

Contribution Agreement ENI/2021/427-059

Annex I

Description of Action

1. Cover Page

Country: Georgia

Programme Title: Joint EU-UN Programme for Rural Development in Abkhazia, Phase III (ENPARD IV)

<p>Programme Duration: 30 months</p> <p>Anticipated start/end dates: 1 January 2022 – 30 June 2024</p> <p>Fund Management Option(s): pass-through</p> <p>Managing or Administrative Agent: MPTF Office of UNDP</p>	<p>Total estimated budget*: USD 1 995 850 (equivalent to EUR 1,770,000 as per INFOREURO for December 2021)</p> <p>* Total estimated budget includes both programme costs and indirect support costs</p>
<p>Sources of funded budget:</p> <p>EU Delegation to Georgia: USD 1 973 298 (equivalent to EUR 1,750,000 as per INFOREURO for December 2021)</p> <p>UNDP Georgia: USD 22 552 (equivalent to EUR 20,000 as per INFOREURO for December 2021)</p>	

Table of Contents

1. Cover Page	1
2. Executive Summary	5
3. Situation Analysis	7
Stakeholder Engagement on the Ground:.....	9
4. Strategies, including lessons learned and the proposed joint programme	10
Lessons Learned:	12
The proposed joint programme	15
5. Results Framework	26
6. Management and Coordination Arrangements	34
The Steering Committee	34
The Joint Programme Coordination Team	35
The Coordination Committee.....	35
The Joint Programme Management Unit.....	35
7. Fund Management Arrangements.....	41
8. Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting	42
9. Legal Context or Basis of Relationship	46
10. Work plan.....	47
11. APPENDICES	48
Appendix 1 - Risk Log.....	48

List of Acronyms

AA	Administrative Agent
AAH	Action Against Hunger
ABL	Administrative Boundary Line
ABNILOS	Abkhazian Experimental Forest Research Station
ASU	"Abkhaz State University"
ATC	Agricultural Training Center
BMSB	Brown Marmorated Stink Bug
CA	Convening Agency
CARD	Centre for Agriculture and Rural Development
CC	Coordination Committee
CLLD	Community-Led Local Development
COBERM	Confidence Building Early Response Mechanism
COVID	Coronavirus Disease
CPD	Country Programme Document
CPF	Country Programming Framework
CPR	Conflict Prevention and Recovery
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CSSP	Civil Society Support Programme
DG NEAR	Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations
DRC	Danish Refugee Council
ENPARD	European Neighbourhood Programme for Agriculture and Rural Development
EU	European Union
EUDEL	European Union Delegation
EUR	Euro
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GAP	Good Agricultural Practices
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HALO	Hazardous Area Life-support Organization
HIV/AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
HQ	Headquarters
HRBA	Human Rights Based Approach
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IFS	Integrated Farming Systems
IoE	Institute of Ecology
IPM	Integrated Pest Management
IT	Information Technology
JP	Joint Programme
LAG	Local Action Group
LDS	Local Development Strategy
LEADER	Liaison Entre Actions de Développement de l'Economie Rurale
MOSS	Minimum Operating Security Standards

MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MPTF	Multi-Partner Trust Fund
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OPSYS	Operational System
PUNO	Participating UN Agency
PWD	Person with Disabilities
RDA	Rural Development Association
REU	Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia
ROM	Results Oriented Monitoring
RUB	Ruble
SAA	Standard Administrative Agreement
SC	Steering Committee
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SIDA	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
SPS	Sanitary and phytosanitary
TBC	To be confirmed
TL	Team Leader
TOR	Terms of Reference
UAV	Unmanned Aerial Vehicle
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNDSS	United Nations Department of Safety and Security
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
UNSDCF	United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USD	United States Dollar
VET	Vocational Education and Training
VG	Vulnerable Group

2. Executive Summary

The Joint EU-UN Programme for Rural Development in Abkhazia, Phase III (ENPARD IV) shall be implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). It will build on the results and achievements obtained under two previous phases (Phase II and Phase I) as well as COVID-19 action complementing to ENPARD III Abkhazia Component.

The **overall objective** of the Joint EU-UN Programme (henceforth "Joint Programme" or "JP"¹) is to **contribute to improved quality of life and socio-economic conditions of the rural population in Abkhazia**, both of men and women in equal manner as well as specific target groups such as individuals with disabilities, or minority ethnic groups, with special focus on agriculture.

UNDP and FAO will be joining efforts to provide integrated services to rural communities in Abkhazia that build on each Agency's comparative advantage in terms of both technical and operational capacities. While FAO will focus on technical aspects of agriculture development, UNDP will concentrate on implementation of community-led interventions and income diversification activities.

The goal of the joint programme is to bring about changes through three specific objectives:

1. Increase protection of consumers and producers; this will be pursued through awareness raising on food safety, and dissemination of Good Agricultural Practices at farm level;
2. Enhance resilience of rural communities; this will be pursued through improved agricultural practices, enhanced local expertise and strengthened diversification of income generation sources;
3. Enhance community empowerment and social inclusion and cohesion through community-led local development initiatives.

In line with the overarching framework identified within the 2019 Action Document for the European Neighbourhood Programme for Agriculture and Rural Development Phase IV, this Joint Programme will expand and deepen the support provided during the previous phases of ENPARD components in Abkhazia by ensuring targeted assistance to rural communities, including local farmers, taking a more value-chain inspired approach, and supporting the establishment of linkages between smallholders and local demand.

The Joint Programme will be articulated around two key components: a first component, in line with the Food Safety and sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) component envisioned under the ENPARD IV Framework of the Action, will focus on improving food safety by working at individual farm level to promote the use of Integrated Pest Management; and at the same time raise awareness of food safety issues among the broader consumer base. A second component will provide targeted support to local farmers and rural communities: a network of demonstrational plots will be established to build capacities of local farmers on Integrated Farming System approaches, and to support crop rotation and diversification. In parallel and based on the experience built during the implementation of ENPARD III, farmers will be provided with extension services and supported in establishing linkages with local demand. The JP will also address the long-standing issue of scarcity of locally-sources quality saplings through the continuous work with existing experimental gardens with support from the Centre for Agriculture and Rural Development (CARD). Community-led Local Development approaches will continue to be pursued as a pathway to the development of rural areas in Abkhazia: through the existing Local Action Groups, the social and community-led initiatives, including the income generation grants/incentives, as possible will be financed on a competitive basis and in line with the existing Local Development Strategies; pathways to social entrepreneurship will also be explored, as well as a progressively decreasing reliance on granting schemes in favor of more conditional cash transfer mechanisms, to counteract any over-reliance of local initiatives on external assistance from international

¹ For ease of reference, the JP might be mentioned as "project" as well within the text of the present Description of Action

partners, and begin to introduce a culture of entrepreneurship and self-reliance. The Local Action Groups will also be supported in coming together to design and plan joint initiatives, with the aim to strengthen existing linkages.

The directions envisioned under the Joint Programme contribute to the overarching objective of the ENPARD IV Action to “contribute to increased rural opportunities (...) via promoting sustainable and inclusive growth, creating employment and livelihoods in the rural areas as well as better food safety and improved protection of consumers (...)”; by ensuring linkages of agro-business people to the local markets, the joint programme will improve the sustainability of income generating activities in rural areas; the JP will ensure a fair do-no-harm oriented approach to rural development at community level; by increasing the skills of farmers, and raising awareness on food safety, the JP will support improved protection of the final consumer of fresh produce (vegetable, fruit or dairy), and at the same time pave the way to better linkages with markets, including across the Administrative Boundary Line (ABL), as possible.

The proposed Joint Programme is also formulated in line with the priorities identified by the EU as part of the Single Support Framework to Georgia (2017-2020), and in particular under sector 1 “Economic development and market opportunities”, specific objective 4 “to improve employment and living conditions in coastal and rural areas through diversification of the coastal/rural economy and developing infrastructure links”. Activities under this JP are also in line with the EU-Georgia Association Agenda 2017-2020, and specifically initiatives in support of agriculture and rural development².

The JP will ensure participation and equal opportunities of both women and men in all components of the Joint Programme, and its outcomes and impact will equally enhance capacities of men and women. The Joint Programme is gender-mainstreamed and it contains gender markers and gender specific targets aiming to equally empower local men and women and to offer them equal opportunities.

The JP will follow the human rights-based approach (HRBA) in programming, including the UN General Assembly Resolution on the Improvement of the Situation of Women in Rural Areas, the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (PWD), and other human rights instruments. The proposed intervention will aim at improving the situation of rights holders in the conflict affected region of Abkhazia in line with universal principles of the international human rights and humanitarian law, including the right to access to quality education, women and youth empowerment as well as the rights of persons with disabilities and disadvantaged groups.

The efficiency and effectiveness of the joint programme will be assessed through measurable indicators with disaggregated indicator targets in order to ensure that cross-cutting issues, such as gender, youth, vulnerable groups (IDPs, PwD, ethnic/religious minorities, households living in remote and/or rural areas) are monitored in a comprehensive manner.

The Joint EU-UN Programme will contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), primarily the SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production) but also SDG 1 (No Poverty), SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth) and SDG 15 (Life on Land) as possible.

The JP will further contribute to implementation of the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) for the period of 2021-2025. It will particularly address achievement of Outcome 4 (By 2025, conflict affected communities enjoy human rights, enhanced human security and resilience). The programme is also aligned with the priorities of the country specific program documents of the two implementing UN agencies.

From UNDP’s perspective, the expected results of the proposed initiative will be aligned with respective outcomes and outputs of UNDP Georgia’s Country Programme Document for 2021-2025. The joint

² Ref. article 7 of the Association Agenda (2017-2020).

programme will contribute to improving access to essential services, and pursue improved socio-economic conditions, community resilience and self-reliance.

From FAO's side, this component is linked to the FAO Country Programming Framework (CPF) between FAO and Georgia, and concretely on priority area 2: "Regional and sectoral development – value-chain development"; and priority Area 4: "Climate change, environment and biodiversity".

3. Situation Analysis

The socio-economic situation in Abkhazia had seriously been affected by the conflict in the nineties, which resulted in the consequent lack of investments, political isolation and overall weak local capacities. The conditions have been further worsened in 2020 by the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, which has compounded a situation already affected by grave development deficits.

According to local unverifiable statistics, the 2019 GDP amounted to 34,833 million RUB (ca. 537mln USD or USD1,888 per capita). The same sources note that the average salary in 2017 was RUB 10,936 (ca. USD 168).

While favourable climatic conditions and fertile soils would make agriculture the backbone of Abkhazian economy, nowadays limited capacities of local actors, who remain committed to obsolete cultivation practices, limited access to agricultural and non-agricultural services, poor infrastructure and obsolete machinery significantly affects the yields and productivity of the sector. Subsistence agriculture remains the most widespread form of farming, and commercially oriented agriculture is rare. Mandarins and hazelnuts are the traditional cash crops, together with strawberries and raspberries to a lesser extent, and contribute considerably to the livelihood of people in Abkhazia. Citruses plantations, however, are often very old leading to low quality produce: commercial investments opportunities for local farmers are limited, and inter-generational issues lead to the progressive abandonment of aging orchards.

Changing climatic conditions and a significant increase in humidity across all rural areas in Abkhazia have also led to the proliferation of pest infestation, chief among all the invasion of the Brown Marmorated Stink Bug (BMSB), that between 2017 and 2019 brought devastating damages to cultivations; more recently identified pests, such as the Chestnut Blight, have the potential to further erode the livelihood base of rural populations. Based on regular pest monitoring conducted under the previous phase of the ENPARD Programme, the risk of infestations of different pests and diseases remains high, threatening food security and livelihoods. The situation remains particularly worrying for citrus and hazelnut growers evolving in monoculture systems.

Based on a series of Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) implemented by UNDP in 2020-2021 with local farmers and buyers, it emerges clearly that the Abkhaz market today remains dominated by intermediaries, and many local farmers have problems with the delivery of products to urban markets. For existing big buyers, local procurement currently takes place mostly through wholesale entities: buyers have a limited number of regular suppliers, who mostly deliver non-perishable products. Stable suppliers for fresh vegetables, fruits, dairy products, and meat are not the norm.

Probably the main issue in the agricultural sector is the low productivity of the local farmers, due to poor and outdated practices, as well as a lack of consistency of the supply in terms of quality and quantity. There is also a lack of diversity in the produce, linked again to poor knowledge of new crops and varieties.

Lacking market infrastructure, including poor transportation network, lack of public and refrigerated storage facilities, and uncertainty over sales opportunities discourage local farmers from increasing production volumes. In part as a result of the over-reliance on local intermediaries, the price of local fruits and vegetables grows to be non-competitive once the goods hit the central market facilities,

compared with imported goods; it follows that local produce, although highly appreciated, remain more expensive than cheaper imports with a lower quality. With an increased productivity and more professional farming, a significant part of the imports of fresh products would be covered with internal production. It is also worth highlighting those local farmers lack the skills and the willingness to develop own sales channels with potential buyers, and thus partially reduce their reliance on wholesalers.

To compound the existing fragilities, COVID-19 and the extended restrictions to movements of goods and people across the crossing points at Inguri and Psou, further weakened small scale and subsistence agriculture, through the limitations to import agricultural inputs (seeds, fertilizer, pesticides) as well as selling their products mainly aimed at export (hazelnuts, citrus). Even after the resumption of movements across boundary lines, the increase in prices of productive inputs coupled with the decrease in local savings and disposable incomes have made it challenging for most farmers to restore their depleted assets.

Beyond the realm of agriculture and farm-based livelihoods, rural communities struggle with the consequences of lack of investments in social infrastructure and essential service provision. Access to district-level health, education, and community services is challenging at best for many rural residents, who tend to rely on community-level voluntary initiatives (i.e., through "initiative groups") to address some of the most urgent community needs.

In addition to the already mentioned weaknesses in the transportation infrastructure, the energy sector is also in dire need of modernization, to cope with the ever-increasing demand from household and income generating activities alike. The renovations, during the winter of 2020/2021, of the Inguri hydro power station, and the increased energy consumption linked to cryptocurrency mining activities (briefly encouraged in Abkhazia at the beginning of 2020), have highlighted the inadequacy of an obsolete and inefficient energy generation and transmission infrastructure that causes unreliable power quality and frequent power outages, to the detriment of commercial activities in urban and rural areas alike.

Public health and education service providers have been overwhelmed by the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, as the outbreak laid bare the lack of shock-responsiveness of both social and economic sectors, both at community and macro level. Regular information collected by the ENPARD programme over the course of 2020 and 2021, has highlighted challenges affecting the health and educations sectors, and impacting on rural livelihoods: while such challenges are common at global level, in the case of Abkhazia, and in the absence of any shock-absorbing mechanism, the pandemic seriously affected lives of vulnerable people, and in particular women.

Due to the absence of a stand-alone policy framework for rural development in Abkhazia, previous phases of the ENPARD programme in Abkhazia have gradually introduced participatory community/district-based rural development approach based on successful implementation/ best practices and lessons learned across Europe in the framework of the LEADER concept. Since 2017, ENPARD programming has engaged in the selection and support of rural development initiatives that foster the adoption of more competitive agricultural practices, animal health and pest control; that promote diversification of rural income sources including viable off-farm economic activities and the sustainable management and protection of environmental resources; and strengthen availability and access to basic services in rural communities. The approach centered around the establishment of Local Action Groups (LAGs) tasked to define and coordinate the implementation of rural development sub-projects as part of a participatory local development strategy based on a territorial approach.

Stakeholder Engagement on the Ground:

Some of the key assumptions of this joint programme are that the implementation process is not derailed by the political climate; that attempts by stakeholders to interfere in the implementation of

activities due to political reasons are kept to a minimum; and that public and private stakeholders alike will actively engage in development activities.

Due to the positive track record of engagement with various stakeholders in Abkhazia, UNDP and FAO are viewed as trustworthy and impartial partners, which is an important precondition for successful implementation of the proposed intervention. Both Agencies participate in coordination mechanisms, such as Abkhazia Strategic Partnership (ASP) and Regional ASP, which allows for coordination of activities between UN Agencies and other international non-governmental organizations, including key observers such as the International Committee of the Red Cross, and the HALO Trust. This close coordination of activities under various programmes/projects in Abkhazia enhances the likelihood of establishing linkages to complimentary interventions.

UNDP and FAO - the participating UN organizations (PUNOs) - will be in communication with key structures of *de facto* authorities in Abkhazia. On district level, the communication will be carried out with *de facto* district administrations as well as district agricultural departments and local veterinary services as appropriate. Further, local entities such as the Institute of Ecology in Abkhazia (IoE), the Research Institute of Agriculture under the Academy of Sciences in Abkhazia and the "Abkhaz State University" (ASU) will be actively engaged in various activities of the joint programme, both in a consultative role and, potentially, as implementing partners.

The JP will follow the human rights-based approach in programming, including the UN General Assembly Resolution on the Improvement of the Situation of Women in Rural Areas, the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and other human rights instruments. By applying the HRBA, the proposed intervention will aim at improving the situation of right holders, especially the poor and most disadvantaged in the breakaway region in line with universal principles of the international human rights and humanitarian law, including the right to access to quality education, women and youth empowerment as well as the rights of persons with disabilities and disadvantaged groups. The proposed development assistance shall support the rights-holders - the boys and girls, men and women and the population of disadvantaged regions - to claim their rights effectively and empower through enhancing their ability to think and to act freely, to take decisions and to fulfil own potential as full and equal members of the society.

Primary target group of the proposed action are the rights holders living in Abkhazia: boys and girls, men and women with specific focus on population in rural areas and individuals affected by specific vulnerabilities (both social and economic). The joint programme will aim to ensure that there is strong representation from youth*, women, minorities, people with disabilities as well as those from remote villages in various events and opportunities promoted, supported, or facilitated within the intervention, including active engagement in the work of the Local Action Groups. The target group will also include farmers, active community members, development-oriented community organizations as well as socially or economically excluded residents.

Besides, the joint programme will work closely with local non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in Abkhazia. Some of the activities under the intervention are planned to be carried out with support of pre-identified partner NGOs, including NGO "Centre for Agriculture and Rural Development" (CARD)³, NGO "ALERT", NGO "Amilatt Resurskua" and NGO "Civic Initiative and Human Being for the Future Foundation". Furthermore, the local NGOs selected as part of the envisioned community sub-granting mechanism in districts Gagra, Gudauta, and Ochamchire may receive financial means to implement field activities and will benefit from the joint programme by strengthening access to social services in targeted rural areas.

* The term youth is defined as persons in the age of 14-29 years, further noting the variations of definition of the term that may exist on the national and international levels, including the definition of youth in the UN Security Council Resolution 2250 on Youth, Peace, and Security and the UN General Assembly Resolutions A/RES/50/81 and A/RES/56/117.

³ CARD was established under previous phases of ENPARD component in Abkhazia; it has recently been registered as NGO.

The agricultural component, with a focus on good agricultural practices and Integrated Pest Management, will work with farmers and farmers groups in the setting up of demonstration plots to showcase better practices. Likewise, the joint programme will collaborate with other stakeholders in promotion of the coordination amongst partners on plant protection, through the working group created with the support from FAO under ENPARD III. The JP will collaborate and provide technical support to other EU financed activities under ENPARD to be implemented by Action Against Hunger (AAH), Halo Trust and the Danish Refugee Council (DRC) in the field of agriculture as requested by these partners.

4. Strategies, including lessons learned and the proposed joint programme

The Joint EU-UN Programme for Rural Development in Abkhazia, Phase III (ENPARD IV) will contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which are a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity. The expected results of the joint programme will primarily contribute to SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production) but also SDG 1 (No Poverty), SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth) and SDG 15 (Life on Land) as possible.

The programme will further contribute to implementation of the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) for the period of 2021-2025. It will particularly address achievement of Outcome 4 (By 2025, conflict affected communities enjoy human rights, enhanced human security and resilience). The programme is also aligned with the priorities of the country specific program documents of the two implementing UN agencies.

From UNDP's perspective, the expected results of the proposed initiative will be aligned with respective outcomes and outputs of UNDP Georgia's Country Programme Document for 2021-2025. The programme will contribute to improving access to essential services, and pursue improved socio-economic conditions, community resilience and self-reliance.

From FAO's side, this component is linked to the FAO Country Programming Framework (CPF) between FAO and Georgia, and concretely on priority area 2: "Regional and sectoral development – value-chain development"; and priority Area 4: "Climate change, environment and biodiversity".

Abkhazia Component of the Joint EU-UNDP Programme for Rural Development was launched in 2017 through Complementary Measures to address development challenges related to underdevelopment and socio-economic weakness in the community fabric across rural areas, and consequent weak resilience at community level. Such development challenges were connected to lack of investments and diversification in small-scale agriculture and rural livelihood; insufficient technical capacities to bring forth a vision for rural development; poor quality of social and economic infrastructure. In addition, environmental factors such as recent infestations of invasive species further affected rural areas. Initiatives under previous ENPARD phases supported income generation in rural areas (UNDP and AAH), small-scale agriculture and management of natural resources (FAO and DRC with RDA).

A complementary action of ENPARD III Abkhazia Component to address the COVID-19 impact was funded in 2021 by the European Union to address urgent needs of vulnerable farmers whose livelihoods had been upended by the pandemic, and to provide tangible support to educational and health points across all seven districts of Abkhazia.

Since its launch, ENPARD Abkhazia Component has achieved considerable progress in supporting the introduction of community-led local development mechanisms, in supporting diversification of income sources in rural areas, in strengthening the agricultural sector, and in supporting local actors establish sustainable mechanisms to identify and mitigate the negative effects of invasive pest on plant and forest health. Access to agricultural and non-agricultural services has been strengthened through the action of the Agriculture Training Centers (ATCs), of the Centre for Agriculture and Rural Development

(CARD) and through initiatives such as the Equipment Rental Scheme spearheaded by the Rural Development Association (RDA) in Tkvarcheli district. Through these entities and initiatives, local experts have reached out to interested farmers, offering services, and building capacities, showcasing and demonstrating new agricultural practices.

Local Action Groups, established in five districts, have progressively gained the skills and assurance to lead community-based efforts for rural development: over the course of programme implementation, linkages between the five LAGs have been encouraged and cultivated, creating a shared understanding, language and vision of Community-Led Local Development in both eastern and western parts of Abkhazia.

It is on these achievements, that the Phase III of the Joint Programme (ENPARD IV Abkhazia Component), here proposed is building on. To influence the socio-economic development of rural areas, reduce the food insecurity and drive a significant part of the population out of the poverty levels, agriculture is the main economic activity to focus on. However, for this to happen agricultural systems need to be optimized with consideration for resources available in Abkhazia and technical skills upgraded further to allow for new practices, agricultural inputs, and methodologies to be spread in a context characterized by isolation from external knowledge for nearly thirty years.

In line with the overarching framework identified within the 2019 Action Document for the European Neighbourhood Programme for Agriculture and Rural Development Phase IV, and based on the recommendations of the final evaluation of the ENPARD II programme, and the mid-term evaluation of the ENPARD III programme, and specifically those included in the separated evaluation report of ENPARD II & III in Georgia's conflict-affected region of Abkhazia⁴, and on lesson learned during JP implementation, UNDP and FAO now propose to expand and deepen the support provided during previous phases of programme implementation by providing targeted support to local farmers, taking a more value-chain inspired approach, and supporting the establishment of linkages between smallholders and local demand.

ENPARD IV Abkhazia Component will strive to contribute to the improvement of opportunities in the rural areas through addressing technical challenges the rural population faces in Abkhazia. The directions envisioned above contribute to the overarching ENPARD IV objective to "contribute to increased rural opportunities (...) via promoting sustainable and inclusive growth, creating employment and livelihoods in the rural areas as well as better food safety and improved protection of consumers (...)" ; by ensuring access of agro-business people to the local markets, the joint programme will improve the sustainability of income generating activities in rural areas; the JP will ensure a fair do-no-harm oriented approach to rural development at community level; by increasing the skills of farmers, and raising awareness on food safety, it will support improved protection of the final consumer of fresh produce (vegetable, fruit or dairy), and at the same time pave the way to better linkages with markets , including across the Administrative Boundary Line (ABL), as possible.

In line with the Food Safety and sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) component envisioned under the Framework of the Action, FAO proposes to take some initial steps in the direction of improved food safety, by working at individual farm level to promote the use of Integrated Pest Management. The reduction of the use of pesticides and the adoption of practices to ensure post-harvest practices will allow to improve the food safety of the agricultural commodities. In parallel, and through the work of the CARD and the LAGs, UNDP will engage in awareness raising on basic notions of food safety and in promoting, through awareness raising and technical knowledge, the adoption of voluntary quality standards for farmers.

In parallel, the existing support to rural development implemented through the LAGs, will take new shape, focusing on supporting social and community-led interventions (including income generation

⁴ Ref. "Evaluation of ENPARD Programme in Georgia" – SOGEROM SA consortium (March 2021)

initiatives/incentives, as possible), while creating opportunities for local producers to access local markets through the implementation of agricultural fairs.

Human rights-based approach (HRBA) to programming, including the UN GA Resolutions on the "improvement of the situation of women in rural areas" and other human rights instruments, will be mainstreamed throughout JP implementation, including in support of vulnerable and marginalized populations of different ethnic origin often deprived of basic rights. To do so, this action will leverage UNDP's and partners' existing programs in Abkhazia in the realm of community empowerment as well as past actions in support of rural development at local and regional level.

A human rights-based approach will be instrumental to maintain and strengthen the ongoing process in support of social transformation, shift in values and behaviours, while allowing for focused strategic interventions in support of the excluded (i.e. persons living with disabilities) throughout the development planning, formulation, implementation, and JP monitoring stages.

Activities under the Joint Programme will also consistently take into consideration and support the fight against climate change, taking an "environmentally responsible" approach to the implementation of JP-funded initiatives. The adoption of climate resilient agricultural practices, and the promotion of sustainable management and protection of environmental resources, will be the focus of this joint programme's targeted support to farm-based livelihoods, especially through the network of existing demonstrational plots and experimental gardens. Work will continue to identify and select the most resilient and climate-adapted varieties of key crops for demonstrational and propagation purposes. The protection of natural resources will be embedded in competitive selection processes for community sub-grants, especially as they pertain the selection of social or social entrepreneurship sub-grants. The same focus will be maintained in the Local Development Strategies. Local partners will be advised to the growing effects of climate change, its effect on local development, and supported to plan for and mitigate risks and promulgate environmental protection.

Environmentally friendly solutions will be adopted as part of programmatic planning and implementation wherever practically possible.

Lessons Learned:

Over previous phases of ENPARD in Abkhazia, a number of lessons learned were collected and internalized, which are the basis now for the design of the new JP activities. The Programme has been instrumental to put forward a vibrant community movement based on the Local Action Groups, following the LEADER model. The LAGs provide a good basis for participation within the community on the definition of the priorities for rural development, as well as a platform that can be used for several purposes, including the training of rural residents. The new phase of the programme provides the opportunity to further strengthen and deepen on the technical support provided to farmers.

The final evaluation of Phase I and the mid-term evaluation of Phase II have also been an opportunity to reflect on what were some of the elements that drove the success of the programme and what were the elements that hindered it. Below some of the key elements that are being integrated in the new joint programme:

1. **Sustainability of entities formed under the project:** throughout its implementation period, the project has been very successful in laying the foundation for locally owned mechanisms and platforms to be established, and in showing the benefits and possibilities that participatory and integrated approaches to development can offer. In cooperation with Abkhaz scientific institutions (Institute of Ecology, Forest Research Station ABNILOS) the project gave birth to some locally maintained structures (boxwood nursery, mycology laboratory); sustaining results beyond the duration of ENPARD III, is however still a challenge for both the CARD and the LAGs. The CARD was initially envisioned to be an advisory body with coordination functions for rural development initiatives, staffed with knowledgeable Abkhaz experts. Over time, it was acknowledged that the

future sustainability of the CARD hinges on its ability to find the financial means to sustain its programming in an environment where small and to an extent medium-sized farmer may not be willing or not have the disposable income necessary to purchase consultancy and advisory services, and where no de facto institutional stakeholder has the means to take responsibility for the continued functioning of the Centre. As of the end of ENPARD III, the CARD's sustainability plan will see it transform in a not-for-profit entity, with the possibility to run some commercial activities in order to sustain its operations. As envisioned in Phase III of the ENPARD project, the CARD will sell to farmers not falling into the "extremely vulnerable category" extension services in the form of soil analysis, artificial insemination for cattle, treatment of crops, farmer's fairs, etc. while in parallel work with existing experimental gardens that will continue closely monitor different varieties of crops in Abkhazia. Over time, the CARD will also support the setting of voluntary quality standard for interested farmers, to address some of the issues hindering purchase of locally produced agricultural goods. As necessary, the CARD will also be contracted by UNDP to offer at heavily subsidized prices, extension services to extremely vulnerable farmers.

Continued engagement of LAG members is also an issue requiring project attention. While significant progress was made in building the sense of ownership and responsibility of LAG members with respect to their role in leading community led local development, considering that participatory development has not had sufficient time to take roots in the Abkhaz mentality, there is the possibility that LAGs will go through a "dormant stage" in absence of continued ENPARD action within Abkhazia. It is worth noting, however, that even longer-established Local Action Groups within the European Union do go through similar cycles of engagement and pause, in line with funding being made available for implementation of LAG activities. The feasibility of local fundraising in support of the implementation of the Local Development Strategies at present remains dubious: LAG members are however considering the establishment of a LAG-NGO to proceed to finance LAG work in the future, and to continue discussing, generating, and developing co-operation project ideas for local development and initiate their implementation.

2. **The granting mechanism.** The final evaluation of ENPARD II and the mid-term evaluation of ENPARD III have highlighted a few potential issues related to the existing granting mechanisms as pursued by the LAGs, and to an extent by the CARD and other entities established under the ENPARD umbrella (i.e., the Agricultural Training Centers). Specifically, it was noted that the amounts being granted, as well as the agreed share of co-financing, are not currently harmonized between components of the project and are, in some cases, disproportionately high compared to the average income of Abkhaz residents. Potentially this may lead to, on the one hand, internal dis-harmony in project implementation, as grantees in different districts or across project components are subject to different rules; and on the other hand, the low co-financing share may not be enough to motivate grant applicants to apply their best efforts in achieving successful outcomes for the projects being financed. In a longer-term perspective, also it is worth noting that over-reliance on granting mechanisms established as part of external humanitarian or development assistance, may lead to stifling of local entrepreneurial spirit and crowd out alternative forms of investments. In light of the above and taking into consideration the planned introduction by the Danish Refugee Council, as part of the larger ENPARD umbrella in the region, of conditional cash transfers that will be made available to farmers and income generating initiatives in the food-processing sector, UNDP plans to work with the LAGs to further address the funding mechanisms made available for the implementation of the Local Development Strategies. Funding of social projects will be released through granting mechanisms with low co-financing shares for the applicant; funding for social entrepreneurship activities, or for income generating initiatives (as possible) in support of livelihoods diversification, will be subject to a varying share of co-financing in line with the aim of the activity being financed, the experience of the grant applicant, and the importance of the activities in bringing forth the aim of the Local Development Strategy.

Granting mechanism under the ENPARD IV Abkhazia component will be administered in a similar manner like in the previous phase. Any direct monetary transfer to the selected beneficiaries / grantees (individuals, group of individuals) will be avoided or minimized. The procurement of

goods, services or construction works needed for the implementation of awarded sub-projects/grants will be responsibility of the UNDP. In case NGOs are selected as beneficiaries / grantees, then both options would be possible: direct monetary transfer (through contracts) or procurement (by UNDP) of goods, services or construction works needed for the implementation of awarded sub-projects/grants.

3. **Coordination.** Recent evaluations have noted that space still exists to exploit synergies between the different entities established under the ENPARD umbrella. While the objectives of the CARD, the Agriculture Training Centres, and of the Rural Development Association do not strategically overlap, all the organizations aim, pursuing different pathways, to improve agricultural knowledge and practices, and provide extension services to help develop sustainable farming enterprises. In order to address this issue, the new phase of ENPARD is being co-designed in close collaboration between UNDP, AAH, and DRC, so that entry points for joint action may be timely identified and exploited during project implementation. In the new framework, CARD may provide services to clients of the RDAs at subsidized prices, in line with commonly agreed identification criteria; the CARD, the ATC and FAO will elaborate a joint approach in establishing a partnership with the university in Sukhumi, and especially with the faculty and the students of the Agro-Engineering department; and all ENPARD partners will be engaged as providers of (local or international) expertise to the benefit of all project components. More detailed information is provided in section 6 below.
4. **Building local expertise.** Local expertise building must remain at the core of ENPARD implementation, whether in the form of training opportunities being provided to project beneficiaries (on- or off-farm, through local or international trainers), or in the form of results of applied research work being disseminated to project stakeholders, or in the shape of hands-on work experiences being offered to university students as part of the project's work plan. Over the past two phases of ENPARD in Abkhazia, considerable progress has already been made through the establishment of demo plots and experimental gardens, the financing of research activities in the field of bio-fertilizers, the establishment of internship opportunities for university students, and the provision of practical trainings to farmers and forest protection practitioners. Additionally, LAGs capacities were built within ENPARD III to implement local development strategies and integrate community-led rural development approach in respective districts, progressively increasing their ownership of the implementation of the district-level Local Development Strategies. Essential work was also implemented to create policy frameworks to control and mitigate the adverse impact of invasive pests and animal diseases and build the capacity of local experts to implement these frameworks in a sustainable manner. In this sense, even within the short timeframe of the proposed JP, local expertise building will continue to constitute the best guarantee of sustained results of project action over time.
5. **Limited basis of data to guide effective implementation.** Data collection in Abkhazia remains a challenge due to the sensitivity of local stakeholders towards collection and sharing of information. Available data sources are unreliable due to lack of resources and poor data collection and processing vis-à-vis the international standards. Information collected by international partners is often at odds with official statistics. This lack of hard data has created challenges for evidence-based programming and for the evaluation of project impact. For this reason, over the course of activity implementation, and in particular following the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, ENPARD partners have progressively come to rely on information collected as part of regular monitoring or targeted research exercises to complement locally available statistics and create a reliable picture of the socio-economic situation and development needs in the target areas. Looking ahead to the next phase of the project, it will be essential that a strong M&E framework is created that ensure the systematic collection of data to both inform and evaluate the implementation of activities, and that, to the extent possible, allows to capture the short-term impact of ENPARD support on lives and livelihoods of the identifies target groups. In terms of the impact of ENPARD activities in agriculture, the project will actively engage in measuring the improved yield and productivity per hectare of the demonstration plots where new practices are

showcased and piloted, allowing for farmers to associate improved yields with better agricultural practices.

6. **Reaching out to women.** Despite efforts made by the ENPARD partners to ensure meaningful participation of female beneficiaries in all project activities, both the community sub-granting mechanisms and the ATC grants have succeeded to have at most 35% of successful women grantees. The local social context in fact tends to consider manual work in agriculture to be “men’s work” while women are engaged in food processing: as such targeting purely, agricultural projects may limit access to the project for women. The identification of value chains in which women are more active, such as vegetable production instead of cash crops (largely dependent on men’s work) will allow to bring more women into the demonstration activities in demonstration plots.

The proposed joint programme

The **overall objective** of the joint programme is to **contribute to improved quality of life and socio-economic conditions of the rural population in Abkhazia**, both of men and women in equal manner as well as specific target groups such as individuals with disabilities, or minority ethnic groups, through increased socio-economic opportunities and improved sustainable management of natural resources, with a specific focus on agriculture.

FAO and UNDP will be joining efforts to provide integrated services to rural communities in Abkhazia that build on each Agency’s comparative advantage in terms of both technical and operational capacities. While FAO will focus on technical aspects of agriculture development, UNDP will focus on the implementation of community-led interventions and income diversification activities taking a more value-chain inspired approach.

The goal of the programme is to bring changes through 3 specific objectives:

1. Increase protection of consumers and producers through awareness raising on food safety, and dissemination of Good Agricultural Practices at farm level;
2. Enhance resilience of rural communities, through improved agricultural practices, enhanced local expertise and strengthened diversification of income generation sources;
3. Enhance community empowerment and social inclusion and cohesion through community-led local development initiatives.

OUTPUT 1. INCREASE PROTECTION OF CONSUMERS AND PRODUCERS

Output 1.1. Increased awareness of food safety among producers and consumers at large through awareness raising on food safety and dissemination of Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs) at farm level

1.1.1 Raising awareness of public and private extensionists on pesticide risk reduction (FAO)

While the development of food safety standards is a desirable strategic direction for future development, the existing operational constraints and the JP’s expected time horizon do not allow policy-level engagement at this stage.

Despite this, through the joint programme FAO will tackle the wrong and abusive use of pesticides in Abkhazia, considered as one of the main risks for food safety in plant production (mainly vegetable) especially due to the non-respects of harvest intervals after the utilization of hazardous chemicals. The JP will engage on conducting an outreach campaign raising awareness amongst different stakeholders, including public and private extensionists, input suppliers, farmers’ groups and CSOs/NGOs, regarding the appropriate use of pesticides and the impact on food safety.

Through TV and press campaigns and using the national and international expertise injected in the local farming system through the joint programme, FAO will disseminate Good Agricultural and Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Practices in Abkhazia among all farming communities. This will take the shape of TV broadcasting of best practices, and miniseries focusing on specific infestations ENPARD wishes to alert on and provide recommendation for the control of.

1.1.2 Dissemination of best practices in term of reasonable use of pesticides amongst practitioners at farm level through in situ training activities (FAO)

Integrated Pest Management (IPM) at farm level has proved to be one of the most significant bottlenecks on the side of the agriculture production in Abkhazia. A generalized lack of understanding of the appropriate and effective utilization of pesticides commonly leads to, on the one hand, an abuse in their utilization on more commercial crops (orchards) and, on the other, to overall low effectiveness in their use.

The different pest infestations affecting agriculture in Abkhazia in the last few years (i.e., Brown Marmorated Stink Bug, American White Butterfly, several hazelnut and citrus pests and fungal diseases) have made clear the need for an improved knowledge in the promotion of IPM as a means for reasonable utilization of pesticides.

Integrated Pest Management (IPM) principles promote the careful consideration of available nonchemical pest control techniques and subsequent integration of appropriate measures that discourage the development of invading species, keeping pesticides use at a level that are economically rational and minimizes risks to human food safety, animal health and the environment. Through IPM demonstrations, FAO will aim at reducing the reliance on and avoid adverse impacts from pesticide use on the safety of farming communities and consumers during and after the JP life cycle. A particular emphasis will be made on the respect at farm level of harvest intervals to avoid contamination with pesticides of the harvested products.

Within this activity, the JP will integrate some IPM into the implementation of the 20 demonstration plots dedicated to crop diversification and Integrated Farm Management (Activities 2.1.1 and 2.1.2 below). The joint programme will engage in a vibrant training programme for farmers, extension services and other practitioners, to train on the IPM principles and the right utilization of pesticides. The JP will aim at reaching prescribers of good pesticide use practices (public and private extensionists as well as teachers of the faculty of Agronomy), through theoretical training and in situ practice within the network of 20 demonstration farms created. It is envisioned that up to 15 trainers will be enrolled in a qualifying cycle sanctioned by a certificate.

The IPM practices to be demonstrated will comprise anti insect nets, pest monitoring using sticky and pheromone traps, use of selective herbicides and pesticides, push – pull strategy, introduction of natural enemies and use of resistant varieties.

1.1.3 Awareness raising activities on food safety among consumers at large via Local Action Groups (LAGs) and the Centre for Agriculture and Rural Development (CARD) (UNDP)

On the consumer side, awareness raising activities on food safety will target both small farmers and communities supported during ENPARD III and will be implemented via LAGs and CARD. Whenever available, voluntary quality standards currently existing within Abkhazia will be analyzed, and expertise building events organized to ensure they are communicated in a simple manner, that can be adopted even by relatively small farmers. The CARD team, and especially the legal advisor is ideally placed to work with the relevant stakeholders and subsequently train small and medium sized farmers on the necessary process.

In parallel, a pilot initiative will be led by the CARD with the involvement of the LAGs as vehicle for information sharing; the initiative will support awareness raising on quality standards (in terms of size, weight, appearance, etc.) for key crops. Lack of product standardization has in fact been identified as one of the key issues for local actors in the food and beverage industry, that currently hinders purchases from local suppliers. The initiative will encourage awareness raising and possible adoption, on a voluntary basis, of such standards within a selected group of farmers that will be further connected with potential buyers in the food and beverage sector, and the results analyzed in terms of revenue change, with a view of extending the activity to a wider group of individuals, if successful.

OUTPUT 2. ENHANCE RESILIENCE OF RURAL COMMUNITIES THROUGH IMPROVED AGRICULTURAL PRACTICES, ENHANCED LOCAL EXPERTISE AND STRENGTHENED DIVERSIFICATION OF INCOME GENERATION SOURCES

Output 2.1. Enhanced agricultural production in target areas through capacity/expertise development and extension service provision

2.1.1 Intensification of crop diversification through establishment of a network of 10 dedicated demonstration plots (FAO)

Crop diversification is one of the most promising tools to enhance agricultural production in Abkhazia, together with increased productivity. Indeed, the agricultural production, in spite of good local conditions (good quality of soils, water availability, mild climate) is very much focused to a handful of cash crops (citrus, hazelnuts) mainly dedicated to export, that have proved to be highly vulnerable to both interruptions in the movements across the Administrative Boundary Line, and to the COVID-19 pandemic in general.

Other than the economic potential of crop diversification, the infestation of Brown Marmorated Stink Bug from 2017, has also shown the importance of having a diversified production, as not all crops were equally affected, and a wider spectrum of production within the year would have allowed for an improved resilience of farmers. Some elements such as counter season production, early crops or varieties, would be fundamental to reduce the impact of pests and diseases on farm-based livelihoods in the future.

The main element to promote crop diversification is demonstration, as farmers have not been exposed to new crops and varieties for a long time, and often stick to what they have always produced. The problems in the export of cash crops due to COVID-19 have started a reflection in the farming communities whether they should grow other crops.

It is therefore timely to promote agricultural diversification, and this joint programme proposes a network of 10 demonstration plots that will introduce a range of legumes and vegetables in Abkhazia and will be used as a basis for field trainings of farmers to take place regularly, with groups of around 15 farmers and practitioners per training. Proposed crops will be:

- Herbs and greens: rocket, celery, lettuce (romaine), spinach and asparagus
- Roots: sweet potato
- Grains: beans and maize / sweet corn
- Flowers: cauliflower, broccoli, and artichoke
- Fruits: zucchini, pumpkins, strawberry, eggplant, sweet pepper, and hot pepper

2.1.2 Promotion of Integrated Farming Systems (IFS) through creation of a network of 10 dedicated demonstration plots (FAO)

An Integrated Farming System (IFS) approach entails the allocation of a farm's available resources to one production purpose, to improve farm income and food security. In an IFS approach, interdependency of productions is used to supplement one another other.

This component aims at promoting optimization of resources available for the farmer (use of manure, use of local breeds and varieties, better utilization of crops (intercropping, cover crops, etc.), restitutions of cultures for improved soil fertility etc.).

The JP will implement 10 demonstration plots that will introduce principles of IFS applied to their own current production systems in Abkhazia. Integrated Farming Principles will be further demonstrated along the production cycle of each plot. The joint programme will organize regular trainings in each plot, each training will gather at least 20 targeted practitioners.

Proposed practices to introduce through vegetable production demo plots will be:

- ***Soil health and fertility:*** crop rotation, soil solarization, use of "green manure", use of fresh chicken manure to reduce soil nematodes, minimum tillage in maize, testing solutions for persistent herbs, compost production, soil pH amendments, use of detached turf in highly infected soils or seeds disinfection.
- ***Production:*** seedling production, varieties screening, raised beds, mulching (plastic and natural), fertigation (fertilizing through irrigation system), off season production of vegetable under walking-through tunnels, off season production of herbs under agro fabric, intercropping (maize and beans), production of vegetative seedlings (for example strawberries, sweet potato), use of irrigation systems, fertilizers foliar application, bio stimulants, use of phyto-hormones to encourage fruit set under low temperatures, use of tensiometers or meteorological data (plant's needs irrigation scheme), use of honeybees hives to increase fruit set in vegetable production, plant shaping (trellising, pruning), post-harvest practices, vegetable and herbs processing.

2.1.3 Capacity/expertise development of farmers on existing experimental gardens of perennial crops in four districts of Abkhazia (UNDP)

In parallel to the continued provision of expert technical advice to the existing experimental sites and follow up on the results of the research on the most conducive varieties of key crops within Abkhazia, the CARD will work closely with existing experimental gardens of perennial crops, which will act as demonstration facilities for training of farmers and local stakeholders on good cultivation practices.

This activity builds organically on the work initiated by the CARD as part of ENPARD III – Abkhazia Component, and specifically on the work conducted by the Centre in four experimental gardens in Gulripshi (in the fields of the Institute of Agriculture Research under the Academy of Sciences in Agudzera), Ochamchire (village Adzhiubzha), Gudauta (village Mgudzyrhua within the grounds of the NGO "Apsabara"), and Gagra (village Adzapsh) districts. The gardens were planted with imported quality saplings of walnuts, wild cherries, cornelian cherry (kyzyl), and grapes (wine and table variety), chosen on the basis of their expected productivity, their relevance to the local economy, and on the value of the crops in terms of expected economic return. The progress of each variety was observed over a number of months through regular visits by the CARD agronomist, and a final overall report, that clearly identified the most promising varieties based on soil and climate conditions, constitutes the basis for the activities now proposed as part of this joint project.

Under the planned action, the CARD will promote training of stakeholders and farmers in these experimental gardens to show good cultivation practices for these varieties, as well as other local varieties that could be sourced locally.

The CARD will work closely with existing experimental gardens and with the Research Institute of Agriculture under the Academy of Sciences in Abkhazia in this research work and will be operating experimental gardens as a showroom for local stakeholders interested in similar crops. A dedicated greenhouse will be constructed to place young saplings of perennial crops available in Abkhazia and regular monitoring will be organized by the CARD agronomist in collaboration with the Institute of Agriculture. It will be focusing on good cultivation practices of perennial crops however, pending further feasibility assessments, one section may be set aside for the cultivation of vegetable seedlings, to be operated by FAO within the framework of capacity building at farmers' level. This is going to create synergies between the JP's components with the overall aim to promote crop diversification and building local expertise. While being fully implemented by the CARD, the operation of the experimental gardens for perennial crops will benefit, as per identified needs, from the experience and expertise of FAO, both locally and internationally sourced. In particular, and in line with the joint character of all activities proposed under this project, extensive and regular communications will be established between the CARD, FAO experts, and UNDP to discuss and as necessary receive guidance and advice on technical issues that might arise during the implementation of the activity, and to identify early on both potential challenges and new opportunities for collaboration between the three partners.

CARD will provide extensive consultations and assistance to the farmers interested in planting similar crops at every stage of cultivation process as well as continue provision of open-air lectures and trainings on the experimental gardens.

The advantages of working with existing experimental gardens are expected to be numerous: income generation for small farmers will be supported through the provision of expertise building and technical support, that will improve the likelihood of success of cultivation.

In addition to farmers, training activities would be targeting students of the Faculty of Agriculture and Department of Process Engineering in the university in Sukhumi, to provide additional hands-on learning opportunities.

2.1.4 Capacity building for local experts at the Centre for Agricultural and Rural Development (UNDP)

Building up on the capacities created within previous programme cycle and in line with the goal of current intervention, the continuation of capacity building activities targeting local experts in the field of agronomy and rural service provision is crucial for sustainable rural development. Therefore, the substantial part of the planned activities will be targeting increase in local capacities both of CARD and local stakeholders. The identification of expertise gaps as well as development and facilitation of the capacity building program for local experts is planned to be organized through the support of international technical advisor whose role is to work closely with the CARD and cover a broader local stakeholders network to provide access to international expertise which are essential for building best localized experience and knowledge within Abkhazia. The international technical adviser will provide strategic support and will conduct a capacity needs assessment and a cost-benefit analysis for the CARD as well as will help formulate a growth-oriented sustainability strategy to generate maximum benefits for target groups: rural farmers, micro and small entrepreneurs, local stakeholders, Local Action Groups (LAGs). The duration of international expert in Abkhazia is expected to cover a substantial part of project implementation period.

In order to keep building the capacities of CARD members, it is imperative that they are regularly exposed to international expertise and learning programs both through the recruitment of international expertise and through study experiences abroad. As such, in summer 2019 the staff of the CARD traveled to Italy to learn from the experience of the Agenzia Regionale per lo Sviluppo e l'Innovazione dell'Agricoltura del Lazio (ARSIAL) – a regional entity with recognized expertise in the

provision of agriculture extension service focused on value addition and innovation at sub-national level and extensive experience in supporting international level capacity building. The Italian experience has shown its fruits, as the 2020 work plan of the CARD is very much focused on pilot experiments for the identification of key high-value cultivars that show the best chance of adaptability to the Abkhazian context and climate, in line with similar activities conducted by the ARSIAL in Italy.

The outbreak of the COVID pandemic in early 2020 has strongly curtailed the possibility of recruiting and receiving further international support for technical expertise building, as travel of specialists was per force interrupted: in fact, even before the pandemic, existing travel constraints required the crossing to Abkhazia of international consultants to be negotiated on a case-by-case basis and in line with programme criticality. At the time of writing, traveling to and from abroad through the territory of Georgia is still limited and subject to extensive self-isolation measures.

These constraints must guide the project's action in support of the CARD. While the overall objective remains the acquisition of new knowledge, and improvement of practical and theoretical skills by studying international best practices and proven innovative approaches, learning experiences abroad must be thoroughly planned, and their feasibility and cost effectiveness assessed against the immediate "expendability" of the knowledge gained in terms of the CARD's ability to replicate and scale the lessons learned from the learning experience itself.

Additionally, with the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic it is crucial to keep consistent learning opportunities for local experts. With this regard, the provision of access to digital knowledge resources, including specialized journals, e-libraries and magazines as well as online trainings and distanced workshops are central for the meaningful expertise building process. Also, in order to guarantee the quality of the services provided by local experts at CARD, regular communication with specialists and laboratories outside Abkhazia will be ensured.

The capacity building activities targeting local experts of CARD as well as local beneficiaries engaging in agriculture contribute to the empowerment of Human Capital through expertise building which is one of the pre-requisites for the increase of productivity, efficiently and higher incomes in the agricultural sector. Furthermore, the consistent improvement of agricultural knowledge and skills are contributing to higher productivity, increased incomes and enhanced (self)-employment of local stakeholders. The provision of trainings for local farmers strengthens their knowledge and constitute the foundation for farmers to increase yields of their crops, running their farms more efficiently and applying a sustainable approach towards long term development of their farms.

2.1.5 Provision of agricultural extension services to vulnerable farmers across all rural areas of Abkhazia (UNDP)

Activities planned under this strategic direction will also build on previous experience and lessons learned accumulated as part of the implementation of ENPARD III – Abkhazia component and implemented by the CARD.

Starting from 2020, the Center has been piloting service provision on an experimental basis, with the aim to introduce modern technologies and methods for crop cultivation and breeding of livestock. To date the CARD has assisted more than 100 farmers across all seven districts within Abkhazia. Additional service provision will thus build on resources and assets already available with the CARD.

Specifically, services to be offered are:

1. Soil analysis
2. Treatment of crops
3. Artificial insemination of dairy and meat cattle

While service provision will mostly take place on a commercial basis as part of the sustainability strategy of the Center, adopting a human rights-based approach and in response to the imperative

to “leave no one behind”, the JP will subsidize (but not fully cover) extension service provision for particularly vulnerable farmers. In consultation with the DRC/RDA, such subsidized-price services may also be offered to farmers targeted under the Equipment Rental Scheme planned to be implemented as part of the ENPARD IV workplan to support extremely vulnerable micro-farmers.

As per existing practice, each service request received by the CARD will be evaluated according to existing criteria to analyze the expected benefits against incurred costs.

Farmers not following within this category would be required to pay in full the price of services, according to a pre-elaborated price list.

2.1.6 Capacity development of university students and faculty through lectures and hands-on training with the Centre of Agriculture and Rural Development (FAO and UNDP)

Building on experience made under previous phases of ENPARD, a strategic direction for the joint programme will focus on bringing forward and deepening the existing partnership with the University in Sukhumi and with the VET colleges created by the different partners (FAO, UNDP, CARD and AAH). The inclusion of teachers of the Agro-Engineering Faculty of the University in Sukhumi (ASU) as master trainers on FAO’s activities and the internship programmes launched by FAO and CARD since 2020 focusing on ASU students are good examples of the previous work with the University of Sukhumi.

FAO will continue its work through the internship programme, and will engage in direct training and awareness of the students and teachers of the University in terms such as introduce the principles of Environmentally Sustainable Farming (Climate Smart Agriculture, Soil Conservation Agriculture, Carbon Capture Agriculture or Good Agricultural Practices) through a set of 12 one-day conferences, workshops and trainings that will train at least 30 participants for each session. These interventions will couple theoretical trainings with field demonstrations made in the demonstration plots that will be implemented through the JP.

With reference to capacity building activities planned to be implemented by UNDP and the CARD, students of the appropriate faculties will continue to be invited to participate in the work of the CARD as interns and volunteer collaborators and, if possible, an agreement will be reached with the university to establish an academic credits system for students engaging with the CARD experts over a period of time. Small funding will be made available to up to four participants at the end of the experience, as seed funding for start-ups in support of youth entrepreneurship and further foster their interest in agriculture.

CARD experts will also continue offering to the university ad hoc classes and talks on specific topics, as well as facilitate – to the extent possible – connection between the university and international experts on agronomy, food technology, etc. This second direction will also build on successful experience of UNDP in providing international experts to ASU via the Horizons project.

UNDP, the CARD, and AAH will elaborate a joined-up approach for activities targeting the university in Sukhumi that takes into consideration the roles and comparative advantage of each institution. Such an approach will be closely coordinated with FAO’s ongoing work and planned initiatives in support of the educators within the same university.

2.1.7 Organization of agro-fairs providing market access to the farmers (UNDP)

The Centre for Agriculture and Rural Development will continue provision of support to local farmers by creating opportunities for them to access local markets through the implementation of agricultural fairs. The organization of such events as part of previous phases of ENPARD has proven to be

successful in creating a venue for farmers to present their products to consumers and receive feedback. Previous agricultural fairs have also been noted to foster a level of innovation, as participants have taken the event as an opportunity to consumer-test some non-traditional products or variations on traditional goods. Further, as part of consultations with local farmers conducted in the summer of 2021, the idea of farmers' markets has been widely discussed and its value recognized by participants to the consultations as an opportunity to connect directly with consumers without the intervention of middlemen.

Agro-fairs will also be an opportunity for the CARD to organize awareness raising activities on food safety among consumers and sellers, by championing the adherence, by participants to the fair, to voluntary quality standards.

The CARD will aim to organize eight agro-fairs during the lifespan of the joint programme in different districts of Abkhazia. Based on historical data, the events will be participated on average by 15-20 sellers (excluding the food court sellers) and 1,000-1,500 buyers and participants. Also based on past experience, the average revenue expected to be generated during each event will be around USD 130-150 per seller.

Output 2.2. Increased employment opportunities and diversification of income sources in rural areas

2.2.1 Community-led sub-granting mechanism implemented in three districts (social entrepreneurship grants) (UNDP)

UNDP will continue to support a bottom up, participatory development approach bringing together a broad cross-section of local actors, through the primary vehicle represented by the Local Action Groups in Gagra, Gudauta, and Ochamchire districts. The LAGs will remain the pivots around which development priorities will be identified and initiatives in support of the improvement of socio-economic conditions in rural areas will be implemented.

The Local Development Strategies (LDSs) will remain the "live" documents guiding the sub-project grants component, and through regular revision the joint programme will ensure the objectives and principles there contained remain in line with the overall vision for development created by the LAGs.

One competitive call for sub-grant proposals, with a specific focus on social entrepreneurship, will be launched building on lessons learned from previous phases of the ENPARD activities in Abkhazia. Farm-based income generating initiatives/ incentives may also remain the focus of the sub-granting mechanisms, to the extent possible, especially in areas where this aspect has been underfunded in previous iterations of the sub-granting mechanism. Thematic sub-budgets targeting individuals and groups that were previously less engaged in project activities, such as: farmers groups; women entrepreneurs; young entrepreneurs; minorities and people with disabilities may also be created at the LAGs' discretion. The overall objective of the activity will be to provide community members with the opportunity to increase employment and support the diversification of local sources of income. It is envisioned that the call for proposals will follow the three-step evaluation process already extensively tested in all three districts. UNDP will retain its role as the accountable body that will assess whether all procedures have been correctly followed. Selected applicants will then be formally notified through letters of award and invited to sign sub-grant agreement with the accountable bodies and the relevant LAG. All rejected applicants will also receive a written notification explaining the reasons for rejecting the application. The procurement of goods, services or construction works needed for the implementation of awarded sub-projects/grants will be responsibility of the UNDP, without making any direct monetary transfer to the beneficiaries selected.

In line with previous experience and lessons learned, in advance of the launch of the call for community sub-grant proposals, the LAGs will be tasked to reach out to villages and settlements

throughout their districts to make them aware of the grant opportunity, criteria for eligibility, and mechanisms for participation: this will on the one hand ensure that information about the JP's objectives and activities is spread widely in the target areas, and on the other contribute to building a closer relationship between the LAGs and their target communities. As per previous practice stakeholders eligible to submit their proposals will be individuals, community groups and/or Non-Governmental Organizations.

For sustainability and efficiency considerations, the working of the LAGs and the community sub-granting process will be supported by the three local CSOs/NGOs that have been collaborating with the ENPARD programme in its previous two phases: Alert NGO, Centre for Human Being of Future and National Resources ("Amilatt Resurskua"). Over time, these three local CSOs/NGOs have become an integral part of the LAGs' membership, and have built with them a mutually beneficial work relationship.

FAO will provide technical opinion on proposals for the community sub-granting mechanisms with a specific focus on farm-based income generating grants/incentives to the extent possible, as well as technical support to existing ENPARD beneficiaries evolving in the framework of its expertise (environmental protection and agriculture).

Additionally, successful grantees will be linked to the existing network of demonstration plots, established by both FAO and UNDP, or receive ad hoc technical advice to maximize investments. The CARD will be providing as per previous practice, expert advice on grant formulation in the relevant areas of expertise, including support to marketing and income base diversification.

Monitoring of the sub-project activities will be conducted by the LAG members, who will be supported in this process by UNDP. These monitoring committees will be tasked with gathering the information necessary to assess the impact of sub-projects on rural incomes as well as to measure other qualitative changes that took place in the targeted households. In parallel, UNDP JP staff will regularly visit grant sites to collect field information about implementation of activities, as well as relevant documents to ensure that key risks and assumptions are monitored, mitigation measures are applied if necessary.

OUTPUT 3. ENHANCE COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT AND SOCIAL INCLUSION AND COHESION THROUGH COMMUNITY-LED LOCAL DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES

Output 3.1. Residents in rural areas have access to improved and inclusive social services

Activity 3.1.1 Implementation of LAG capacity strengthening initiatives (UNDP)

The Gagra, Gudauta, and Ochamchire Local Action Groups have been established and operational since early 2018. Thanks to extensive support to expertise building provided by international experts on the LEADER approach, regular moments of reflection and evaluation of LAG activities, information and experience sharing with other LAGs both within Abkhazia and abroad⁵, over time these community bodies have reached a significant understanding of their role in the implementation of community-led local development initiatives; and taken a progressively more proactive and responsible attitude towards the needs of their districts and communities, and towards the sub-grants they contributed to finance.

Nevertheless, based on feedback from LAG members themselves, additional expertise building chiefly focusing on sub-grants evaluation and monitoring, and on local fundraising, is needed to strengthen LAG members capacities to operate as a fully competent body. Further, LAG members themselves have noted a progressive loss of interest in the work and functioning of the organization by first-

⁵ International capacity building activities were organized for the three LAGs to Austria and Estonia as part of the first phase of the ENPARD programme in Abkhazia.

generation members, highlighting the need to renew and, to the extent possible rejuvenate, LAG membership by identifying and inviting to young and active new participants.

In response to these identified capacity gaps, UNDP will continue supporting expertise building and reflections among the established LAGs. On the one end, the JP will continue working on the implementation, monitoring, and if necessary, revision of the Local Development Strategies. This will include capacity building on monitoring and evaluation, and on the operationalization of the LAG work. In doing so, UNDP will build on international expertise, and on the experience made under different EU-funded initiatives such as the Civil-Society Support Programme (CSSP).

In parallel and upon consultation with LAG members, the second step of the sub-grant selection process will be slightly modified with the objective of progressively increasing the LAG's ownership of the allocation mechanism, as well as its accountability towards the sub-grant applicants. Building on experiences made with the Gagra LAG, members of the sub-grant selection committee will be invited to provide scores (rather than collective recommendations as per previous practice) to each grant application for a selected number of criteria – including its eligibility as part of the Local Development Strategy, the ability of the applicant to implement the grant activities, and any additional social or environmental criteria. It is envisioned that the sub-grant selection committee will be able to assign about 50% of the available points to each sub-grant proposal. The remaining 50% will continue to be allocated by independent external experts evaluating blind applications.

The sub-grant selection committee will also be required to provide a (joint or individual) written feedback to each sub-grant applicant, providing an explanation of the scoring, as well as identified weaknesses and strengths in the sub-grant application. Beyond increasing the accountability of the LAG for funding choices, this new process will result in strengthened linkages between LAG members and the communities they operate into.

Activity 3.1.2 Implementation of community-led sub-granting mechanism in three districts (social grants) (UNDP)

As part of the new phase of the programme, UNDP will strive to move away from traditional “social grants” to identify social sub-projects with a higher multiplier effect. Inter-LAG cooperation will be leveraged as the vehicle to ensure high-impact sub-projects are selected in the social sphere.

The call for social community sub-grants will benefit from regular lessons learning exercises conducted as part of the implementation of the previous phases of ENPARD in Abkhazia: in particular, extensive efforts will be made in advance of the launch of the community sub-granting mechanisms, to reach out to rural communities, directors of schools and health points, local Civil Society Organizations with a particular focus on youth organizations, to inform about the funding opportunity and the process for obtaining such funding.

As per previous iterations of the community sub-granting modality, the call for social sub-grants will once be competitive with a multi-step selection process. Training opportunities will be offered to prospective applicants to build expertise on community needs identification and assessment; project writing; implementation and monitoring or results.

Also based on LAG feedback as part of previous lessons learning exercises, part of the social community sub-grant allocation may be reserved for support to extremely vulnerable families and individuals, to be awarded by at the LAG's discretion and based on own initiative and need identification, outside of the regular community sub-granting mechanism.

Mechanisms for LAG-led funding allocation have been successfully tested as part of the ENPARD III Complementary COVID-19 Action and resulted in timely and critical support being provided to health points and youth activities in Gagra, Gudauta, and Ochamchire districts. Decision on funding, reached by consensus within the LAGs, were subsequently implemented through procurement mechanisms

and processes led by Local NGO partners, to which LAGs contributed in an extensive and constructive manner.

Activity 3.1.3. Design and implementation of joint LAG activities (UNDP)

To strengthen linkages and ensure the creation of a common language and shared understanding between Local Action Groups, UNDP proposes to continue joint work of all LAGs in terms of joint monitoring visits, exchanges of information and experience through joint workshops and events, and implementation of joint initiatives, should entry points be identified for multi-district sub-projects.

As a minimum, a joint understanding of the concept of “social entrepreneurship” shall be reached among the different LAGs through a series of joint workshops, to ensure a common understanding of the concept and, to the extent possible, harmonization in the application of the concept to the community sub-grant selection.

In parallel, a network will be created connecting all ENPARD grantees and graduates: small farmers with food processing businesses, tourism related businesses with producers of souvenirs and other typical products, etc. This initiative may be taken forward through a collaboration between the LAGs, the CARD, the ATCs and the NGO Panorama as appropriate. In particular connecting small landholders with food processing business will have beneficial effects in terms of decreased post-harvest losses, be a stimulus for the internal market, and facilitate a value-chain approach to rural development.

Limited budget shall also be allocated to the LAGs in Gagra, Gudauta, Ochamchire districts for the implementation of cross-district initiatives in support of the overall objectives of the JP, including but not limited to engagement with rural communities to inform about and advocate for community-led local development in accordance with the CLLD approach. It is envisioned that this funding may finance joint district events about the work of ENPARD in Abkhazia, or the creation of joint publications and other outreach materials, based on common discussion between LAG members.

Sustainability of results:

As previously stated, building local expertise will remain at the core of ENPARD IV Abkhazia Component and constitute one of the vehicles to ensure that JP achievements and results are sustained over time. As local capacities grow, and new methods of cultivations are introduced and tested, it is expected that the overall resilience of micro- small- and medium-sized farmers will be strengthened against external shocks brought to be by climate change and pest invasions. In the same fashion, by supporting the diversification of rural development fabric, connecting small entrepreneurs to local demand, and working to improve social services in villages, we expect that rural communities in Abkhazia may take a few steps ahead towards the achievement of decent standards of wellbeing. In this, a pivotal role will have the Local Action Group themselves: the LAGs have undergone a period of very rapid growth that has increased both their capacities and sense of ownership of the Local Development Strategies by them formulated. Many of the existing LAGs are not openly discussing the possibility to register as CSOs in order to access funds from international donors, or to fundraise through local communities. While these activities may not result in the full sustainability of the LAGs, they represent a step in the direction of self-reliance and self-sufficiency, and during the course of ENPARD IV the Joint Programme will continue supporting dialogue and exploration of avenues for LAG sustainability over time.

The CARD, in its new format as autonomous non-governmental organization, will provide extension services to farmers to finance its operations. While the CARD will be a key implementing partner for UNDP under the new phase of the JP, it is expected that the organization may also partner as appropriate and based on needs, with other ENPARD partners.

5. Results Framework

The **overall objective** of the JP is to **contribute to improved quality of life and socio-economic conditions of the rural population in Abkhazia**, both of men and women in equal manner as well as specific target groups such as individuals with disabilities, or minority ethnic groups.

The goal of the programme is to bring changes through 3 specific objectives:

1. Increase protection of consumers and producers through awareness raising on food safety, and dissemination of Good Agricultural Practices at farm level;
2. Enhance resilience of rural communities, through improved agricultural practices and strengthened diversification of income generation sources;
3. Enhance community empowerment and social inclusion and cohesion through community-led local development initiatives.

The JP will further contribute to implementation of the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) for the period of 2021-2025, and in particular the achievement of Outcome 4 of the UNSDCF (*By 2025, conflict affected communities enjoy human rights, enhanced human security and resilience*) and Output 4.2 (*Socio-economic conditions, community resilience and self-reliance improved with programmes benefiting conflict affected communities particularly those left behind*). The JP is also aligned with the priorities of the country specific program documents of the two implementing UN agencies:

- a) It will contribute to Output 4.1 of the UNDP Country Programme Document (CPD) "*Conflict-affected populations have improved access to essential services, including education, healthcare, gender-based violence (GBV) response/legal assistance and improved socio-economic conditions, community resilience and self-reliance*".
- b) It will contribute to the FAO Country Programming Framework (CPF) between FAO and Georgia, and concretely on priority area 2: "Regional and sectoral development – value-chain development"; and priority Area 4: "Climate change, environment and biodiversity".

The activities proposed under this Joint Project fit under the priorities identified as part of the Single Support Framework to Georgia (2017-2020), and in particular under sector 1 "Economic development and market opportunities", specific objective 4 "to improve employment and living conditions in coastal and rural areas through diversification of the coastal/rural economy and developing infrastructure links". Activities under this project are also in line with the EU-Georgia Association Agenda 2017-2020, and specifically initiatives in support of agriculture and rural development⁶.

⁶ Ref. article 7 of the Association Agenda (2017-2020).

Table 1: Results Framework

	Results chain	Indicator	Baseline (value & reference year)	Target (value & reference year)	Current value* (reference year) (* to be included in interim and final reports)	Source and mean of verification	Assumptions
Impact (Overall objective)	1/ Contribute to improved socio-economic conditions of the rural population in Abkhazia	1/ # of jobs created through project support (EU RRF indicator)	TBA ⁷ (2021)	120 (2024)	TBD	Partner reporting via end line survey and field monitoring visits	Not applicable
		2/ % of project beneficiaries reporting improvements in living/community conditions in their localities	N/A (2021)	40% (2024)	TBD		
		3/ % of LAG members reporting that the CLLD approach has effectively supported rural development in their localities	N/A (2021)	70% (2024)	TBD		
Outcome (s) (Specific objective(s))	Outcome 1/ Increased protection of consumers and producers	1.1/ # of farmers complying with Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) ⁸ in term of rational use of pesticides	0 (2021)	300 (2024)	TBD	Partner reporting via field monitoring visits (end line survey)	Assumptions Implementation process not derailed by the political climate. Attempts by stakeholders to interfere in the actual implementation due to political reasons are kept to a minimum.
	Outcome 2/ Enhanced resilience of rural communities	2.1/ % increase in productivity per ha in project-assisted demonstrational plots	TBD ⁹ (2021)	30% (2024)	TBD ¹⁰ (2021)	Partner reporting (end line survey and monitoring)	

⁷ Baseline will be job creation identified under ENPARD III measured at the end of the Complementary COVID-19 Action.

⁸ GAP, as defined by FAO are a "collection of principles to apply for on-farm production and postproduction processes, resulting in safe and healthy food and non-food agricultural products, while taking into account economic, social and environmental sustainability."

⁹ Baseline will be last harvest of the selected producer.

¹⁰ Average vegetable crop yields in each district – 2021 season.

	Results chain	Indicator	Baseline (value & reference year)	Target (value & reference year)	Current value* (reference year) (* to be included in interim and final reports)	Source and mean of verification	Assumptions
		2.2/ % of supported farmers adopting/integrating GAPs to their production system	0% (2021)	75% (2024)	TBD		Active and broad engagement of stakeholders (particularly grassroots organizations) in the implementation process. Staff and contractors of implementing partners are ensured safe and uninterrupted passage through the Administrative Boundary Line. No legislative activity puts in question the presence of international organizations in Abkhazia.
		2.3/ % of youth trainees self-reporting improvement in technical knowledge as a result of engagement with the project	N/A (2021)	70% (2024)	TBD		
		2.4/ # of capacity building activities for local experts and farmers	0 (2021)	50 (2024)	TBD		
	Outcome 3/ Enhanced community empowerment and social inclusion and cohesion through community-led local development initiatives	3.1/ LAG social inclusion rate measured by the proportion (%) of women (a), youth (b) and vulnerable groups (c) participating in respective LAG decision making	W: 33% Y: 10% Vuln: 5% (2021)	W: 45% Y: 25% Vuln: 10% (2024)	TBD	Partner reporting (end line survey and monitoring)	
		3.2/ % of residents in targeted districts availing of improved community services as a result of project supported social initiatives	N/A (2021)	30% (2024)	TBD		
			TBA ¹¹ (2024)	TBD (2024)	TBD		

¹¹ The baseline will be measured at the end of ENPARD III, and Complementary COVID-19 Action based on services provided by the CARD and villages/settlements from where a community sub-grant proposal was received.

	Results chain	Indicator	Baseline (value & reference year)	Target (value & reference year)	Current value* (reference year) (* to be included in interim and final reports)	Source and mean of verification	Assumptions
		3.3/ % of villages and settlements within a target district represented within the community-led granting mechanisms 3.4/ % of villages and settlements within a target district whose residents are requesting services from the CARD	TBA ¹² (2024)	TBD (2024)	TBD		
Outputs	1.1/ Increased awareness of food safety among producers and consumers at large	1.1.1/ # of awareness raising and training activities implemented among producers and consumers (EU Logframe indicator) 1.1.2/ # of farmers participating in training activities promoting Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) in term of rational use of pesticides.	0 (2021) 0 (2021)	4 (2024) 300 (2024)	TBD TBD	Partner reporting via field monitoring visits and training reports (annual)	Assumptions Implementation process not derailed by the political climate. Attempts by stakeholders to interfere in the actual implementation due to political reasons are kept to a minimum. Active and broad engagement of stakeholders (particularly grassroots organizations) in the implementation process.
	2.1/ Enhanced agricultural production in target areas	2.1.1/ # of vulnerable farmers receiving extension services via the	109 ¹³ (2021)	50 (2024)	TBD		

¹² The baseline will be measured at the end of ENPARD III, and Complementary COVID-19 Action based on services provided by the CARD and villages/settlements from where a community sub-grant proposal was received.

¹³ Baseline will be the number of farmers receiving services via the CARD as part of ENPARD III as measured at the end of September 2021. Provisional data only.

	Results chain	Indicator	Baseline (value & reference year)	Target (value & reference year)	Current value* (reference year) (* to be included in interim and final reports)	Source and mean of verification	Assumptions
	<i>through capacity development and extension service provision</i>	<i>Centre for Agriculture and Rural Development</i>	<i>400¹⁴</i>	<i>300 (2024)</i>	<i>TBD</i>	<i>visits training needs assessment and report (annual)</i>	<i>ensured safe and uninterrupted passage through the Administrative Boundary Line.</i> <i>No legislative activity puts in question the presence of international organizations in Abkhazia.</i>
		<i>2.1.2/ # farmers recipient of field/technical consultations provided by the CARD to farmers throughout all districts of Abkhazia</i>	<i>0 (2021)</i>	<i>15 (2024)</i>	<i>TBD</i>		
		<i>2.1.3/ # of new farming practices introduced and piloted in line with the Description of the Action</i>	<i>0 (2021)</i>	<i>15 (2024)</i>	<i>TBD</i>		
		<i>2.1.4/ # of crop production demonstrated through the 20 plots established on at least 10 different crops in line with the Description of the Action</i>	<i>17 sellers¹⁵</i>	<i>20 sellers</i>	<i>TBD</i>		
	<i>2.1.5/ Average number of individuals participating in agro-fair events</i>	<i>1,500 participants</i>	<i>2,000 participants</i>				
	<i>3.1/ Residents in rural areas have access to improved and inclusive social services</i>	<i>3.1.1/ # of community-led initiatives financed through project support that facilitate social service provision in target areas in line with</i>	<i>25 (2020)</i>	<i>15 (2024)</i>	<i>TBD</i>	<i>Partner reporting via field monitoring visits (annual)</i>	

¹⁴ Same as above

¹⁵ Baseline based on agro fair activities implemented under ENPARD III as of March 2021.

	Results chain	Indicator	Baseline (value & reference year)	Target (value & reference year)	Current value* (reference year) (* to be included in interim and final reports)	Source and mean of verification	Assumptions
		the Description of the Action. 3.1.2/ # of joint initiatives designed and implemented by LAG in Abkhazia or across the ABL	N/A (2021)	3 (2024)	TBD		

Table 2: Activity Matrix

<p>1.1.1 Raising awareness Of public and private extensionists on pesticide risk reduction (FAO)</p> <p>1.1.2 Dissemination of best practices in term of reasonable use of pesticides amongst practitioners at farm level through in situ trainings (FAO)</p> <p>1.1.3 Awareness raising activities on food safety among consumers at large via Local Action Groups (LAGs) and the Centre for Agriculture and Rural Development (CARD) (UNDP)</p> <p>2.1.1 Intensification of crop diversification through establishment of a network of 10 dedicated demonstration plots (FAO)</p> <p>2.1.2 Promotion of Integrated Farming Systems (IFS) through creation of a network of 10 dedicated demonstration plots (FAO)</p> <p>2.1.3 Capacity/expertise development of farmers on existing experimental gardens of perennial crops in four districts of Abkhazia (UNDP)</p> <p>2.1.4 Capacity building for local experts at the Centre for Agricultural and Rural Development (UNDP)</p> <p>2.1.5 Provision of agricultural extension services to vulnerable farmers across all rural areas of Abkhazia (UNDP)</p> <p>2.1.6 Capacity development of university students through lectures and hands-on training within the Centre for Agriculture and Rural Development (FAO and UNDP)</p>	<p>Costs:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Staff and personnel costs 2. Transfer and grants 3. Supplies, commodities, materials 4. Contractual services 5. Travel 6. General Operating and other direct costs 7. Indirect support costs <p>Human resources: as per project organigram and budget details – project staff, international and local experts</p> <p>Programme costs: procurement of agricultural inputs, procurement of goods and services connected to the community sub-grants, contractual arrangements with local NGO partners including the CARD, visibility and outreach costs, consumables for program activities</p>	<p>Assumptions:</p> <p>Implementation process not derailed by the political climate.</p> <p>Attempts by stakeholders to interfere in the actual implementation due to political reasons are kept to a minimum.</p> <p>Active and broad engagement of stakeholders (particularly grassroots organizations) in the implementation process.</p> <p>Staff and contractors of implementing partners are ensured safe and uninterrupted passage through the</p>
--	--	--

<p>2.1.7 Organization of agro-fairs providing market access to the farmers (UNDP)</p> <p>2.2.1 Community-led sub-granting mechanism implemented in three districts (social entrepreneurship grants) (UNDP)</p> <p>3.1.1 Implementation of initiatives aiming at strengthening LAG expertise and operational capacities (UNDP)</p> <p>3.1.2 Community-led sub-granting mechanism implemented in three districts (social grants) (UNDP)</p> <p>3.1.3 Design and implementation of joint LAG initiatives in line with the Description of the Action (UNDP)</p>	<p>Support and administrative costs: rental of office premises and security costs, consumables, vehicle maintenance and fuel, office equipment maintenance, communication/internet costs, translation costs.</p> <p>(Breakdown will be provided in the Budget for the Action)</p>	<p>Administrative Boundary Line.</p> <p>No legislative activity puts in question the presence of international organizations in Abkhazia.</p>
---	--	---

TECHNICAL NOTES:

Reference to **Outcome indicator 3.3/ % of villages and settlements within a target district represented within the community-led granting mechanisms (social grants)**

Brief definition of the indicator: the indicator measures on the one hand how widespread information about the project's activities are, and on the other, how inclusive.

Methodology of calculation: Denominator: total number of villages and settlements in each district. Source of data: df district administration. **Numerator:** Number of identified sub-grant locations for each sub-grant proposals received and accepted for evaluation under the ENPARD IV calls for proposals (social grants). Each village/settlement will be counted once. The percentage will be calculated separately for each targeted district. Source: project records.

Frequency of data collection: Denominator: once at the beginning of project implementation. **Numerator:** at the end of the sub-grant selection process for each organized call for proposals.

Responsible for data collection: Project M&E Officer.

Reference to **Outcome indicator 3.4/ % of villages and settlements within a target district whose residents are requesting services from the CARD**

Brief definition of the indicator: The indicator measures the scale of the network of clients created by the CARD and how widespread the uptake of CARD's services is by local farmers. In doing so, the indicator may highlight specific rural areas or populations that are not reached by (or interested in) the work of the Centre.

Methodology of calculation: Denominator: total number of villages and settlements in each district. Source: df district administration. **Numerator:** Number of locations identified in each request for service provision received by the Center for Agriculture and Rural Development, regardless of whether they shall be subsidized under the ENPARD IV projects or provided on a commercial basis). Each village/settlement will be counted once. Source: CARD records.

Frequency of data collection: Denominator: once at the beginning of project implementation. **Numerator:** at the end of the sub-grant selection process for each organized call for proposals.

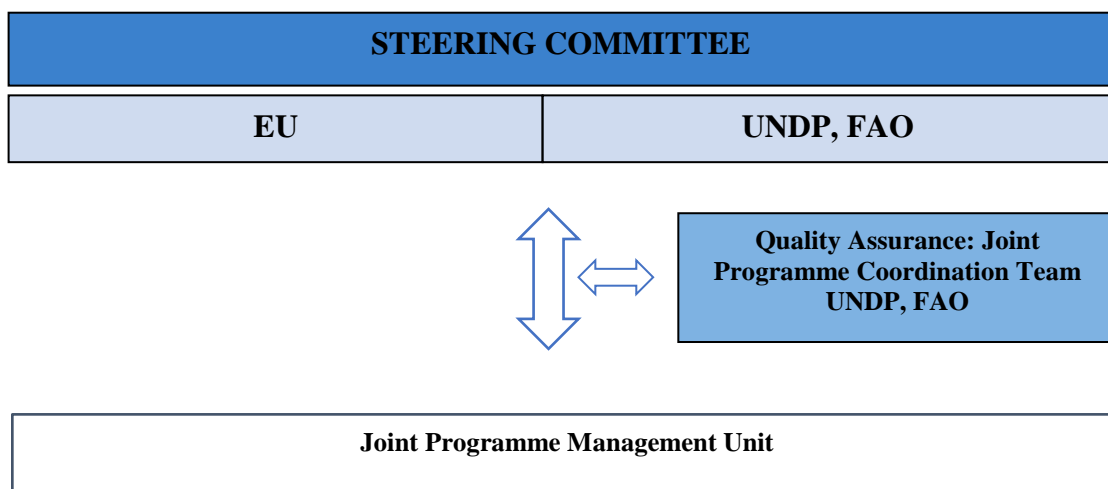
Responsible for data collection: Project M&E O

6. Management and Coordination Arrangements

The JP will be jointly managed, coordinated and implemented by respective country offices of UNDP and FAO (thereinafter referred as “Participating UN Organizations” or PUNOs). UNDP CO will additionally have the role of Convening Agency (CA) while the Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office (MPTF Office) of UNDP will serve as the Administrative Agent (AA) of the Joint Programme. The AA functions are fully described in the Fund Management Arrangement Section below. The Joint Programme will be jointly managed and coordinated by PUNOs through the following bodies/structures:

The Steering Committee

As per internal procedures and requirements of participating UN organizations, a **Steering Committee (SC)** shall be established to ensure smooth and successful implementation of the joint programme. The SC will be co-chaired by Head of EU Delegation, UNDP Resident Representative and FAO Representative or designated authorities from the mentioned organizations/institutions. It may also be attended by technical level focal points and programme/project managers from UNDP, FAO and EUDEL. The **SC** will provide strategic guidance for a coherent and coordinated programme implementation and ensure that funds are managed properly and in a cost-efficient manner.



The executive role within the Joint Programme will rest with participating UN organizations in respective components but whenever needed they shall request guidance and directions from the **SC**. The **SC** shall review the progress of annual work plans, provide strategic directions and oversight, set allocation criteria, allocate resources, review implementation progress, note audit reports (published in accordance with each PUNOs’ disclosure policy), and initiate investigations (if needed). In the final year of the Joint Programme, the **SC** shall hold an end-of programme review to capture lessons learned and discuss opportunities for scaling up and to socialize programme results and lessons learned with relevant audiences.

The members of the **SC** shall seek to reach consensus on all decisions. The **SC** will meet twice a year, whenever decision-making is needed, upon the request of one of its members or upon the request of the Joint Programme Coordination Team. During project implementation, the **SC** may invite as observers the representatives from the UN Resident Coordinator Office as well as iNGO consortium in charge of ENPARD project in Abkhazia; it may also seek to engage with relevant stakeholders and may invite external experts as observers, including other UN agencies or international NGOs active in Abkhazia.

Due to existing sensitivities linked to operations in Abkhazia, project beneficiaries will usually not be invited to the **SC** meetings but may be represented through participating UN organizations and their partners. In any case, the **SC** will strive to reflect the beneficiaries' positions via other means, such as focus groups or consultations prior to **SC** meetings or, in less sensitive cases, having representatives of beneficiaries join parts or the entirety of such **SC** meetings (to be decided by the **SC** on a case-by-case basis).

The **SC** reserves the right to use electronic approval, as needed. The authority to approve may be delegated to respective representatives of the EU, UNDP and FAO, if need be, with prior agreement and consent from the **SC** members.

The Joint Programme Coordination Team

The Programme Coordination Team will be established with participation of the designated quality assurance personnel of the Participating UN Agencies with the responsibility to coordinate the planning and implementation for the Joint Programme, assuring the quality of the implementation and reporting vis-à-vis the **Steering Committee**, as well as ensuring the joint approach to the cross-cutting themes, such as synergies, complementarity with other projects, communication, and visibility. The coordination team will be jointly responsible to identify and foster synergies across various project initiatives and promote joint/consolidated implementation. The Coordination Team will meet on regular basis, or in an ad hoc manner if required to review the progress, address the challenges, and ensure the coordinated implementation. The team will jointly serve as a quality assurance to the **Steering Committee**.

The Coordination Committee

On technical and operational level, a Coordination Committee (CC) shall be established. The CC will be in charge of coordination and programmatic implementation process of activities on the ground between UN (UNDP, FAO) and iNGO (Action Against Hunger – AAH, Danish Refugee Council – DRC) consortia. The Coordination Committee shall be co-chaired by designated staff of UNDP, FAO, AAH and DRC as well as beneficiaries and/or experts, if needed. Designated representative(s) from the EU shall also be invited to participate in the work of the Coordination Committee. The Coordination Committees will meet regularly, but ad hoc meetings shall also take place in case of need. The CC meetings may take place on the ground in Abkhazia as well as in Tbilisi as needed. One of the main responsibilities of the Coordination Committee shall be to review, assess and further provide technical guidance on synergies and complementarities between the programmes implemented by UN and iNGO consortia.

The Joint Programme Management Unit

A Joint Programme Management Unit will be established for successful implementation of programme activities towards the achievement of the Joint Programme results. The Unit will consist of designated personnel of both PUNOs responsible for the day-to day implementation of the Joint Programme, including with managerial, technical and administrative responsibilities. Guided by the respective Country Office units of participating UN organizations, the Joint Programme Management Unit will be responsible for all aspects of programme execution, including coordination with local partners, oversight of implementing partners (including selected NGOs), achievement of set targets under the respective results, overall monitoring and reporting.

Regular team meetings [preferably every month or at least once in a quarter] will be established which will be attended by relevant team members active under the Joint Programme (including staff and short-term experts, if applicable) to ensure continued coordination and coherence of programmatic and operational activities.

The Unit will also ensure efficient coordination between the implementing UN agencies - UNDP and FAO - on the one hand and – INGOs - AAH and DRC - on the other, as well as synergies and complementarity with other projects in the field of education, agriculture and rural development.

UNDP

UNDP will strive to ensure synergies between the proposed intervention and other ongoing projects in Abkhazia, included but not limited to other EU-funded initiatives such as CSSP, COBERM IV and VET projects as well as initiatives funded or expected to be funded by other donors. Complementarities will be explored and sought with relevant granting mechanisms established as part of CSSP and COBERM projects as well as with the work plan of the VET Abkhazia programme in the fields of agriculture, rural development and entrepreneurship support. Issues of complementarity and synergies with other projects will be regularly discussed within the Joint Programme Coordination Team, Joint Programme Management Unit and Coordination Committee with the possible involvement of relevant projects' representatives (CSSP, COBERM, VET Abkhazia, etc.) and further consultation with donor organizations (EU, SIDA, USAID, etc.). By actively seeking complementarity between activities implemented under various projects UNDP will pursue (not exhaustive list): more cost-efficient and value for money programming, larger multiplication effect, knowledge sharing, opportunities for scaling up successful pilot activities, etc.

FAO

FAO's activities will be complementary to other ongoing efforts implemented or being implemented in Abkhazia to combat several plant pests and diseases, including the efforts of FAO and AAH under the USAID funded project for the promotion of IPM in Abkhazia through Farmer Field Schools. Training of farmers to boost the local production with a focus on good agricultural practices is a key priority of FAO's work in Abkhazia. FAO will continue providing technical support to increase capacities of farmers, farmers associations, extensionists and other stakeholders and practitioners, with the main aim to provide more socio-economic opportunities of farmers within the agricultural sector. FAO will also keep the lead role in coordinating the efforts of different partners active in the agricultural sector in terms of the promotion of agriculture and technical support at all levels.

UNDP and FAO have created successful partnerships and synergies during project implementation in Abkhazia, building on each other's comparative advantage and expertise. Also with AAH and DRC, both implementing partners during the second phase of ENPARD in Abkhazia, a successful cooperation model was created as part of various initiatives implemented in partnership with UNDP, FAO and other UN agencies active in Abkhazia. The co-partner UN agencies will continue to participate in the coordination platforms such as Abkhazia Strategic Partnership and Joint Consultative Forum. The donor community and partner organizations will be regularly updated about the progress and results of the intervention.

Project Office:

UNDP

The UNDP **project office** located in Sukhumi (with programmatic and operational support from UNDP Country Office in Tbilisi and the coordination support from MPTF Office) will host staff carrying out various tasks, such as technical assistance, administration and management that are directly attributable to the implementation of the Joint Programme. Both full-time dedicated and part time specialized project staff will operate as part as the project team. Part-time staff will be charged to the Joint Programme's budget based on the time spent directly attributable to the implementation of the Joint Programme. The proposed workload ratio of the staff is an average percentage of the work to be performed during the JP implementation period. The percentages in a certain period might be higher or lower depending on the needs.

Throughout two prior phases and one complementary action implemented since 2017, the team locally implementing the ENPARD programme - Abkhazia component has accumulated solid expertise and capacities; as such, this Joint Programme will empower locally recruited staff to lead on JP implementation, notably through the introduction of a Technical Coordinator's position to be based in Sukhumi. Thanks to the afore-mentioned expertise and experience, the Technical Coordinator shall be able to fulfil all standard administrative duties and responsibilities of JP management. An International Technical Advisor / International Consultant will be additionally recruited to focus on the substantive part of the Joint Programme, on strategic liaison with stakeholders in Tbilisi and Sukhumi, and on ensuring transparency and oversight of sensitive components of the Joint Programme, such as the granting mechanism, etc.

The project office will consist of the following project staff:

Technical Coordinator based in Sukhumi will provide, among other duties, programmatic and operational oversight of the JP's implementation, including coordination with JP partners. He/she will ensure development and implementation of the monitoring plan, risk management, evaluation, support to visiting missions, collection of data and lessons learned, reporting, including provision of substantive analytical inputs for EU and UNDP. The **Technical Coordinator** will be charged through direct project costs for the time spent directly attributable to the implementation of the joint programme at the rate of 100% for the first 24 months of the JP implementation period and 30% - for the last six months.

Project Officer/Community Coordination Specialist based in Sukhumi will oversee daily activities under the JP and will support the Technical Coordinator in implementation of operational and programmatic strategies of the JP; he/she will supervise community mobilization/public awareness activities in Abkhazia, ensuring implementation of capacity building programme for LAGs and local leaders; he/she will also support the Technical Coordinator in the daily management of the JP's financial resources; the Project Officer will be charged for the time spent directly attributable to the implementation of the JP at the rate of 100% for 24 months of the JP implementation period (tentatively between January 2022 and December 2023).

M&E Officer based in Sukhumi will contribute to implementation in planning and implementation of regular monitoring of activities, data collection and reporting, knowledge building and knowledge sharing. The M&E Officer will work in close collaboration with all ENPARD partners, including the INGO consortium to ensure harmonization of monitoring and reporting. He/she will conduct regular visits to project sites and involve local communities in consultations and focus group discussions as needed. He/she will be charged for the time spent directly attributable to the implementation of the joint programme at the average monthly rate of 50% throughout 24 months of the JP implementation period.

Communications Officer based in Sukhumi will ensure implementation of the JP's communication and visibility plan, including messaging, branding and outreach activities. The Communications Officer will be charged for the time spent directly attributable to the implementation of the JP at the average monthly rate of 50% throughout 24 months of the JP implementation period.

Administrative and Finance Associate based in Sukhumi will support the Technical Coordinator and the Project Officer in performing program-related administrative and financial management activities in Abkhazia, including preparing financial reports, projections, payments, asset management, premises management, salaries, recruitment etc. The Administrative and Finance Assistant will be charged for the time spent directly attributable to the implementation of the JP at the rate of 100% for the first 24 months of the JP implementation period and 10% - for the last six months.

Project Assistant (procurement) based in Sukhumi will support JP implementation for UNDP activities in Abkhazia by maintaining daily contacts with implementing CSOs, overseeing vendors and

companies (e.g., refurbishment works), organizing project events (incl. supporting international and local experts in logistics, event planning etc.), supporting procurement, contributing to planning and implementation activities. The Project Assistant (procurement) will be charged for the time spent directly attributable to the implementation of the joint programme at rate of 100% throughout 12 months of the JP implementation period.

Senior Driver based in Sukhumi will provide transportation services to project staff in Abkhazia and will be charged for the time spent directly attributable to the implementation of the joint programme at the rate of 100% throughout 24 months of the JP implementation period.

Additionally, the quality assurance, project oversight and overall guidance, monitoring and operational functions will be provided by:

The UNDP Crisis Prevention and Recovery Team Leader (CPR TL) based in Tbilisi: he/she will provide overall guidance, oversight, quality assurance and monitoring of the JP to ensure that the joint programme produces the results (outputs) specified in the JP document and compliant with the required standard of quality and within the specified constraints of time and cost. The CPR TL will provide liaison support with donor and national partners (mainly government) in Tbilisi, oversee reporting (both for the EU delegation and internal UNDP reporting), provide additional analysis of risks and mitigation measures (linked to Georgian stakeholders), ensure coherence and promote cooperation between this JP and other UNDP and non-UNDP projects operating in Abkhazia. The UNDP CPR Team Leader will also be a focal person for the donor on this JP. UNDP CPR Team Leader will be charged for the time spent directly attributable to the implementation of the joint programme at the average monthly rate of 20% of the working time for the first 24 months of the JP implementation period and average monthly rate of 5% - for the last six months. The salary rate includes salary and UNDP regulated entitlements for this position for Fixed-Term National Staff.

The UNDP CPR Programme Associate based in Tbilisi: he/she will provide quality assurance for financial matters and reporting and advice project personnel on financial, administrative, and reporting procedures. The Programme Associate will be charged for the time spent directly attributable to the implementation of the joint programme at the average monthly rate of 10% of the working time for the first 24 months of the JP implementation period and average monthly rate of 5% - for the last six months. The salary rate includes salary and UNDP regulated entitlements for this position for Fixed-Term National Staff.

The UNDP Country Office will provide M&E and operational support through respective staff members based in Tbilisi:

The Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist based in Tbilisi: he/she will support the setting up of a rigorous monitoring system, including individual sub-projects, and will be responsible for external evaluation of the project, if any. The Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist will be charged for the time spent directly attributable to the implementation of the joint programme at the average monthly rate of 5% of the working time during 24 months within the period of JP implementation. The salary rate includes salary and UNDP regulated entitlements for this position for Fixed-Term National Staff.

Procurement Team Leader: based in Tbilisi: he/she will provide assistance and advice to the JP on procurement related matters, such as, assistance in conducting tenders to acquire property, plant and equipment or services for projects, Logistics support services such as travel, event management for project staff and project activities, Equipment and Asset Management services, including Information Technology equipment, maintenance, licenses and support for the project team and project activities. The position is funded from UNDP projects since it is directly tied to implementation of projects. Procurement team leader conducts quality assurance of the procurement procedures during the project implementation. The duties are stipulated in the respective terms of reference which is in compliance with Standard Operating Procedures of the office. Cost of 10% is calculated

based on the estimated time spent on similar project/s during the year, up to a maximum of 24 months within the JP implementation period.

Administrative coordination of the JP implementation will be carried out by **UNDP's MTPF Office**, serving as the Administrative Agent for the Joint Programme. The Administrative Agent will charge direct costs for respective staff of the MPTF Office based in New York to carry out the following activities:

- a) Sign Contribution Agreement (CA) / Standard Administrative Arrangement (SAA) with donors and receive contributions from donors that wish to provide financial support to the Fund/Programme through the AA.
- b) Administer such funds received in accordance with its regulations, policies and procedures, as well as the relevant MOU and Fund Terms of Reference (TOR) and CA/SAA, including the provisions relating to winding up the Fund account and related matters.
- c) Subject to availability of funds, disburse such funds to each of the PUNOs in accordance with decisions from the Steering Committee (SC), taking into account the budget set out in the approved TOR/JP documents.
- d) Ensure consolidation of statements and reports, based on submissions provided by each PUNO, as set forth in the TOR/JP document and provide these to each donor that has contributed to the Fund/Programme account and to the SC.
- e) Provide final reporting, including notification that the Fund/Programme has been operationally completed.
- f) Disburse funds to any PUNO for any additional costs of the task that the SC may decide in accordance with the programmatic document/JP document.

Other costs of a project office will include travel and subsistence costs for staff and other persons directly assigned to the operations of the project office; depreciation costs, rental costs or lease of equipment and assets composing the project office; costs of maintenance and repair contracts specifically awarded for the operations of the project office; costs of consumables and supplies specifically purchased for the operations of the project office; costs of IT and telecommunication services specifically purchased for the operations of the project office; costs of energy and water specifically supplied for the operations of the project office, including fuel costs for the office's generator; costs of facility management contracts including security fees and insurance costs specifically awarded for the operations of the project office.

General Expenses: To support all project activities, this proposed project includes expenses related to office rent in Sukhumi, 24-hour security guards for the office and operation of Gali radio room operators, communication and internet, stationery and other office supplies, and office equipment maintenance. Per MOSS requirements, territory of Abkhazia qualifies as security zones level 3 and 4, which requires constant tracking of UN staff operating on this territory. Radio room located in UNHCR office in Gali, staffed with 4 radio operators, provides tracking of travel of UN staff on the territory of Abkhazia and ensures 24/7 communication system for all UN staff on the territory of Abkhazia, including cases of emergency. UNHCR provides office space and communication costs in-kind, UN agencies pay only for the salary of the radio operators, which is shared among UN agencies. Based on the number of staff, the given project will be charged 30% of monthly rent/security/radio operators fee.

Materials Expenses: For this project's main activities relating to support to rural development and diversification of income sources, including capacity building initiatives, public awareness and outreach, technical advisory, procurement of productive inputs, rehabilitation/refurbishment, and other materials for UNDP to implement the project related activities.

Transportation and Vehicle-Related Expenses: Support to this activity requires maintenance, depreciation and fuel costs to ensure safe, reliable transportation for the Project Staff.

Maintenance & Repair and Outfitting Costs: This project envisages the repair of office space, if necessary, and the outfitting of the spaces with the necessary furniture and IT equipment to facilitate effective operations.

Upon the completion of this project, any remaining available assets or materials procured will be either maintained for further usage for development initiatives in Abkhazia or transferred to project beneficiaries if necessary, according to Article 9 of the General Conditions (of the European Union contracts).

FAO

Technical Support Services (FAO HQ and REU support): This budget line covers the costs of the involvement of the FAO technical staff to the project, both from the Regional Office and from FAO headquarters for backstopping, technical guidance, quality control, and any ad hoc technical inputs that may be required, to ensure the corporate FAO guidance to the international consultants. This budget line will also cover the technical support provided by FAO staff in cross-cutting issues, such as gender and environmental support to the project activities.

Supplies, Commodities, Materials - Small equipment/investment in Farmer Field Schools: This budget line covers the procurement of items of expendable nature (agricultural inputs), that will be used during the implementation of the establishment and functioning of the network of demonstration plots.

Equipment, Vehicles, Furniture, Depreciation of Vehicle costs: This budget Line will cover the cost of Vehicle's fuel, maintenance and insurance.

Office Equipment: This budget line covers the expenditure for IT equipment (laptops, screens, IT equipment, cameras, projector) and furniture for office space. Calculation is done based on similar costs for similar number of staff members in other project/s.

Contractual Services - Provision of international and local expertise.

International Agronomist (Plant Protection Specialist): The project will contribute to a 100% of the salary of this position for a duration of 30 months. His/her tasks will be to ensure the provision of technical support to the project activities as well as to ensure the overall coordination and management of field activities. The International Agronomist, under guidance of the HQ-based Lead Technical Officer of the Project, will lead the team of national agronomists in introducing diversification of cropping systems, plan provision of technical guidance to farmers in terms of GAPs, IPM.

Punctual International Expertise

Other international consultants will provide international expertise will come in support to the team for delivery of GAPs IPM and IFS cycles of trainings throughout the 20 plots and to the University / VET teachers, focusing on specific technical under - thematic or targeted crop systems.

National Agronomist (Plant Protection Specialist): The project will contribute to a 100% of the salary of this position for a duration of 30 months. His/her tasks will be, under supervision of the International Agronomist, to operate technical support for the network of demonstration plots in Abkhazia.

Junior National Agronomist (Plant Protection Specialist): The project will contribute to a 100% of the salary of this position for a duration of 30 months. His/her tasks will be, under supervision of the International and National Agronomists, to operate technical support for the network of demonstration plots in Abkhazia.

Contractual Services - Provision of operational support

Administrative support Officer: The project will contribute to a 50% of the salary of this position for a duration of 30 months. He/she will be responsible for provision of finance, administrative, procurement and logistics assistance.

Desk Support for Operations: The project will contribute to a 50% of the salary of this position for a duration of 30 months. His/her tasks will be to provide operational support to the project and ensure that the FAO corporate procedures are fully respected throughout the life of the project.

Communication Officer: The communication officer based in Abkhazia will ensure good dissemination of IPM campaigns through the territory and among all farming communities (TV broadcasting of best practices, miniseries focusing on specific punctual infestation ENPARD wishes to alert on)

Travel: This budget line covers the costs for all travel activities of both national and international project staff as well as travel costs for technical backstopping of officers involved in project implementation. It includes airfares and per diems for staff as well as other local travel costs. It also includes travel costs of non-FAO staff that need to participate in trainings in country.

General Operating Expenses: This budget line covers the operating costs of the project for communication, telephone, office rent and office running costs, office consumables as well as any other very low procurement of this kind to be covered locally.

7. Fund Management Arrangements

The present UN Joint Programme will follow the pass-through fund management modality according to the UNDG Guidelines on UN Joint Programming, with UNDP's MTPF Office, serving as the Administrative Agent for the Joint Programme.

The Administrative Agent (AA) will charge direct costs, which are included under the personnel/staff budget line for MPTF Office staff based in New York to carry out the following activities:

- a) Sign Contribution Agreement (CA) /Standard Administrative Arrangements (SAAs) with donors and receive contributions from donors that wish to provide financial support to the Fund/Programme through the AA.
- b) Administer such funds received in accordance with its regulations, policies and procedures, as well as the relevant MOU and Fund Terms of Reference (TOR) and CA/SAA, including the provisions relating to winding up the Fund account and related matters.
- c) Subject to availability of funds, disburse such funds to each of the PUNOs in accordance with decisions from the Steering Committee (SC), taking into account the budget set out in the approved TOR/JP documents.
- d) Ensure consolidation of statements and reports, based on submissions provided by each PUNO, as set forth in the TOR/JP document and provide these to each donor that has contributed to the Fund/Programme account and to the SC.
- e) Provide final reporting, including notification that the Fund/Programme has been operationally completed.
- f) Disburse funds to any PUNO for any additional costs of the task that the SC may decide in accordance with the programmatic document/JP document.

The Participating UN Organizations will:

- Assume full programmatic and financial responsibility and accountability for the funds disbursed by the Administrative Agent.
- Establish a separate ledger account for the receipt and administration of the funds disbursed to it by the Administrative Agent.

- Each UN organization is entitled to deduct their indirect costs on contributions received according to their own regulation and rules, taking into account the size and complexity of the programme. Each UN organization will deduct 7% as overhead costs of the total allocation received for the agency.

The Joint Programme Account will be administered by the Administrative Agent in accordance with the regulations, rules, directives, and procedures applicable to it, including those relating to interest.

Prior to the launch of the Joint Programme, a Memorandum of Understanding will be signed between the Participating UN Organizations and the Administrative Agent.

Some of the local Implementing Partners of the Joint Programme have been already identified by the Participating UN Organizations through previous cooperation experience and partners' capacity assessments, these are: NGO "Autonomous non-profit organization Center for Agriculture and Rural Development", NGO "ALERT", NGO "Amilatt Resurskua", and NGO "Civic Initiative and Human Being for the Future Foundation". Other Implementing Partners will be identified through open tenders and competitions, as needed in accordance with participating UN agencies' regulations, rules, directives, and procedures.

Transfer of cash to local Implementing Partners: Cash transfer modalities, the size and frequency of disbursements, and the scope and frequency of monitoring, reporting, assurance and audit will be agreed prior to programme implementation, taking into consideration the capacity of implementing partners, and can be adjusted in its course in accordance with applicable policies, processes and procedures of the Participating UN Organizations.

8. Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting

Joint Programme Indicative Monitoring Framework (JPMF)

Expected Results (Outcomes & outputs)	Indicators (with baselines & indicative timeframe)	Means of verification	Collection methods (with indicative time frame & frequency)	Responsibilities	Risks & assumptions
Outcome1: Increased protection of consumers and producers	1.1/Indicator: # of farmers complying with Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) in term of rational use of pesticides. Baseline (0); Target: (300)	Reports surveys, and/or assessments (end line)	Monitoring visits/internal monitoring reports and/or feedback from beneficiaries/stakeholders and/or media reports and/or external evaluation. Annually, or in the frequency required for each indicator.	FAO	Risks are identified by project management and actions will be taken to manage the risk. The risk log will be actively maintained to keep track of identified risks and actions taken. Any quality concerns or slower than expected progress shall be discussed by the project Steering Committee and management actions will be agreed to address the challenges, if any. Performance data, risks, lessons and quality will be discussed by the project board and used to make course corrections.
Outcome 2: Enhanced resilience of rural communities	2.1/ Indicator: % increase in productivity per ha in project-assisted demonstrational plots Baseline (0); Target: (30%) 2.2/ Indicator: % of supported farmers adopting/integrating GAPs to their production system Baseline (0); Target: (75%) 2.3/ Indicator: % of youth trainees self-reporting improvement in technical knowledge as a result of engagement with the project Baseline (0); Target: (70%) 2.4/ Indicator: # of capacity building activities for local experts and farmers Baseline (0); Target: (50)	Reports, surveys and/or assessments (end line)	Monitoring visits/internal monitoring reports and/or feedback from beneficiaries/stakeholders and/or media reports and/or external evaluation. Annually, or in the frequency required for each indicator.	Jointly by Administrative Agent [UNDP] together with FAO;	
Outcome 3: Enhanced community empowerment and social inclusion and cohesion through community-led local development initiatives	3.1/ Indicator: % of women, youth below 30 years and vulnerable groups taking part in LAG decision making Baseline (W: 30%; Y: 10% VG: 5%); Target: (W: 45%; Y: 30% VG: 10%). 3.2/ Indicator: % of residents in targeted districts availing of improved community services as a result of project supported social initiatives [disaggregated by age (youth), sex and vulnerability status] Baseline: (N/A); Target: (30%; W: 40%; Y: 50% VG: 10%);	Reports, surveys and/or assessments (end line)	Monitoring visits/internal monitoring reports and/or feedback from beneficiaries/stakeholders and/or media reports and/or external evaluation. Annually, or in the frequency required for each indicator.	Administrative Agent [UNDP];	

	<p>3.3/ Indicator: % of villages and settlements within a target district represented within the community-led granting mechanisms Baseline (TBC¹⁶); Target: (TBC)</p> <p>3.4/ Indicator: % of villages and settlements within a target district represented within the community-led granting mechanisms or requesting services from the CARD Baseline (TBC¹⁷); Target: (TBC)</p>				
<p>Output 1. Increased awareness of food safety among producers and consumers at large</p>	<p>1.1.1 /Indicator: # Awareness-raising and training activities implemented among producers and consumers Baseline (0); Target: (4)</p> <p>1.1.2/ Indicator: # of farmers participating in training activities promoting Good Agricultural Practices (GAP)¹⁸ in term of rational use of pesticides Baseline (0); Target: (300)</p>	<p>Reports and/or assessments</p>	<p>Monitoring visits/internal monitoring reports and/or feedback from beneficiaries/stakeholders and/or media reports.</p> <p>Annually, or in the frequency required for each indicator.</p>	<p>Jointly by Administrative Agent [UNDP] together with FAO;</p>	<p>Risks are identified by project management and actions will be taken to manage the risk. The risk log will be actively maintained to keep track of identified risks and actions taken.</p> <p>Relevant lessons will be captured by the project team and used to inform management decisions. Areas of strength and weakness will be reviewed by project management and used to inform decisions to improve project performance.</p>
<p>Output 2.1 Enhanced agricultural production in target areas through capacity development and extension service provision</p>	<p>2.1.1/ Indicator: # of vulnerable farmers receiving extension services via the Centre for Agriculture and Rural Development Baseline (109¹⁹); Target: (50)</p> <p>2.1.2/ Indicator: # farmers recipient of field/technical consultations provided by the CARD to farmers throughout all districts Abkhazia Baseline (400²⁰); Target: (300)</p>	<p>Reports and/or assessments (annual)</p>	<p>Monitoring visits/internal monitoring reports and/or feedback from beneficiaries/stakeholders and/or media reports.</p> <p>Annually, or in the frequency required for each indicator.</p>	<p>Administrative Agent [UNDP] together with FAO;</p>	<p>Risks are identified by project management and actions will be taken to manage the risk. The risk log will be actively maintained to keep track of identified risks and actions taken.</p> <p>Relevant lessons will be captured by the project team and used to inform management decisions. Areas of strength and weakness will be reviewed by project management and used to inform decisions to improve project performance.</p>

¹⁶ The baseline will be measured at the end of ENPARD III and Complementary COVID-19 Action based on services provided by the CARD and villages/settlements from where a community sub-grant proposal was received.

¹⁷ The baseline will be measured at the end of ENPARD III and Complementary COVID-19 Action based on services provided by the CARD and villages/settlements from where a community sub-grant proposal was received.

¹⁸ GAP, as defined by FAO are a "collection of principles to apply for on-farm production and postproduction processes, resulting in safe and healthy food and non-food agricultural products, while taking into account economic, social and environmental sustainability."

¹⁹ Baseline will be the number of farmers receiving services via the CARD as part of ENPARD III as measured at the end of September 2021. Provisional data indicated only.

²⁰ Baseline will be the number of farmers receiving services via the CARD as part of ENPARD III as measured at the end of September 2021. Provisional data indicated only.

	<p>2.1.3/ Indicator: # of new farming practices introduced and piloted in line with the Description of the Action Baseline (0); Target: (15)</p> <p>2.1.4/ Indicator: # of crop production demonstrated through the 20 plots established on at least 10 different crops in line with the Description of the Action Baseline (0); Target: (15)</p> <p>2.1.5/ Indicator: Average number of individuals participating in agro-fair events Baseline (17 sellers 1,500 participants²¹); Target: (20 sellers; 2,000 participants)</p>				
<p>Output 2.2 Increased employment opportunities and diversification of income sources in rural areas</p>	<p>2.2.1/ Indicator: # of income generating initiatives (incl. social enterprises) assisted in target areas through community led financial investment²² Baseline (37); Target: (10)</p> <p>2.2.2/ Indicator: Average number of individuals participating in agro-fair events Baseline (17 sellers 1,500 participants²³); Target: (20 sellers; 2,000 participants)</p>	<p>Reports and/or assessments (annual)</p>	<p>Monitoring visits/internal monitoring reports and/or feedback from beneficiaries/stakeholders and/or media reports.</p> <p>Annually, or in the frequency required for each indicator.</p>	<p>Administrative Agent [UNDP] together with FAO;</p>	<p>Risks are identified by project management and actions will be taken to manage the risk. The risk log will be actively maintained to keep track of identified risks and actions taken.</p> <p>Relevant lessons will be captured by the project team and used to inform management decisions. Areas of strength and weakness will be reviewed by project management and used to inform decisions to improve project performance.</p>
<p>Output 3.1 / Residents in rural areas have access to improved and inclusive social services</p>	<p>3.1 / Indicator: # of community-led initiatives financed through project support that facilitate social service provision in target areas in line with the description of the action Baseline (25); Target: (15)</p> <p>3.2 / Indicator: # of joint initiatives designed and implemented by LAG in Abkhazia or across the ABL Baseline (N/A); Target: (3)</p>	<p>Reports and/or assessments (annual)</p>	<p>Monitoring visits/internal monitoring reports and/or feedback from beneficiaries/stakeholders and/or media reports.</p> <p>Annually, or in the frequency required for each indicator.</p>	<p>Administrative Agent [UNDP];</p>	<p>Risks are identified by project management and actions will be taken to manage the risk. The risk log will be actively maintained to keep track of identified risks and actions taken.</p> <p>Relevant lessons will be captured by the project team and used to inform management decisions. Areas of strength and weakness will be reviewed by project management and used to inform decisions to improve project performance.</p>

²¹ Baseline based on agro fair activities implemented under ENPARD III as of March 2020.

²² Possibility to issue income generation grants will be further explored and discussed with the donor as well as respective stakeholders.

²⁴ Official financial reporting against the Annex III – Budget of the Action shall prevail.

Monitoring & Evaluation of this project and its achievements will be done in line with the General Conditions set out in Annex 2 to the present agreement. PUNOs will report on the results and impact as per the results & resources framework included in this "Description of the action". Progress and final reports will be produced in line with the requirements set out in Art. 3 of the said General Conditions.

More specifically:

Monitoring: The Joint Programme will be monitored throughout its duration and evaluated in accordance with the programme M&E plan. Participating UN Organizations will share information and progress updates and undertake joint visits where appropriate. Programme monitoring will be carried out by the Programme Implementation Unit in accordance with the policies and procedures of Participating UN Organizations. The programme implementation will be assessed continuously at the level of results. Results will be measured at regular intervals and against clearly defined indicators. Specific programme activities will serve as benchmarks indicating the progress achieved. The results of monitoring activities will be presented to the Programme **Steering Committee** by the Programme Implementation Unit. The programme will likely be subject to Result-Oriented Monitoring (ROM) missions organized by EU.

Reporting: Reporting will be carried out in line within the deadlines established for the respective type of the agreement. The participating UN agencies will ensure results and impact-oriented reporting through regular narrative progress reports. Monitoring and Evaluation of the project will be conducted using the project-specific logical framework (henceforth "logframe") attached to the present description of the action. The partner should report on the results at impact, outcome, and output levels, linked to sources of verification presented in the logframe. Reporting will be carried out through Progress/Interim and Final Reports as laid down in the present Description of the Action and general conditions as set out in Annex 2 to the present agreement. Once arrangements are in place for UN agency access to the EU projects monitoring platform OPSYS, the partner will report through OPSYS. The results framework may be revised for further streamlining by the parties; with that in view, for the better quality of the logframes and indicators, the partners are encouraged to get familiar with DG NEAR guidelines on Indicators - P. 45 and the EU Results Framework. Wherever an indicator set out in the project logframe is also reflected in the EU Results Framework, project reporting will also mention that.

Official financial reporting by the Administrative Agent will be carried out in line with the Annex III – Budget of the Action while PUNOs will further provide informally the unofficial regular financial updates against the detailed budget (Attachment I to the DoA)²⁴.

9. Legal Context or Basis of Relationship

Basis of Relationship

Participating UN organization	Agreement
UNDP	This Joint Programme Document shall be the instrument referred to as the Programme Document in Article I of the Standard Basic Assistance Agreement between the Government of Georgia and the United Nations Development Programme, signed by the parties in 1993.
FAO	The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the Government of Georgia signed agreement for the establishment of the FAO Representation in Georgia on 26 January 2004.

²⁴ Official financial reporting against the Annex III – Budget of the Action shall prevail.

10. Work plan

Work Plan for: Joint EU-UN Programme for Rural Development in Abkhazia, Phase III (ENPARD IV)																										Period: January 2022-June 2024					
		YEARS																													
Activity Implementer	Year 1												Year 2												Year 3						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	1	2	3	4	5	6	
1.1.1 FAO				■	■	■	■										■	■	■	■											
1.1.2 FAO				■	■	■	■										■	■	■	■											
1.1.3 UNDP		■	■							■	■																				
2.1.1 FAO		■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
2.1.2 FAO		■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
2.1.3 UNDP	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■							
2.1.4 UNDP					■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■					■	■	■	■	■	■	■								
2.1.5 UNDP					■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■												
2.1.6 UNDP		■			■				■		■		■	■			■		■			■		■							
2.2.1 UNDP			■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■											
3.1.1 UNDP	■	■						■	■																						
3.1.2 UNDP			■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■											
3.1.3 UNDP																■	■	■	■	■											

Note: The Joint Program is foreseen for 30 months starting on 1 January 2022 and finishing on 30 June 2024. The first month of the indicative workplan is January 2022.

11. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 - Risk Log

Risk	Category	Probability and Impact	Management Response
1/ General uncertainty about de facto government policy and priorities (changing frequently)	Political	Programme implications: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uncertain and changing priorities make strategic planning difficult and could negatively impact the project implementation (P=3/I=3) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flexible approach in determining the priorities and ensure conflict sensitivity in implementation Continuous (formal and informal) contact with the de facto government at all levels to understand and incorporate changing priorities into the project
2/ Outbreak of violent confrontations	Political	Programme implications: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Block implementation and ongoing discussions on future planning Evacuation of international staff (P=2/I=5) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flexible approach in determining the priorities and ensure conflict sensitivity in implementation Monitor developments Contingency plan ready Continued Liaison with UNDSS
3/ Accidents, misconduct	Operational	Programme Implications: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delay roll out of planned activities Discredit UN(DP)'s image (P=1/I=4) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff members have completed courses on security in the field, sexual harassment, HIV/AIDS Ensure safe driving
4/ Insufficient capacity of the local specialists and service providers	Operational	Programme Implications: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low efficiency of the project Time delays Increased prices due to discrepancies between supply and demand (P=3/I=2) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Well developed and clearly defined plans and specifications of activities to be undertaken Close monitoring of the implementation process by the international project advisor. Consultations with local providers on the expectations and requirements vis-à-vis expected outcomes
5/ Weak/unprepared communities with no prior experience of cooperating with similar community-based programmes	Operational	Programme Implications: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Time delays due to lack of experience of leaders and initial distrust of people (P=4/I=2) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developed plan of awareness building Consultations with local stakeholders and champions to win their support for the programme
6/ Limited number of civil society organizations having experience in area-	Operational	Programme implications: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lower quality of programme products 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Performing capacity assessment of all partner CSOs Supporting CSOs (capacity building) in planning and

Risk	Category	Probability and Impact	Management Response
based rural development		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time delays (P=4/I=3) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • implementation of their activities • Close monitoring of activities and results
7/ Potential negative attitude of the part of de facto authorities towards international technical assistance (leading to the worsening of the overall conditions for international assistance)	Operational	Programme implications: Potential impediments to the operation of international organizations may delay implementation of the project or prevent (P=3; I=3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Close monitoring of emerging risks and performing communication activities to prevent negative impact of local policies on international assistance programmes • Maintaining dialogue with stakeholders on both sides to transparently inform about project objectives and results • Careful communication policies performed by the programme
8/ Delays in procurement of saplings for the experimental garden extend the timeframe needed for project implementation	Operational	Programme implications: Delays in implementation of the activity may lead to insufficient time for evaluation of results (P=3/I=3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project will be relying on tested relationships with reliable vendors for import of necessary goods. • Regular market analysis will take place to identify bottlenecks early on.
9/ Poor adaptation of some of the locally grown sampling varieties for the experimental gardens to the climate conditions in different regions of Abkhazia	Operational	Programme implications: Poor adaptation of some of the saplings may lead to fewer varieties being available for showcasing to local stakeholders (P=3/I=4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The CARD will work closely with FAO experts and UNDP to exchange information and as necessary receive technical advice on the operation of the gardens. • Planting in the gardens will take a risk-informed approach that gives priority to varieties already tried and tested during the implementation of ENPARD III. All saplings will be tested at the source for viruses and will receive the necessary certifications.