



DEVELOPMENT EMERGENCY MODALITY

Joint Programme 2022 Annual Progress Report

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UNCT/MCO: Armenia

Reporting Period: 1 January - 31 December 2022

JP title: Food value chains have improved resilience through investments that increase productive capacities to respond to increased market demand

Thematic SDG Areas: Food systems transformation;

PUNOS: WFP, FAO

Stakeholder partner: Sub-national Governments; Khndzoresk agricultural cooperative, The “Center for Agricultural Research and Certification” state non-commercial organization, Armenian National Agrarian University;

Gender Marker: Gender-sensitive (for example, the JP acknowledged and aimed to address gender to enhance the policy/programme, such as undertaking gender analysis to ensure policies/programmes do no harm)

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Annual Progress

Overall JP self-assessment of 2022 progress:

Satisfactory (majority of annual expected results achieved; 1 to 3 months delay in implementation)

Overall Progress

During the reporting period JP provided 8,5mt quality seeds to farmers from 373 households in Syunik region. Namely, WFP assisted 69 farmers with legume seeds instead of planned 60 as some beneficiary farmers could not take seeds for 1 hectare coverage due to the splitted plots of land. As of end of 2022, 57,4ha of land is planned to be cultivated by legumes seeds. This will increase to 60ha as 2 more farmers will receive seeds by the of March 2023.

In total 91mt of winter wheat seeds were distributed to 304 farmers in October 2022 by FAO. The target was to support 400 beneficiaries. This variance was caused by two factors: a) The “Center for Agricultural Research and Certification” state non-commercial organization recommended to use 300kg per hectare instead of initially planned 250, and b) the cost of a kilogram of winter wheat seed increased for 21% (from planned 240AMD to 290AMD).

Distribution of quality seeds will ensure cultivation of 361,4ha of land with expected 1100mt of harvest to be collected in September 2023.

Recipients of legumes and members of cooperative (40 in total) participated in two trainings on peculiarities, risks of grain processing and management of cooperatives. The latter training was delivered by rector of Armenian National Agrarian University. The newly established agricultural cooperative has 10 member farmers, out of which 4 are women. In total, 11 of the training participants were women. Two more educational sessions on the topics of legumes production, processing, marketing and sales will be organized in 2023 with intentional engagement of women.

FAO has finalized the results of tender for selection of a training company. Educational sessions on wheat production and promotion of produced goods along with distribution of educational materials will be conducted in February and March of 2023. The latter (brochures) are already developed and printed.

The targeted number of training participants along with knowledge increase will be provided in the final report.

As part of JP, a combine harvester and seeder are to be provided to the agricultural cooperative of Khndzoresk. The cooperative is in the process of establishment with total cost of U\$300,000 funded by South-South and Triangular Cooperation. This was attributed by SDG FUND The cost of combine was U\$56,600, , while the seeder U\$13,977) is fully charged to JOINT SDG FUND and already transferred to the cooperative. The combine will be assembled and tested in February by a specialist to arrive from India. The combine harvester will serve the cooperative's value chain, as well as provide paid services to the farmers of neighboring communities. The Khndzoresk cooperative can be vital for local economic development as it allows smallholder farmers to pool their resources and negotiate better prices for their products. This helps to increase the farmers' profitability and sustainability, which in turn can lead to increased investment in the local economy. Additionally, the cooperative is planned to provide services such as marketing, processing, and distribution, which can help farmers to increase their productivity and efficiency. This will lead to higher standards of living for the farmers and their communities.

SDG Acceleration progress towards the SDGs, focusing on the main SDG targets

- Inclusion of vulnerable households in high value crop chains contributed to the SDG 2 to end hunger and ensure access by all people, in particular the poor and people in vulnerable situations, including infants, to safe, nutritious and sufficient food all year round.

- Establishment of an agricultural cooperative will ensure decreased fixed costs for participant farmers and viability of joint economic actions. This promotes the SDG 17.16 to enhance the global partnership for sustainable development complemented by multi-stakeholder partnerships that mobilize and share knowledge, expertise, technologies and financial resources to support the achievement of sustainable development goals in all, particularly developing countries.

- Establishment of a solar panel on the building of Khndzoresk cooperative contributes to SDG 7, namely, to ensure universal access to affordable, reliable, and modern energy services (7.1) and to increase substantially the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix (7.2).

Constraints that were encountered and any adjustments that were made to strengthen the relevance and effectiveness of the JP and the coherence and coordination of UN system support.

The "Center for Agricultural Research and Certification" state non-commercial organization recommended to distribute 300kg of wheat seeds of specific type per hectare instead of planned 250kg. Namely, the recommended norm for "Grom", "Alekseich", "Vassa" and "Bezostaya 100" sorts of wheat in Syunik province is from 300 to 320 kg per hectare. Also, increase in costs of the seeds resulted in a need to review the number of beneficiaries and distribute to 304 farmers instead of targeted 400.

Another adjustment was necessary due to the closure of Lars checkpoint on the border of Russia and Georgia. This resulted in delays of procurement and provision of seeds for two months, as the seeds are imported from Russia.

The legumes seeds were new to all 69 beneficiaries. This resulted in application of new agricultural practices of farmers. However, due to the same reason, smallholder farmers were rather careful, and this resulted in a need for more community sensitization sessions, thus slower time for inception and operations. For future interventions, longer time will be allocated for community nurturing sessions aimed at increased awareness on proposed value chain activities.

On 12 September 2022, military hostilities erupted on the border of Armenia and Azerbaijan, particularly in southern Vayots Dzor and Syunik regions. This resulted in disruption of transportation channels towards the south along with challenges with the sourcing and delivery of the winter wheat seeds on time, organization of educational trainings in the regions, and other delays. Hence, the implementing agencies had to request a 3 months no-cost extension, to complete the planned activities.

Next steps, scaling and sustainability [up to half a page]

Within the JP, high quality crop seeds were distributed to 373 farmers that can be sowed at least for three years and get high results. It is expected to have at least 20% harvest increase. The seeds can be supplied to other farmers interested in grain. This will promote expansion of high value crops that are more profitable for smallholder farmers.

The joint project contributes to the work of the logistics hub (operated under the agricultural cooperative) and subsequently economic development of Khndzoresk and neighboring communities. The cooperative is in the process of establishment. The construction materials for the cooperative's building were provided by WFP, while the land and construction works were contributed by the community. A 40kw solar plant will be installed on the building to cover the cooperatives expenses and processing equipment work, such as pulse processing, deseeding, crushing, packing, etc. The climate sensitive energy solution ensures decreased fixed costs for the farmers cooperative and sustainable operations for years to come.

Also, Armenian society has negative social memory on the agricultural cooperatives from Soviet "kolkhozes". The new cooperatives will showcase the benefits of unions to the farmers from neighboring communities/provinces and have catalyzer effect on promoting joint economic actions throughout the country.

Strategic Partnerships and Communications

Explain how diverse stakeholders were engaged with the JP

The project was coordinated in partnership with the agricultural development of department of Syunik Marzpetaran. The “Center for Agricultural Research and Certification” state non-commercial organization provided expertise and recommendations on seeds cultivation. The Armenian National Agrarian University supported with educational component. Local administrations of Kapan, Goris, Tegh, Gorhayk, Tatev, Sisian enlarged communities and Khndzoresk and Tsghuk settlements were engaged for farmers sensitization, selection and training activities.

Key meetings and events organized

JP steering committee/ programme board meeting	Strategic partners/ donors	Kick-off meeting
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Priority Cross-cutting Issues

Cross-cutting results/issues

Women farmers were intentionally integrated into joint project for empowerment. Namely, 40% of Khndzoresk cooperative members are women. Also, 11 of 40 of delivered training participants were women. Most of the educational events planned within project are to be carried out by March 2023. Women will further be purposely included as project beneficiaries for capacity building sessions organized by WFP and FAO.

WFP has beneficiary selection SOP, wherein preferential criteria is defined for women, large families, families of displaced population, families with disabled people, women headed households. Selection committee was formed in the communities and beneficiaries were selected based on the availability of at least 0,5ha of available land plot (with a few exceptions) and land readily available for spring planting. As a result, the project team included families with large number of children, with people with disabilities and victims of military operations in legumes beneficiary list. Detailed information on women selection as beneficiary farmers and participation in capacity building events will be provided in Project’s final report.

How did the JP apply the Gender Marker

The JP is Gender-sensitive (for example, the JP acknowledged and aimed to address gender to enhance the policy/programme, such as undertaking gender analysis to ensure policies/programmes do no harm). Capacity development (e.g. training of social workers, local governments, local communities);

JP address the below cross-cutting issues and principles of leaving no one behind

Human Rights	Persons with disabilities	Youth	Environmental and social standards
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No	Yes	No	Yes
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Contribution to enhancing SDG Financing

Drafted a bill, strategy, and/or approved a law increasing the fiscal	Produced financing, costing, diagnostic feasibility analyses as a basis to invest or	Improved efficiency (cost savings) in the	Improved effectiveness (value for money; i.e.	Drafted policies/regulatory frameworks or developed tools to	Structured new financial instruments (public, private or
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space for the policy in focus	increase spending on the SDGs	management of programmes/schemes	social impact of \$1 spent) of spending	incentivize private sector investment on the SDGs	blended) to leverage additional funding
No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No

How and in which area your JP contributed to enhancing SDG financing

The establishment of an agricultural cooperative is a way to increased effectiveness as cooperatives can pool resources and investments to improve operational efficiency and reduce costs for members. The joint economic actions of smallholder farmers will be based on better resource management and can help to strengthen rural communities by generating income and creating jobs. Joint implementation of the project by WFP and FAO proved to be efficient in terms of information sharing in the field, reduced operational costs such as proposal writing and reporting, less paperwork, common indicators and results.