of the initiative to the national level. At the moment, the Government is finalizing the development of the [National Fruits in Schools programme](#) that would cover all kids in public educational system.



Kids served with fresh cut snacks



Fresh cut snack, 15 days shelf life at 0+5°C

Component 3.

Support to export promotion and access to external markets is ensured by the project mainly through co-financing the participation of producers and exporters to most relevant trade fairs and exchange visits/trade missions. As outlined in the project proposal, the project accomplished major tasks related to export promotion and performed the evaluation of the participation to such trade fairs.



Participation of Moldovan producers to 2016 IndagraFood Bucharest

The **key results** are:

Input	Progress/ Completion	Participants	Cost-sharing	Expected/achieved results
2016 World Food Moscow, Moscow, Russian Federation (12-15 September 2016)	Completed 100%	29 participants from 11 selected companies	Project and Association Moldova Fruct	207 contacts established, including 75 potential customers, including 11 tentative contractual agreements; exports performed to Russian Federation and Mongolia as result of signed contracts.
2016 Indagrafood, Bucharest, Romania (2-6 November 2016)	Completed 100%	19 participants from 8 companies;	Project and Association Moldova Fruct	156 contacts established, including 33 potential clients, including 12 potential customers. One important long-term export contract was signed with Auchan Romania.
Study visit 2016 Interpoma, Bolzano, Italy	Completed 100%	10 participants	Project and Association Moldova Fruct	About 55 contacts established, mainly related to innovative technologies in harvesting and post-harvesting of apples.
2016 FoodFest Tallinn (27-29 October 2016)	Completed 100%	12 participants from 6 companies	Project, Association Moldova Fruct and Moldova Investment and Export Promotion Organization	More than 50 contacts established.
2017 FruitLogistica in Berlin (7-11 February 2017)	Completed 100%	13 participants from 10 companies	Project, Association Moldova Fruct, Moldova Investment and Export Promotion Organization	More than 100 contacts established, including on new technologies (fresh cut, other)
2017 Study visit to Poland (20-24 February 2017)	Completed 100%	18 participants from 16 companies	Project and Association Moldova Fruct	Contacts established with most innovative fresh fruit producers and processors; best practices documented and transferred to all members



Participation with Moldova booth to 2016 WorldFood Moscow



Participation with Moldova booth to 2017 Fruitlogistica Berlin

Analysis of risks and mitigation plans:

Key encountered risks in the implementation of the project were:

External . weather conditions in the spring of 2017 had a negative impact on the overall harvesting; while official data were not yet released, producers registered from 5-10% losses in the overall quantity of the harvesting and this will negatively affect turnovers. Due to the efforts of the project, producers managed to learn about the modern technologies to prevent damage from hail and other bad weather conditions. Some of the producers already invested into the named technologies, that would ensure higher levels of resilience in the future.

Economic . investment capacity of SMEs towards the innovation projects remains an important challenge. Although companies that applied for the Innovation Challenge, to provided trainings and participation to trade fairs, were able to commit some financial resources, access to finance is a constraint in the promotion of innovation. To mitigate this, project ensured synergies with other projects and donors, so that achievement of planned targets is not hampered. Also project started to explore the existing/upcoming opportunities for producers to tap into the alternative financing market, mainly through concept and equity crowdfunding.

Politic . export embargo on the traditional market(s) is yet in place and Moldovan producers are struggling to export to such markets; at the same time, producers explore new opportunities for exports while participating to international fairs.

Communication and visibility activities:

Selective external links on participation of Moldovan fruit producers at major trade fairs in Berlin Fruit Logistica, WorldFood Moscow and Indagra Food Bucharest Expo are enlisted below. Project ensured high level of visibility of undertakings, donors and partners. The project plans to further support the Moldovan producers with strategic communication and branding expertise.

- <http://diez.md/2017/02/10/foto-gustul-face-diferenta-la-berlin-producatorii-din-moldova-participa-la-cel-mai-mare-targ-din-europa/>
- <http://www.agrovmoldova.md/producatorii-din-moldova-la-fruit-logistica>
- <https://madein.md/news/diverse/producatorii-de-fructe-din-republica-moldova-participa-la-cel-mai-mare-targ-agro-alimentar-din-europa>
- <http://abcnews.md/gustul-face-diferenta-in-berlin-producatorii-de-fructe-din-republica-moldova-participa-la-cel-mai-mare-targ-agro-alimentar-din-europa/>
- <http://bani.md/12-producatori-de-fructe-din-moldova-prezente-la-un-targ-international-agroalimentar-din-berlin-foto---87522.html>
- <http://www.eurotv.md/stire-producatori-de-fructe-din-r-moldova-participa-la-cel-mai-mare-targ-agro-alimentar-din-europa>
- <http://radiochisinau.md/producatorii-de-fructe-din-republica-moldova-participa-la-cel-mai-mare-targ-agroalimentar-din-europa-foto---45589.html>
- <http://www.timpul.md/articol/producatorii-de-fructe-din-republica-moldova-participa-la-cel-mai-mare-targ-agro-alimentar-din-europa--104660.html?action=print>
- <http://trb.ro/gustul-face-diferenta-berlin/>
- http://en.publika.md/moldovan-farmers-exhibit-their-products-at-largest-fruit-fair-in-europe_2634600.html
- http://www.noi.md/ru/news_id/207837
- <http://trm.md/ru/economic/producatori-de-fructe-din-moldova-prezen-ti-la-cel-mai-mare-targ-agroalimentar-din-europa/>
- <http://www.germania.mfa.md/embassy-news-ro/506782/>
- <http://moldovafruct.md/ro/news/view/42>
- <http://www.rusia.mfa.md/press-releases-ro/505069/>
- <http://www.agrovmoldova.md/fructele-din-moldova-la-world-food-moscow-2016>
- http://www.noi.md/md/news_id/90857
- <https://ecoportal.md/ro/Fructe-si-conserve-din-Moldova-la-World-Food-Moscow-2016>
- <http://www.moldovafruct.md/en/news/view/28>
- <http://mbc.md/rom/news/economy/frukty-i-konservy-iz-moldovy-predstavleny-na-world-food-moscow-2016/>
- <http://unica.md/alimentatie/ai-grija-ce-mananci/fructele-si-legumele-din-moldova-apreciate-la-expozitia-world-food-moscow-2016/>
- <http://agrobiznes.md/foto-membrii-moldova-fruct-au-participat-la-cea-mai-mare-expozitie-din-spatiul-csi.html>
- http://infomarket.md/en/agriculture/Fruit_and_canned_products_from_Moldova_widely_exhibited_at_World_Food_Moscow_2016
- <https://madein.md/ru/news/drugie-novosti/moldavskie-frukty-i-konservy-predstavleny-na-world-food-moscow-2016>
- <http://radiochisinau.md/producatorii-din-republica-moldova-participa-la-expozitia-indagra-food-din-bucuresti---40624.html>

- <https://madein.md/news/diverse/producatorii-de-fructe-proaspete-din-moldova-la-expozitia-indagra-food>
- <http://www.ziarelive.ro/stiri/producatorii-de-fructe-proaspete-din-moldova-la-expozitia-indagra-food-din-bucuresti.html>
- <http://curentul.md/stiri/producatorii-de-fructe-proaspete-din-moldova-au-participat-la-o-expozitie-la-bucuresti.html>
- <http://www.agrofood.ro/index.php/bauturi/item/564-indagra-food-2016-puntea-catre-noi-opportunitati-in-industria-alimentara>
- <http://infoprut.ro/45692-producatorii-de-fructe-proaspete-din-rep-moldova-la-expozitia-indagra-food-din-bucuresti.html>
- <http://trb.ro/taste-makes-difference-moldovan-fresh-fruit-producers-exhibit-indagra-food-bucharest/>
- <http://www.md.undp.org/content/moldova/ro/home/presscenter/pressreleases/2017/02/10/gustul-face-diferen-a-n-berlin-produc-torii-de-fructe-din-republica-moldova-particip-la-cel-mai-mare-t-rg-agro-alimentar-din-europa.html>
- <http://www.md.undp.org/content/moldova/ro/home/presscenter/pressreleases/2017/local-producers-deliver-fresh-fruits-to-one-of-the-largest-retai.html>

V. Lessons learned

The key lessons learned during the implementation of the project are enlisted below:

- Knowledge sharing activities, including conducted trainings and demonstrative activities, coupled with direct matching cash support for technological transfer represent an innovative combination yielding impressive results in terms of knowledge and technology up-take, as well as diffusion of best practices
- Project extensively used the existing platform in the sector, i.e. the Association of producers and exporters, to promote dissemination of best practices; such an approach gave the possibility to strengthen the capacities of the Association (and its members) and ensure that achieved positive results are sustainable and scalable;
- Matching cash support for technology transfer, through UNDP's Innovation Challenge Scheme, represents an innovative way to engage with private sector and mobilize financial resources; new available technologies are used for productive as well as demonstrative purposes, so that all members of the Association have the possible to get acquainted with new technological solutions and network with each other;
- Ensuring annual continuous participation to major trade fairs in the region is imperative; this is the only way to make sure that Moldovan fresh produce and producers have the possibility to exhibit and promote the local brands and commodities; active participation also gives the possibility to learn about the current trends in terms of available technologies and know-how, networking, new markets and new opportunities for producers and exporters.
- Promotion and external communication towards potential partners on new and traditional market is key for promoting exports. Project made extensive use of the Moldovan brand "Taste makes the difference", an overarching logo for Moldovan producers to exhibit during the major fairs.

VI. Conclusions and Way Forward

The Project managed to reach an important progress in the implementation of the key components. Some indicators of progress show that planned quantitative results were exceeded, in particular when it comes to the number of companies reached with the training

program. The Project management documented all achieved best practices and lessons learned in details and shares knowledge with companies and other projects. The monitoring under the core three components and the evaluation of the impact of participation to major trade fairs was conducted. The project managed to ensure synergies with other donors (in particular USAID for the organization of the trade fairs abroad), Government and private sector companies, identifying specific entry-points for further mobilization of funds, including through alternative financing. Project developed two specific concepts for 2 project ideas with very high potential:

- **The first one is the concept for the ‘Coolege Vitamine’ campaign that was successfully piloted and up-scaled to the national level. The project will continue supporting the producers, Association and the Government with the promotion of the fresh fruits consumption culture.**
- **The second project idea is the establishment and development of the first top-quality export group for Moldovan producers capable to enter new/niche markets, as well as to crowdfund financial resources on external markets through equity crowdfunding.**

VII. Financial Status

The Financial Interim Donor Report is attached.