



**External Evaluation of UNCTAD Project Account-
External Evaluation of Development Account Project 0809AT –
Strengthening capacities of rural communities in LDCs to enhance the
value-added of their traditional products***

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ACRONYMS

DM	Decision Makers
DTIS	Diagnostic Trade Integration Studies
EIF	Enhanced Integrated Framework
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
GAP	Good Agricultural Practices
GI	Geographical Indications
HACCP	Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point
HQ	Head Quarters
INGO	International Non-governmental Organization
IPR	Intellectual Property Rights
IR	Inception Report
ITC	International Trade Centre
LDC	Least Developed Countries
PCA	Programme Cooperative Agreement
MDG	Millenium Development Goals
MTSP	Medium Term Strategic Plan
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
PDO	Protected Designation of Origin
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers
RC	Rural Community
SFF	Slow Food Foundation
SPS	Sanitary and Phytosanitary measures
SSA	Sub Saharan Africa
TOR	Terms of Reference
TRIPS	Agreement on Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights
UN	United Nations
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference for Trade and Development
UNEP	United National Environmental Programme
VC	Value Chain
WIPO	World Intellectual Property Organization
WTO	World Trade Organization

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This evaluation is a summative evaluation of the “Development Account Project Q7 – Strengthening capacity of rural communities in LDCs to enhance the value-added of their traditional products”. This project was carried out during three years between April 2012 and December 2014. The focus of the project was to enable Rural Communities (RCs) to utilize Geographical Indications (GI) for objectives of poverty reduction, economic growth and export promotion for Least Developed Countries (LDCs). This focus is in line with UNCTAD’s goal of putting trade at the heart of poverty reduction.

Project design was based on a problem analysis, which identified many constraints that prevent RCs and their unique products from gaining international recognition. Problems found included production capacities, value chain limitations, weak linkages between governments, RCs and trade policies, and especially poor information at all levels of potentials for GI products in international trade.

Based on the problem analysis conducted, RCs were selected as the primary target of the project, and the other key stakeholders were Ministries of Trade. Expected accomplishments were to: i) improve understanding and ability of these stakeholders to utilize the potential of GI, and ii) to facilitate supportive trade policies and laws that promote traditional products. The work was carried out in nine LDCs in sub Saharan Africa and Asia (Senegal, Ethiopia, Madagascar, Mozambique, Mauritania, Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Bhutan) with a budget of USD 496,000 supplemented with assistance from the Italian government, Slow Food Foundation (SFF) and the Enhanced Integrated Framework (EIF) Trust Fund.

The project was executed by UNCTAD in collaboration with relevant ministries in project countries, generally trade related government ministries where project focal points were located. Selection of countries and RCs was based on work of organizations like SFF that have a record of work supporting RCs and traditional products. Important contributions were also made by several specialized agencies of the UN system, especially FAO.

Evaluation issues and questions were identified by UNCTAD’s evaluation office along OECD-DAC guidelines, to cover key aspects of project relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and gender aspects of the work. The methodology uses theory based evaluation to address the questions being addressed in a way to identify contributions of both project activities as well as other factors that are drivers but outside the scope of the project. Data sources for the evaluation included: i) project documents including technical and financial reports, ii) all project outputs and related reference documents, and iii) stakeholder interviews conducted via skype or telephone. A total of 36 stakeholders from nine countries including RC representatives, government focal points, technical experts and implementing partners, were contacted by UNCTAD out of which 17 responded and were interviewed – giving a response rate of 47 percent.

Operationally, the project was well managed given the large scope and varied levels of country level conditions prevailing. A high level of flexibility was required in the design and sequencing of activities in each country, and level of EIF focal points in the national ministries of Trade or Commerce. Activities were along the lines of those identified in the Project’s results chain. Several adjustments were made in project implementation to maximize outcomes and cost effectiveness. Such course corrections helped to deal with challenges observed.

The main activities included National and Regional Workshops and consultancy services intended to increase understanding of Rural Communities and Government representatives on the opportunities available for GI production for LDCs. These activities were very effective in raising awareness and have helped to create an atmosphere of engagement and exploration of these possibilities further in

the countries where the Project was implemented. Based on the results of this evaluation, there is one aspect of the Project's Theory of Change, that has produced relatively unclear results. It was hoped that as a result of the project activities, RCs would become enabled to engage with and influence their national governments to provide them needed support to proceed towards GI certification for their products. The ground reality in LDCs is that most RCs tend to be poorly organized and have little political clout, especially with Ministries of Trade. However GIs have been inserted in DTIS matrix in many countries, is an indication that RC interests are gaining traction as a result of UNCTAD's work. In some countries there is good connectivity between Trade Ministries and Rural Communities, eg., in Cambodia and Senegal, and in those instances progress made is greater. Increasing effort in this direction is creditable, and needs to be pursued further.

Stakeholder satisfaction was uniformly high regarding improved understanding of GI production potentials. In particular the information sharing at National, Regional and International Workshops was found to be very valuable by all stakeholders interviewed. Reports produced and consultancies for government officials were also found to be useful by government representatives interviewed. However, given the short term nature of the Project and limited resources available, the extent of support and technical assistance available for continuing the effort was deemed important, and this is evidenced by the efforts made during project implementation to insert GIs promotion in the DTIS's action matrices in many countries to ensure sustainability and expansion of this work.

RC representatives also valued the information sharing, but many interviewees also observed that ability of RCs to take initiatives was limited. Though ideally, GI initiatives start from RC taking a lead role, enlarging efforts to lesser known products may require greater assistance from governments and this is reflected in many RC representative and experts opining that GI initiatives "should start from the government, and can't start from RCs only." Some governments, including in Senegal and Cambodia have established associations that link producers with value chain actors as well as with technicians from relevant ministries to assist in raising quality production and marketing of local products. These systems, as well as others such as producer cooperatives, offer opportunities for establishing GIs to benefit rural communities.

Based on the stakeholder interviews, there was a clear indication that in countries where there was an interest generated at the national policy level --follow up activities were being implemented, and additional donor resources were being tapped for these (eg., in Bhutan, Senegal, Cambodia, and Ethiopia). A key outcome in many countries that was part of the project's results chain for sustainability was the integration of GI in trade policy or DTIS work of the EIF in a number of countries, to enable continued donor support for the work. Additional requests for technical assistance to UNCTAD for support in GI production have also been generated from non-project countries Mali and Benin, who participated in the Geneva information sharing workshop that was included in the revised Workplan for this Project.

By and large, the project has met its immediate objectives of improving understanding of GI potentials for RCs and governments in LDCs. Policy level results are also indicated, and these benefitted from the consultations and information sharing that was carried out in the Regional Workshops. RC level results require a longer period, and were limited especially in terms of increasing their engagement with officials in ministries of Trade for promoting their products. This can be attributed to the generally weak levels of organization or connections with market chains for export markets.

The Project is commended for giving attention to empowering RCs with information as well as opportunities for engaging with officials from Ministries of Trade/Commerce. However given the power imbalance between government and RCs in LDCs, there is ongoing need for encouraging such exchanges. There is a clear value in keeping attention on RCs in GI promotion, to assure that their concerns are kept central, and improvements in their living conditions can be achieved.

The main recommendations that are based on the results of this evaluation are:

i) Documentation, analysis and dissemination of developing country experiences with GI: One of the important contributions of this project was information sharing on different experiences with setting up and promoting GI products. This information was presented in Regional and National workshops conducted, and is currently limited to presentation material only. Reports that describe this information in detail, including policy, legal, institutional and economic aspects of GI product implementation would assist in making it more widely available. This analysis could also be expanded to include other key aspects such as : impacts on foreign trade, GI value chain processes, women's participation and constraints, prices trends for GI products, and income growth for producers and other VC actors.

As there is a clear indication of growing demand from other LDCs for UNCTAD support in establishing GI production, the experiences and learning from this project may also be utilized in extending the work to other countries.

Such a documentation and dissemination effort will facilitate policy dialogue that is key to the future expansion of recognition of GI production opportunities, and this is also an area of UNCTAD's comparative advantage.

ii) Gender integration needs a more comprehensive framework at the design stage of projects to ensure attention to women workers and entrepreneurs along the value chains for GI products in LDCs.

iii) Expanding partnerships with other UN agencies FAO and ITC which have complementary mandates with UNCTAD on assisting LDCs with expanding agricultural production and markets including for GI products.

iv) Provide ongoing technical support to countries that have an interest in GI production, including assistance with detailed feasibility studies that will assist policy makers in deciding which products are suitable for GI and would also provide economic benefits to RCs.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 INFORMATION ON THE EVALUATION

This evaluation is a summative evaluation of the “Development Account Project Q7 – Strengthening capacity of rural communities in LDCs to enhance the value-added of their traditional products”. This project was completed in December 2014.

The evaluation was conducted between June and August 2015 by Shubh Kumar-Range with the support of UNCTAD's Evaluation Office - Ms. Yuen Ho and Project team members Mr. Stefano Inama and Ms. Pramila Crivelli. Terms of Reference for this evaluation are given in Annex 1.

1.2 PROJECT SUMMARY

This project was conceptualised and implemented to provide support to rural communities of nine selected LDCs. Five LDCs and respective communities were identified during the project's preparatory phase - Bhutan, Cambodia, Ethiopia, Madagascar, Mauritania, Mozambique - subsequently the project was extended to three other LDCs - Laos, Myanmar, Senegal.

The project addressed the challenges the rural communities faced in promoting and marketing traditional products. The project's aim was to place the small producers at the center stage of the

value chain: when the transformation and processing (up to the final step of packaging and shipping) takes place locally, economic returns are maximized and the role of intermediaries optimized for the benefit of the community members. The project was planned to be implemented through a sequence of activities aimed at enhancing the understanding and capacity of rural communities' to use geographical indications to add value to their traditional products and protect the origin of the product.

The project conceptualization placed great emphasis on Rural Communities, but at the same time also included aspects of trade policy, legislation and strategies.

According to the Project Document (p.11),

The project assists rural communities in gaining international recognition and appreciation of their traditional products. More precisely, the implementation of the project's activities will result in:

- (i) A written code of harvesting and processing methods adopted by the rural communities codifying the oral savoir-faire to ensure transparency and traceability, to meet international quality standards and requirements, and to minimize losses in the product life cycle. The project activities will provide local entrepreneurs and relevant Government institutions with the necessary training and expertise to record traditional know-how, and to preserve and reflect the product characteristics (nutritional value, flavor and so on), so as to maintain its uniqueness and increase its commercial value;
- (ii) A better understanding for community-based entrepreneurs, and the ability to comply with and implement safety control systems (HACCP and EurepGap). Compliance with SPS and quality standards is a necessary condition to gain remunerative markets access;
- (iii) The submission by rural communities of the necessary documentation for registration of their products under geographical indications and/or trademarks accompanied by an increased capacity on the part of LDC Government institutions to provide information on existing trading opportunities and trade laws aimed at promoting traditional products
- (iv) The establishment and/or strengthening of a two-way flow of information and partnership among the rural communities and the government officials and trade supporting institutions aimed at inserting traditional products in national development plans.

Though the focus of the project was on assisting Rural Communities (RCs), the Activities and Expected Accomplishments also included a focus on facilitating trade policies to enable RCs to utilize Geographical Indications (GI) to enable their participation in economic growth and export gains. This dual focus is in line with UNCTAD's goal of putting trade at the heart of poverty reduction.

The project had two main sets of Activities. According to the Project Document (P.10) there were:

- Capacity building of the rural communities for the enhancement of the value of traditional products using Geographical Indications/trademarks, and to meet SPS requirements
- The development of trade policies in the development plans of beneficiaries LDCs aimed at preserving and enhancing their traditional products

These two sets of Activities were in line with the two main Expected Accomplishments as stated in the Project Document (p. 13):

EA 1 Improved understanding by the rural communities of the potential of Geographical Indications to increase the value of their traditional products, and enhance their capacity to meet SPS market access requirements

EA 2 Trade policies, strategies and regulations and development plans of LDCs enhanced to promote their traditional products

The start date for the Project was April 2012, and ended in December 2014. Beneficiary countries were: Bhutan, Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Ethiopia, Senegal, Mauritania, Madagascar and Mozambique.

Implementing partners included FAO, IFAD, Slow Food Foundation and Crops for the Future.

1.3 INTERVENTION LOGIC

The foundation for the intervention logic is UNCTAD's goal of putting trade at the heart of poverty reduction. In order to address this, the project highlighted a significant anomaly: that despite a valuable array of traditional products available in LDCs with potential to compete globally, these countries continue to face limited exports with low and fluctuating market value of their products.

The project identified the value of bringing small local producers up front in the global value system, to enable them to move beyond subsistence, and at the same time enable their countries to expand high value exports. Several experiences, including in LDCs have demonstrated that this is possible with their products certified under various trademarks of GI, in order to fetch higher retail and producer prices. Most of these have been small scale activities to date. Consequently, there is merit in enabling an expansion of such experiences.

A 'problem analysis' was conducted, and this identified the following constraints that prevent RCs from gaining international recognition:

- (i) Harvesting and processing methods rely on the oral savoir-faire transmitted from one generation to the other, in the absence of a written code.
- (ii) Community-based entrepreneurs do not possess the capacity to comply with SPS requirements, including the implementation of safety control systems (e.g. HACCP and EurepGap) and compliance with their quality standards requirements;
- (iii) Lack of capacity among LDC trade officials and support institutions to assist the rural communities in submitting the necessary documents for the registration of GIs/PDOs or trademarks and provide information on trade laws opening trading opportunities for traditional products in the multilateral trading system.
- (iv) Inexistent or insufficient channels of communications and representation among the rural communities and the relevant authorities to jointly develop partnership and initiatives for value addition and promotion of traditional products in national development plans.

This analysis was followed by identifying RCs at the primary target of the project. Other stakeholders identified included: Ministries of Trade/Industry/Economics, and the business communities. The project document indicated that "some other ministries, like agriculture, may also be involved in project activities".

1.4 FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS

The Project received support from the UN Development Account tranche #7 in the amount of USD 496,000. This was supplemented by financial leveraging achieved by UNCTAD from donors (Italy), international foundations (SFF) and the EIF Trust Fund. As a result of project activities, Benin and

Mali, who were not included in the project have expressed interest in promoting traditional products through GIs and provided some resources for carrying out technical assistance activities, ensuring a continuation of project activities work there.

1.5 IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

The project was executed by UNCTAD in collaboration with the relevant ministries in the beneficiaries' countries.

Project execution involved the following arrangements:

- UNCTAD had a central executing function. It was responsible for the final selection and supervision of international and national consultants, the preparation of the terms of reference and overall work plan and the monitoring of implementation progress of the project.
- The national stakeholders were selected based on UNCTAD's own contacts with trade related government ministries, and knowledge of key centers of decision making. Governments identified relevant officials in the Ministries of Trade, Industry or Economics to adequately support project activities. It was initially expected that these government ministries would assist in making connections with RC representatives. However, since trade related ministries are much more oriented towards export/import issues, their links with local producer communities and their value chains were found to be limited in some countries.
- Selection of RCs was more of a challenge for the project, and there was great reliance on implementing partners, particularly SFF, who have a record of working with RCs in promoting their traditional products.
- Finally, UNCTAD provided advice and inputs for the preparation of the follow-up technical assistance project proposals.

1.6 CONTRIBUTIONS OF OTHER PROGRAMME PARTNERS AND STAKEHOLDERS

It was planned that project activities would be developed and delivered with a number of partnerships with other UN agencies and NGOs:

- Specialized agencies of the UN system: - **ITC** in relation to the marketing expertise and interaction with Trade support institutions at national and regional level, **FAO** in relation to ongoing activities in support of the geographical indications under the existing program "Quality linked to geographical origin: product, people and place"¹ and related technical assistance to comply with SPS requirements, **WIPO** in relation to the Intellectual Property Rights and to the on-going work on Protection of Traditional Knowledge under TRIPS, **UNEP** as this project could contribute to achieving the Trade & Development goals of the on-going *Biodiversity in Food Supply initiative* launched in view of the 2010 Biodiversity Target of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

¹ See for details of the initiative: <http://www.foodquality-origin.org/eng/index.html>

The project formulation has relied extensively on prior work done by international NGOs who have been working with RCs to promote their traditional products. Some were also significant partners in the design and delivery of project activities jointly with UNCTAD's project team.

- **Slow Food Foundation** in relation to the specific expertise in training rural producers in the field, **OriGin** in relation to the specific expertise and net working on geographical indications, **Tralac** in relation to its specific expertise on trade laws in the African region.

2. PROJECT CONTEXT AND PLANNING

2.1 PROJECT IDENTIFICATION

The project was identified based on UNCTAD's area of expertise in providing assistance to LDCs in trade policy making, market access and trade laws such as GIs, trademarks and SPS. In addition to being one of the agencies of the Enhanced Integrated Framework² (EIF) a multi-agency/Donor program aimed at mainstreaming trade issues in the development plans of LDCs, UNCTAD is also in a position to do follow-ups, and also assist beneficiary LDCs, upon request, in developing a strategy for the integration of traditional products in national development plans.

UNCTAD also was in a position to avail of experience from implementation of its previous projects on *Market access and trade laws* and *Mainstreaming LDCs into the global economy*, as well as the assistance being provided in the context of the EIF.

In order to build on this comparative advantage, in accordance with its priority of putting trade at the heart of poverty reduction, the project also draws on the organization's Strategic Framework, to address MDGs' of eradication of poverty and hunger, and environmental sustainability.

This project was also built on recent studies that demonstrated the potential for registration of products under a *Designation of Origin* and *Geographical Indication* (GIs) or trademarks results in the fetching of higher retail prices, fostering production growth and better distribution of the profits. Geographical indications also have the potential to encourage the preservation of biodiversity, local know-how and natural resources. A clear link of trade with poverty reduction and environmental conservation was thus made in identifying this project.

2.2 PROJECT FORMULATION

Pre-project analysis pointed to the fact that many factors are limiting the marketing of traditional products or preparations that the rural communities are producing. These communities often have scarce or no access to infrastructure and information, face difficulties in complying with SPS and related standard requirements in those markets where their products could fetch high prices.

Another key concern was that governments and trade officials might not pay the required attention to the possibilities or obstacles that these combined trade instruments might have for the rural communities.

² The EIF is a multi donor programme which helps LDCs play a more active role in the global trading system. There are six core agencies implementing the EIF: UNDP, WTO, UNCTAD, ITC, IMF and the World Bank

Adding value to traditional products through the use of GIs and trademarks on one hand and, a targeted action of support in favour of rural communities to comply with SPS and related standards, on the other, might trigger a win-'win situation for the rural communities since they may gain access to remunerative markets and promote their products.

However trade officials might not have the necessary capacity and links with the rural communities to develop a sequenced and progressive win-win strategy for traditional products which could be inserted in an appropriate manner into national development plans.

At present there is limited, if any, technical assistance specifically devoted for the promotion of value-addition to traditional products through the combined use of GIs and trademarks coupled with specific assistance to rural communities in meeting SPS requirements. This project was formulated to address this gap, and aimed at designing an experimental, wide ranging (geographically and thematically) project based on which lessons may be learnt for promoting such work in future.

2.3 DESCRIPTION OF UNDERLYING INTERVENTION THEORY

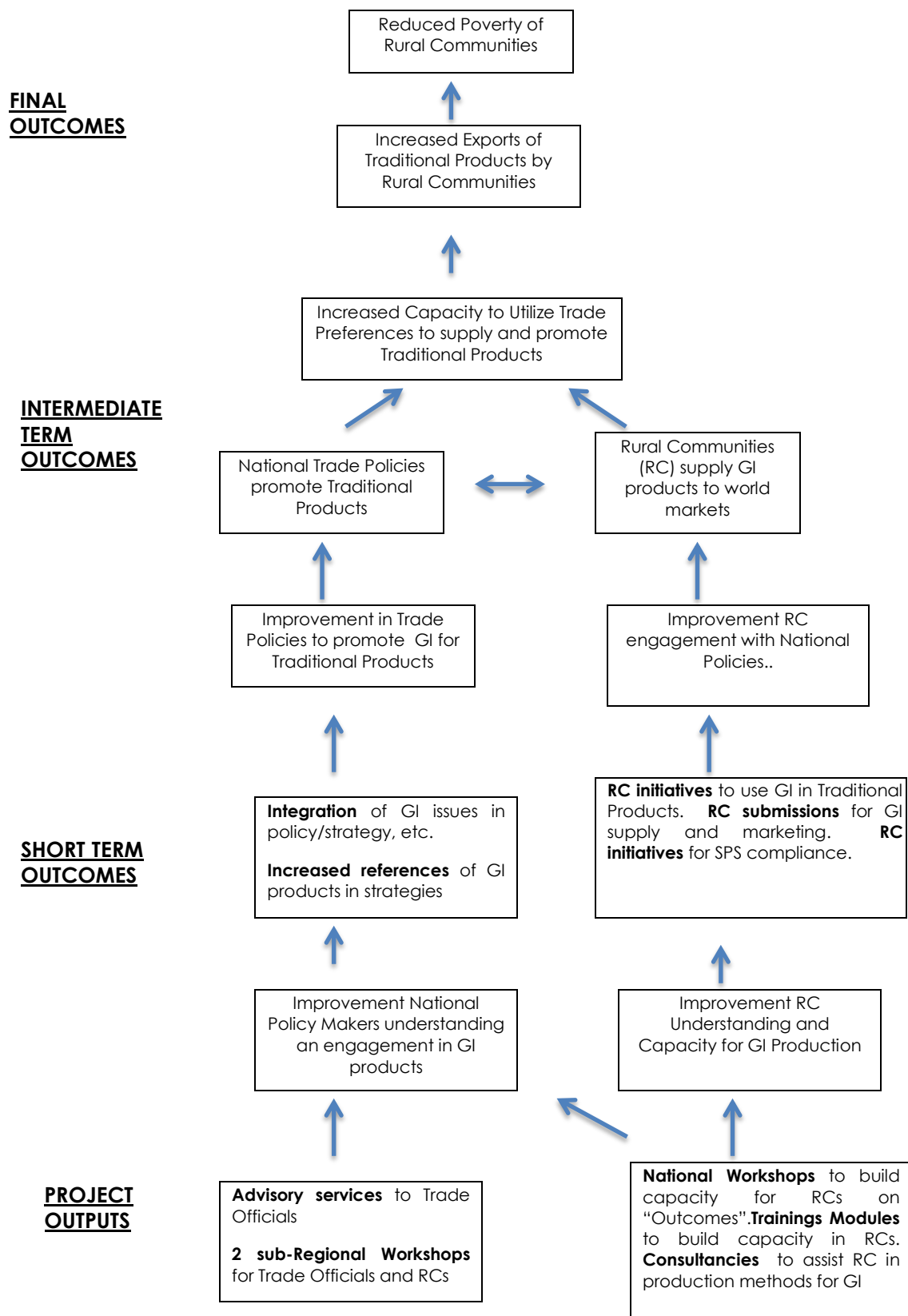
The underlying intervention theory for this project derived from the idea that rural poverty was a function of poor quality and low prices, promotion and market access of traditional products. This problem was compounded by many impediments to business and trade by RCs including poor markets, infrastructure, and know-how about trade opportunities. This ground level situation also expected to be disconnected with national laws, policies and institutions that also lack coherence with new trading opportunities. Hence the problems were identified at both the RC and national policy making levels as a combination of insufficient understanding of the new opportunities, as well as specific ways of taking action for moving forward.

The main focus of activities was capacity building at rural community and national policy levels, and enabling an engagement between the national policy and local community levels. Results Chain linking project activities with larger development goals is shown on Figure 1.

Project strategy was to cover a diversity of national situations where a potential was present for addressing product specific aspects of supply capacity, and related SPS requirements to enter markets where GI, trademarks, and Designations of Origin could effectively improve branding and quality recognition to enable producers and value chain actors to fetch premium prices in international markets. The work was carried out in nine countries: five in SSA – Ethiopia, Madagascar, Mauritania, Senegal and Mozambique; and four in Asia – Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Bhutan.

Selection of project countries and GI products was based on a consultative process which relied on ongoing work of the international NGO – Slow Food Foundation, and continued via discussions with other key UNCTAD strategic LDC support activities, such as the Enhanced Integrated Framework .

FIGURE 1: PROJECT RESULTS CHAIN



3. EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

3.1 MAIN EVALUATION ISSUES

The main evaluation issues are derived from the Project Results Chain, which essentially unpacks the two main Expected Accomplishments of the project's goals and activities:

EA 1 Improved understanding by the rural communities of the potential of Geographical Indications to increase the value of their traditional products, and enhance their capacity to meet SPS market access requirements

EA 2 Trade policies, strategies and regulations and development plans of LDCs enhanced to promote their traditional products

All the aspects of the Project's Results Chain that were included in the Scope of the Evaluation (Figure 2 in Annex 2) were covered in the evaluation. Evaluation criteria applied are derived from the Key Evaluation Questions and included as assessment of quality and satisfaction with results, and also an analysis of contextual factors contributing to the results in addition to project activities. This is further elaborated in the 'Methods Used' section of Evaluation Methodology below.

3.2 KEY EVALUATION QUESTIONS

As stated in the TOR, the evaluation assessed all activities that have been implemented under this project. It is designed to examine the performance of the project in accordance with its Results Chain. More specifically, the evaluation addressed the following issues:

Relevance

-Whether the project design and choice of activities and deliverables have properly reflected and addressed the needs of the beneficiaries, especially the beneficiaries in the rural communities, taking into account UNCTAD's mandate for this area of work;

-Whether the planned and actual activities and outputs of the project were consistent with the intended outcomes;

-What is UNCTAD's comparative advantage in this area of work;

Effectiveness

-To what extent does the project contribute to the objective of enhanced understanding of the potential of GIs in terms of value addition, impact on prices and income, and as an intellectual property protection tool among rural communities, government officials and all other relevant stakeholders?

-To what extent does the project contribute to the objective of enhanced capacity of national authorities to develop a framework for improved marketing of locally produced goods, using GI and related techniques in their country?

-To what extent are project stakeholders satisfied with the quality of the outputs? What are the follow-up actions that have been undertaken and how are they going to be implemented?

Efficiency

-Have project management and implementation modalities been adequate and appropriate to ensure timely completion of project activities?

-Have possible constraints/problems encountered during project implementation been addressed in the most appropriate manner?

Sustainability

-Have the project activities been designed and implemented in such a way to ensure maximum sustainability of their impact, for instance, whether beneficiary country stakeholders and development partners were actively involved in the initiation, design and implementation of the project;

-To what extent do the national authorities assume ownership of the analysis, recommendations, assessment and in particular, the book of specifications for GIs, and have the capacities and willingness to continue the necessary follow-up actions?

Gender aspect

-To what extent the design and implementation of the project incorporated gender concerns, and can outcomes be identified in this regard?

3.3 METHODS USED

The evaluation methodology used is in conformance with UN evaluation norms, standards and ethics .

Theory Based Evaluation:

Theory based evaluation seeks to address both evaluation questions, eg., around relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability, as well as other contributing factors needs to have a flexible approach to aligning the two. One way is to identify contributing factors including assumptions, risks and impact drivers from the theory of change along with outputs/outcomes to form 'criteria' to judge the evaluation questions. This allows the experience from the project to be used to improve the theory of how change occurs .

Since this evaluation seeks to assess results achieved in relation to both the quality of project activities, as well as contextual conditions in the project countries, a Contribution Analysis Approach was used. In Contribution Analysis, the program Log Frame comprising of the chain of Activities/Outputs/Outcomes/Impacts is linked to a Theory of Change – which connects the change being sought with the drivers of this change that are contextual in nature. Figure 3 (Annex 3) shows the Contribution Analysis Framework that was applied to the Project Results Chain. It identifies contextual factors that contribute to the expected Outcomes of the activities conducted.

In this version of Contribution Analysis, these contextual/contributing factors are classified in terms of the degree of control the Project has over them. Terminology for contextual factors may also be seen in terms of project assumptions and risks, as well as drivers of outcomes/impacts.

Another element of the evaluation methodology used emphasized 'patterns versus aggregation'. This is suitable given the qualitative nature of the data available, and also the variety of project contexts that limit the usefulness of aggregating evaluation findings. Patterns in different macro (eg., national policy contexts), meso (marketing and value chain/infrastructure conditions) and micro (community organization, gender participation) conditions therefore, emerge from the variations of national contexts in which the project was conducted.

Stakeholder Analysis:

Stakeholders for the project are rural communities, national ministries of trade, industry or economics, and business community involved in the value chain or marketing of GI products. According to the project document, the rural communities are the primary target of the project. These rural communities are producing traditional products that possess special characteristics and qualities, and hence have potential for commercial value added, entrepreneurial farming. This can enable producers to move out of poverty.

The key challenges the rural communities producing traditional products face are insufficient technical expertise, entrepreneurial and marketing capacity. Also, absence of cohesion/organization

within the community, and quality control, are other factors hampering them achieving market-value of their products.

Another key stakeholder group for the project are officials of Ministries of trade/industry/economics. They are generally in-charge of formulating and implementing the overall trade policy of a country, including Intellectual property regulations and therefore the promotion of traditional products using geographical indications and related means including trade marks, Protected Designations of Origin. Some other Ministries, like agriculture, are also key stakeholders, and may also be involved in project activities.

Though not included in the project's activities, another group of stakeholders that are impacted by the project related activities are: members of the business community, including traders and processors that have a role in linking farmers with the market. The project document states that: "...there exists a need to integrate the business community, as a partner, into the value-chain development strategy. The business community is comprised of a large variety of players including domestic and foreign companies, large, medium and small scale enterprises, state-owned and purely private companies. Although companies may benefit from the development of value chain strategy of traditional products, they may not always support the implementation of such strategy for a variety of reasons."

3.4 DATA SOURCES

Data Sources for this evaluation include:

- Project Proposal and Annual Progress Reports
- Reports from Country level activities including: Consultancy reports of Situation Analysis, Workshop reports and outputs,
- Key Informant Interviews with a selection of Stakeholders

3.5 STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION IN EVALUATION PROCESS

From the Stakeholder groups identified, a sample was selected across the project countries to be interviewed on the Key Evaluation Questions that are contained in the TOR, and further elaborated in the Evaluation Matrix (Annex 4). Sub-questions were developed for each of the Key Evaluation Questions of the TOR, and Questionnaires were developed in English and French for different stakeholders. Questions pertained to the activities that have been carried out, results obtained, and also address contextual conditions that may have influenced the progress of work, and the extent to which they were incorporated by the project.

The selected individuals were informed about the Evaluation through via e-mail from the Evaluation Manager at UNCTAD. The letter also included key aspects of the evaluation TOR and project goals and activities. Interviews were conducted in English and French with stakeholders who responded to the request for providing inputs. The list of stakeholders contacted and interviewed is shown in Annex 5. The sample size for stakeholders who participated in this evaluation is given below in Table 1.

TABLE 1: SAMPLE SIZE FOR STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

Stakeholder Group	No. Contacted	No. Interviewed	% Response Rate
UNCTAD and Cooperating Agencies	6	5	83%
National Govt. Representatives	10	4	40%
National RC Representatives	11	4	36%
Experts and Consultants	9	4	44%
TOTAL	36	17	47%

3.6 LIMITATIONS AND POTENTIAL SOURCES OF BIAS

The limitations stem from the long-distance nature of evaluator contact with project stakeholders, including the project team. Contacting stakeholders via telephone or skype makes for a potential bias in sample where those without access to these forms of communication, eg., in rural areas were left out of the evaluation process. This limitation was compounded due to scheduling delays, such that not a single field visit was possible. The main limitations were:

- No country visits were possible within the timeframe established for the evaluation
- Telephone or skype connectivity generally poor, and also limited participation
- Local language barriers also limited RC representative participation
- Response rate from both RC and Government representatives contacted though reasonable for phone surveyes was between 36-40%, all project countries could not be covered, and this may be a potential source of bias.
- Limited evaluation budget available. No budget was available telephone calls to stakeholders, or for translation services. All these were done at the evaluators personal expense. Also, no country visits were possible. Though a visit to Cambodia was planned, this was not possible due to scheduling delays. .

4. PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

4.1 FINANCIAL IMPLEMENTATION

Financial budgeting and reporting available are along organizational budget line items such as: General Temporary Assistance; Consultant's fees and travel; Other Official Travel of Staff; Contractual Services and General Operating; Miscellaneous; Participants in seminar. Budget allocations are in line with the project budget of USD496,000. Adjustments made in budget categories indicate the priority given to Workshops for information dissemination (Table 2). Cost savings were made in other categories including operating expenses and staff travel to accommodate the increased requirements for Workshops and expert inputs for those. However no expenses or allocation is available for the Supplementary Funding that was leveraged, except the in-kind support

given by SFF to accommodate participants at the Turin Workshop and Food Fair. Supplementary funding was also provided by the Government of Italy.

4.2 *MANAGEMENT, MONITORING AND ADAPTATIONS MADE*

Project Management

The project was managed by the UNCTAD team based in Geneva, and EIF country focal points were in the national Ministries of Trade or Commerce and the office or department of intellectual property rights was held. The EIF focal points and the Coordinators responsible for managing the EIF activities were part of project

TABLE 2. PLANNED AND ACTUAL EXPENSES ³

Object Class	Description	A. Budget/Allotment (as per project document) (USD)	B. Revisions to allotments (if any) (USD)		C. Total Expenditure (USD)	D. Explanations to redeployments (USD)
			September 2014	December 2014		
602	General Temporary Assistance	43'500.00	16'000.00	-3'500.00	55'400.37	Organizing national and regional workshops across African & Asian LDCs in 2014 requires technical & administrative skills that are more appropriate for staff functions rather than consultants and additional temporary staff will therefore assist and backstop UNCTAD staff.
604	Consultants and Expert Groups	144'500.00	-16'000.00	16'000.00	128'182.15	Evaluation will be carried out at the end of the project activities and Object Class 604 needs therefore to cover contract & travel fees of the evaluator.
608	Travel of staff	110'000.00		-12'500.00	93'576.48	
612	Contractual services	10'000.00		-1'000.00	-	
616	Operating expenses	11'500.00		-8'000.00	3'001.25	
621	Fellowships, grants and contributions	176'500.00		9'000.00	182'135.97	To carry out efficiently the workshop on 16/12/2014 and to ensure meaningful representation of representatives of rural communities, Object Class 621 needs to be redeployed.
	Total	496'000.00			462'296.22	

³ Source for information on this table is Project Final Report

activities to ensure that the trade policy dimension of the project was fully understood and integrated into respective Diagnostic Trade Integration Studies (DTIS)⁴ or donor funding requests.

Design and sequencing of activities in each country was tailored to the level of development of the RC and the capacity of the EIF focal points, officials in the Trade ministry or in Intellectual property departments. to better modulate the level of intervention and ensure better delivery and relevance of the assistance provided. Activities to be implemented in each country were determined based on initial scoping visits or consultancies. Timing and sequencing was shaped by ability to establish contact with national focal points and identification of centers of interest and responsibility in the project, the identification and availability of consultants and identification of suitable products with GI potential. For the latter, the project relied in some cases on the work of SFF which has been working with poor and often remote RCs to assist them in marketing of their traditional products.⁵

Monitoring

Monitoring was focused on tracking information on status and activities carried out, and these are reported in two annual reports, for the years 2013 and 2014. The Project logical framework identifies 'Indicators of Achievement' for the two main expected accomplishments:

EA 1 Improved understanding by the rural communities of the potential of Geographical Indications to increase the value of their traditional products, and enhance their capacity to meet SPS market access requirements

Indicators of achievement

IA1 (i) Rural communities undertake initiatives to promote the use of geographical indications and trade marks to increase the value of their traditional products

IA1 (ii) The number of submissions by rural project communities to trade officials and donors aimed at promoting and increasing the value of their traditional products through the use of geographical indications and trademarks

IA1 (iii) Rural communities undertake activities aimed at complying with SPS requirements (ex: upgrade hygienic conditions, harvesting and processing methods of traditional products)

EA 2 Trade policies, strategies and regulations and development plans of LDCs enhanced to promote their traditional products

Indicators of achievement

IA2 (i) Integration of issues related to the development of traditional products in national policy or strategy documents like DTIS (Diagnostic Trade Integration Studies)¹ updating or other trade policy strategy documents of the Government

IA2 (ii) Increased number of references to traditional products in the trade strategies adopted by the government.

The two annual reports referenced stated outcomes/results by the indicators, but there was no independent means to verify these in this evaluation. This applied to all three RC level indicators for EA1, and both the indicators for EA2. It may be expected, that in the final analysis, the main outcome that can be established is that there was likely to have been an increased understanding at both the RC and Ministry levels, but that the time frame and budgets needed for achieving tangible

⁴ National Diagnostic Trade Integration Studies (DTIS) are the main backbone of the Enhanced Integrated Framework (EIF) which is a multi-donor supported programme which helps LDCs play a more active role in the global trading system.

⁵ The focus of SFF work is mainly geared to protecting traditional products and knowledge of RCs, and assisting them in developing markets for their GI products. They are working within available institutional and legal options available for this in countries where they are working, and not engaged with legislative reforms or trade policies.

results is far greater than those available, given the low levels of substantive analysis in LDC on feasibility of GI production for poverty reduction. This observation is further elaborated in the section on “Effectiveness in producing intermediate outcomes and actions”. Given the large scope of effort needed to establish GI laws and institutions based on an improved understanding at RC and Ministry levels that was a key short run intended outcome of this project – integrating this issue in development plans of the countries was an important objective of the activities carried out.

Adjustments Made

Several adjustments were made in project implementation, as results of the scoping exercises emerged. These included:

- i) involvement of Ministry of Agriculture in Bhutan when the project encountered a series of difficulties in engaging with the initial country counterpart. This was a very good move, as the Agriculture Ministry is taking a leadership role in engaging with both RCs and Ministry of Trade to support the work needed with RCs for GI production.
- ii) Regional workshops were re-framed to become more of international sharing of success cases from LDCs and other countries, rather than limited to Africa or Asia specific information.
- iii) Combining the location and timing of the ‘Africa regional workshop’ to move to Turin to coincide with the SFF supported biennial Food Fair held to showcase artisanal GI products from around the world. This enabled the Workshop delegates to see the results in action as well as to interact with government officials, and hear detailed GI experiences from experts.
- iv) An international workshop in Geneva was added in which LDC delegates to WTO were included. This was in response to observations made during project implementation that these delegates have a big role in both, i) shaping the agenda of trade ministries in their countries, and ii) in representing these issues in trade negotiations in WTO and WIPRO, and iii) making the case to donors in international for enlisting their support, including through the EIF discussion that are held in Geneva.

As seen from the list of adaptations made during the project, it was possible to make several ‘course corrections’ based on challenges observed during implementation. In other cases, it was not possible to address them. An example was in the case of Senegal, where based on information from implementing partner, SFF, the women’s fruit juice processors in Casamance were identified for GI support. However trade officials were more interested in low-hanging fruits, such as mangoes which are not suitable for GI support which were being promoted by ITC. However given the high level of interest in GI in the government, this issue is inserted in their DTIS and is receiving follow up support to enable them to conduct detailed feasibility studies for GI production options.

4.3 ACTIVITIES AND OUTPUTS

Activities carried out were along the lines of those identified in the Project Results Chain.

Details of activities carried out as reported in the two available annual reports are given in the table below. Additional details for baseline situation, activities, and endline situation is given in Annex 6.

YEAR	ACTIVITIES
2012 (partial)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Operational links established with implementing partners, SFF and FAO. - Contact made with National focal points
2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fact finding missions in Bhutan, Cambodia, Myanmar, Senegal, Mauritania - National Workshops in Bhutan and Mozambique - Identified FAO/IFAD links needed in countries where SFF not working to establish links with RCs and identification of GI potential products - Planning for joint activities (national workshops) in Ethiopia and Senegal - Contact with Italian government for financial leveraging
2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cambodia: Feasibility study of three potential products - Ethiopia: Status of Legislation and existing practices on marketing of potential GI products - National Workshops in Senegal, Madagascar and Ethiopia - Regional Workshops in Cambodia and Turin - International Workshop in Geneva

4.4 OUTCOMES

The main main activities and outcomes for each project country is shown in Annex 6, documenting the ‘before’ and ‘after’ situations in each country that was prepared by the Project Team (Annex 6: Comparison of Initial and Final Situation in Countries). Based on the stakeholder interviews and document reviews, a deeper understanding of outcomes and challenges has also been obtained. Some of the main observations made by stakeholders has been integrated with project document reviews to identify the following:

- i) Improved understanding in National policy makers on potential for GI products to increase export values and improve RC livelihoods⁶;
- ii) Improved understanding in RCs reached on GI potentials for improving their livelihoods, and complexity of issues involved for them to avail of this potential⁷.
- iii) Integration of GI in the majority of DTIS that were being done at the time of the project, and follow up in other countries. Given the short time horizon of the project, it is difficult to identify evidence of policy or legislative changes were initiated as a result of project activities⁸. However the interest generated at policy level has contributed to several follow up budget/donor allocations to expand feasibility studies where legal frameworks already exist, in addition to integration in DTIS⁹.

⁶ Finding based on stakeholder interviews

⁷ Finding based on stakeholder interviews

⁸ Finding based on Project reports and interviews with Project team

⁹ Finding based on stakeholder interviews

- iv) Several draft books of specifications were developed (Mozambique white prawns and goat meat, pink rice from Madagascar,¹⁰ Harenna coffee of Ethiopia but national stakeholders interviewed did not identify that any follow up on these are possible by the RCs due to their limited access to national decision makers, and in their assessment, there is a need for detailed feasibility studies for the products before the government undertakes certification and institutional development for their promotion and development.¹¹
- v) A project proposal was prepared by the women's fruit juice products cooperative in Casamance, Senegal, for the government to include in their promotion and external trade efforts. However, this has not acted upon so far as the priority for export was identified as mangoes, and the feasibility for GI certification of different products is now being considered.

5. MAIN FINDINGS

5.1 RELEVANCE AND STRATEGIC FIT OF THE PROGRAMME

Relevance to Needs of Beneficiaries

The larger issue addressed in this project is of the need for LDCs to expand export earnings, and also to reduce poverty. These are clearly highly relevant needs in all countries that were selected for this work.

A central tenet of the project results chain was that GI certification offers a means for LDCs to achieve both objectives. The Project activities were designed to raise awareness at national trade policy level and local community levels of this potential, and to lead to actions towards making it a reality. GIs have value in LDCs for a host of reasons, that have in the past been more associated with protecting IPR of already highly sought after products, such as basmati rice, Darjeeling tea, Ceylon tea, Oolong tea, etc. GI certification has value from a national and international perspective in many ways other than to raise export earnings, and can serve as a means to document local knowledge, varieties, and thereby expand recognition and retail value, irrespective of whether it is exported or not. Given the wide array of benefits from GI certification, this legislation has broad sectoral reach, beyond Ministries of Trade that are seeking to expand value of exports. Thus Ministries of Agriculture, Environment, Culture etc., all have a stake in this.

From a purely export value perspective, there are many pre-conditions for a GI certification to produce results that are cost-effective. Interviews with project focal persons in Ministries of Trade or Commerce suggested that the information presented has generated some interest, but in order to proceed, a careful feasibility assessment of alternative products is needed. According to a key project stakeholder from Cambodia: "No one size fits all, and (it is) important to adapt to local conditions to apply (knowledge gained from other countries). He also indicated that they are monitoring the results for the two products for which they have GI registration (Kampot Pepper and Palm Sugar), and find that price has increased gradually for producers, but face several challenges due to low management skill at producer level and enforcement costs. He added that they "found report on scoping useful, but also need to conduct feasibility studies to identify key elements for GI in a product to be relevant" For this a longer term technical assistance program would be required. An interviewee from Senegal indicated that project activities "helped in getting a good command of the subject and identify eligible

¹⁰ Harenna Coffee production specifications had previously been compiled by SFF, and this product is already marketed via the Sidamo Coffee Cooperative Society to select retailers in Italy.

¹¹ Information based on stakeholder interview from Mozambique and Ethiopia

products” and that they were now doing feasibility studies, and have “formed an excellent alliance with the Ministry of Agriculture” as a result of this work. They expect to move forward based on results of the current feasibility studies.

Relevance of Activities for Intended Outcomes

The main activities included National and Regional Workshops and consultancy services intended to increase understanding of Rural Communities and Government representatives on the opportunities available for GI production for LDCs. These activities were very effective in raising awareness and have helped to create an atmosphere of engagement and exploration of these possibilities further in the countries where the Project was implemented.

Based on the results of this evaluation, there is one aspect of the Project’s Theory of Change, that has produced relatively unclear results. It was hoped that as a result of the project activities, RCs would become enabled to engage with and influence their national governments to provide them needed support to proceed towards GI certification for their products. GI’s have been inserted in the DTIS action matrix of several countries, and it is possible that lobbying and pressure from RCs has contributed to that. However, RC representatives and experts interviewed generally expressed the view that most RCs tend to be poorly organized and have little political clout, especially with Ministries of Trade. In some countries there is good connectivity between Trade Ministries and Rural Communities, eg., in Cambodia and Senegal, and in those instances progress made is greater. Increasing effort in this direction is creditable, and needs to be pursued further.

Relevance of work for UNCTAD’s Comparative Advantage

Trade policy support is an area of expertise for UNCTAD, and the need to integrate that with poverty reduction an area of priority. Hence the topic of the project is of great relevance to the organization. The focus of the work was on GI certification – vs. a variety of means to raise retail value with improved quality, and value chain performance. This was based on the assessment that GI certification of selected traditional products produced by RCs is one of the strategies for enabling development of poor communities and integrating them in foreign trade and the country’s economic development. Obviously GI certification is not a panacea but has to be linked to SPS criteria and could be complemented by others such as fair trade, organic,. The Government should undertake a comprehensive policy analysis to address different ways of supporting VCs including strengthening producer organizations, can be made a part of GI related policy support to LDCs. UNCTAD’s ability to provide assistance to LDC’s trade policy making for improving market access and trade laws for GI’s, trademarks and SPS was a central aspect of this project. Furthermore, sustainability of the work requires ongoing efforts, and for this, UNCTAD’s participation in the multi-donor Enhanced Integrated Framework (EIF) helped in connecting project activities to countries’ DTIS for continued donor support.

Planned and Actual Activities in Relation to Intended Outcomes

Planned and actual activities were in line with the project’s Results Chain.

Selection of products with prospects for GI certification was initially based largely on work of SFF, whose work is to engage and work with small scale producers to help to protect traditional knowledge and products that could face extinction with spread of new technologies and seed varieties.

While GI certification is an important tool for LDCs to protect IPR of their local products, for this to translate into a means for economic development would require a host of systems to be put in place. For the countries for which interviews were conducted, it was found that the products selected had potential as GI products, but were not likely to receive their national support for its promotion without continual support. This evaluation has been informed that a variety of such follow up activities are currently being carried out. A sampling of situations found included: i) Ethiopian Herenna coffee: small volume of demand in Italy that had been developed by SFF, and expansion of demand would require government investment in promotion and GI market chain support. This project has enabled

the inclusion of significant follow up work, for example DTIS to address legislation and GI certification assessment for selected products, including Herenna coffee. ii) Senegalese women juice products cooperative producing small volume of products, and support needed to promote export marketing, iii) white prawns in Mozambique that are mainly an artisanal fishery product but exported by a few large scale foreign companies to high income countries, achieving high export volumes. Challenges include inter-ministerial coordination, as well as integration of several value chain actors, including business and fishery associations. According to Expert Erminio Jociala, “ laws are in place and dynamic has been produced among the technical persons in Ministry of Trade, but not much engagement with communities and other VC actors” iv) red rice in Bhutan getting attention of Ministry of Agriculture, but Ministry of Economic Affairs (and trade) would like to see more involvement of marketing cooperatives, and producers not well organized; iv) GIs for Kampot pepper and palm sugar from Cambodia has been in place since 2008, following supportive legislation enacted in 2007. According to the government representative interviewed, the government established GI associations for these products with different stakeholders to support quality production and marketing. Based on a favorable experience with these products, additional GI products are now being explored, and this was supported by this Project; v) in Bhutan, considerable interest and follow up work has been generated.

Interviews with government stakeholders indicated that given a wide variety of potential GI products available in the countries, conducting feasibility assessments for different products should be given priority.

5.2 EFFECTIVENESS IN ACHIEVEMENT OF INTENDED OUTCOMES

Improved Understanding of GI Potentials

A high level of interest was generated by the information presented at National and Regional Workshops. The evaluation forms that were available indicated a high level of satisfaction with the quality of information, expertise present and organisational quality. This high level of satisfaction and value of information presented and interactions possible for increasing understanding of GI potentials was evident in feedback from both RC and government focal point perspectives. Based on this improved understanding many actions have been undertaken, and need for additional actions is also being identified.

Were right groups targeted? It is likely that the audience for raising awareness of potential of GI certification of products is much larger than Ministries of Trade and RC representatives. In some cases Ministry of Agriculture representatives were included, but not clear as lists of workshop participants was not available except in the case of two national workshops in Mozambique. UNCTAD’s implementing partners were crucial in assisting in expanding stakeholder participation beyond the Ministries of Commerce and Trade. The issues discussed in National workshops did receive some advocacy or media attention, but this was limited given the short duration and innovative nature of the policy dialogue. It is therefore likely that the awareness raising effect may dissipate except in cases where follow up actions have been taken up.

Improved Capacity of National Authorities

The project was designed to give central focus to RCs with the assumption that their recognition of GI potential and knowledge of processes involved would enable them to improve quality of their products, and also to connect with Trade policy officials to and work with them towards GI promotion. However, this evaluation observes that overall, there is a great disconnect between the trade policy officials and RCs in most LDCs, in contrast to the situation in DCs where producer

organizations have more political visibility. However, even within LDCs there is variation in ability of RCs to lobby for their interests, and in future work, stakeholder analysis can be geared to identifying and involving RC power brokers along with RC representatives. Interviews with RC representatives and experts suggested that in many cases, RCs need support from national authorities to assist in setting up systems and value chain connections for them engage more effectively in production and marketing of their traditional products. Ensuring buy-in of national authorities is a pre-requisite in these circumstances. National leadership in promoting this type of public-private partnership was observed in the case of Cambodia and Senegal, where stakeholders were interviewed, and initial attempts are being made in the case of Bhutan. It was weaker in other instances such as in Mozambique, and Laos. In the case of Ethiopia, producer cooperatives have a long history originating in state control of production established during the 1970's, and are being gradually transitioned into public-private partnership mode. However presence and continuing support of these structures offers opportunities for the government to engage with and support Rural Communities for GI production.

There are success stories of GI products from developed and developing countries, and these have been identified and distributed in information sharing produced by this Project. A key premise of this work is that there is untapped potential in LDCs for creating new GIs for relatively little known products in international markets and enlarge their demand beyond small niche demand centers, such as that which currently exists for Ethiopia's Herrena coffee or Cambodia's Kampot pepper need to be better understood.

Evidence of interest and receptivity in Governments, and expressed desire to better understand complexities. It may be expected that more detailed feasibility analyses will assist governments to adapt GI opportunities to national contexts. During this process, the focus on RC connectivity issues and needs, including gender integration has to be maintained.

Demand for comprehensive and convincing feasibility studies for different products suitable for GI certification – was an expression of need by country focal points interviewed (Bhutan, Cambodia, Senegal).

Stakeholder Satisfaction

Stakeholder satisfaction was uniformly high at the first level outputs of the Project's Results Chain (Figure 1) All stakeholders interviewed expressed an appreciation of the information sharing conducted by the Project, especially the content and discussion opportunity of the National, Regional and International Workshops. Reports produced and consultancies for government officials were also found to be useful by government representatives interviewed. However, given the short term nature of the Project and limited resources available, the extent of support and technical assistance available for continuing the effort was deemed important, and this is evidenced in the integration in DTIS's in many countries of expansion of this work. D

At the level of RCs, involvement and information sharing was welcomed. RC representatives and experts interviewed observed that given power imbalances, ability of RCs to take initiatives was limited, and that GI initiatives "should start from the government, and can't start from RCs only" (Interviewee from Ethiopia).

5.3 EFFICIENCY

Adequacy of Project Management Modalities

Implementation modalities in execution of the project were kept flexible for rapid identification of country situation and needs at the RC and national policy levels.

Identification of National policy level status in relation to GI in trade policy was facilitated by national counterparts who were from Ministries of Trade or Commerce. In the case of Bhutan, where this issue had not received adequate national policy attention in then past, the Ministry of Agriculture (the Director of Agricultural Marketing was the focal person) was chosen placement of the national counterpart. This was a sound decision, as a result of which many actions are being taken to explore options for GI and also to get producers organized. UNCTAD's ministerial contacts ensured a smooth establishment and assessment of situation and needs, etc. as a result of this.

Project activities at the RC level were predicated on initial identification of possible products that may be suitable for GI, as well as community level pre-conditions such as producer organization. This was challenging due to: i) limited time available for project execution, and ii) limited RC level engagement of officials in ministries of Trade and Commerce where project counterparts were located, and iii) unavailability of feasibility assessments on these issues. As a result, RC and product identification was done on the basis of work at the RC level by organizations such as SFF, who had been engaged in identifying RCs with unique products with a combination of commercial value and specific geographical product characteristics that would benefit from protection, and working with them to organize producers for quality control and marketing. These products were those that had already been identified at the project proposal stage.

To sum up, the Project implementation modalities at both national ministry and RC levels thus were well linked to ensure the timely completion of activities planned.

Addressing Constraints and Problems Encountered in Project Implementation

Several project adaptations were made, and selected activities also carried out that were identified as useful during implementation, but that were not initially planned. Such adaptations ensured that project funds were used in an efficient manner to respond to needs identified during implementation, and to produce greater effectiveness and impact.

Additional activities included: preliminary studies of different product potentials in Cambodia, Ethiopia, Mauritania and Mozambique; and also a workshop in Geneva for LDC officials at the WTO to engage with project counterparts from national ministries of Trade and Commerce to help promote the GI concept in international fora.

Notable adaptations made to the initial project design included: locating the Africa regional workshop to Turin to coincide with the SFF bi-annual food fair where international experiences from Europe, Asia and LA as well as Africa were being presented. This enabled a much broader learning opportunity to be made available for the Africa project partners, since there were limited success stories on GI project marketing available from Africa.

Another adaptation made was shifting the project focal point to Ministry of Agriculture in Bhutan, where the GI production issues received greater resonance, and from there involving the Ministry of Economic Affairs where the trade policy portfolio resided.

5.4 SUSTAINABILITY

Project Design for Sustainability

The design for sustainability of project activities was based on selected outputs that would help to promote a continuation of forward momentum at both policy and RC levels. Though a key expected outcome was improved understanding and interest in potential of GI for promoting trade and poverty reduction – this in itself is not adequate for sustainability, unless it is accompanied with a clear ability to continue to develop the potential in a concrete manner. Key outcomes that were part of the project

results chain that could help to ensure sustainability were: integration of GI in trade policy or DTIS work of the EIF in a number of countries to enable continued donor support for the work; promote RC links with national policy makers to enable them to lobby for supporting GI; and assist in formulating a ‘book of specifications’ for the potential GI products identified with participation of the RCs. Additional requests have also been generated from Mali and Benin, due to added international visibility for the work generated from the Geneva workshop that was included in the revised workplan for this Project.

Ownership, Willingness and Capacity to Continue

Based on the stakeholder interviews, there was a clear indication that in countries where there was an interest generated at the national policy level, that follow up activities were being implemented, and additional donor resources were being tapped for these (Bhutan, Senegal, and Cambodia, Ethiopia). This evaluation is not in a position to be able to attribute the extent to which this project contributed to this, but it is likely to have moved the action forward. Based on interviews conducted, many follow up activities that were identified, including:

Senegal: Are in the process of conducting detailed feasibility studies on potential GI products identified.

Bhutan: Some mention has been made of GI in DTIS, which was motivated by Ministry of Agriculture after they got involved in this project. A new IPR law was tabled in the last parliament, with GI included for the first time. Funding from EU has been obtained for a joint conference with the government after the conclusion of the project for expanding dialogue on GI production in the country.

Cambodia: Scoping study conducted by project was useful and has been disseminated to donors for supporting new GI products development. The interviewee indicated a need for TA and financial resources to conduct detailed feasibility studies to analyse new GI products (besides two they already have in place – Kampot pepper and Palm sugar) Inclusion of GI in new medium term plan for the implementation of the DTIS

Mozambique: Interest has been generated at technical level in Ministry of Trade and Commerce’s Institute of Intellectual Property Rights in potential of GI products. However, “challenge is getting government to support GI, as problem is that a few individuals dominate the prawn export market, so GI will not benefit poor rural communities” (Interview with technical expert for Mozambique)

Ethiopia: Legislative and policy study conducted with support from EIF project to provide an input for the country’s DTIS study this year.

Myanmar: The Government of Myanmar has started with the help of UNCTAD FAO and the Agence Française de Développement, a scoping review of the products that could be eligible for GI and a national workshop has taken place in March 2015, while a another workshop is planned in November 2015 to assess the results.

Activities carried out at the RC community level, seem to be more problematic from a sustainability standpoint. The RC representatives interviewed, or those who were familiar with RCs involved, indicated that any follow up work was difficult for them, for several reasons. These were:

- RC too small and remote to be of interest to national policy makers (Ethiopia)
- Lack of interest of national policy makers, and weak organizations of RCs (Laos)
- RCs fragmented and not organized (Bhutan). Some effort being made to establish these organizations by Ministry of Agriculture officials who were involved in the project.
- In Mozambique, artisanal fishermen are not well organized, have associations that manage catch for sustainability of resources. They are not well connected with the export value chain which is

dominated by a few large multinational companies who deal in large volumes. It may be possible if national trade associations work together with producer organizations in developing a cold processing value chain for the artisanal fishery products, that a GI product chain may be possible. Book of specifications developed for white prawns but its ownership not clear as no actions being taken to develop this GI for it as yet..

- Agency or Associations that have been formed with help of National govts that bring together producers and other VC actors and Agriculture ministry specialies, can take work forward, but depend on the National Govt., for establishment and activities (Senegal, Cambodia).

Initial exposures, have led to follow up work in many cases, eg., Bhutan, Senegal, Mozambique – in all these cases, the focal points in Ministries of Trade were able to make good connections with Min of Agriculture, and a clear momentum seems to have been established. This momentum is seen to be a result of information sharing by the Project with key focal points in Ministries of Trade, especially in countries where involvement of Ministries of Agriculture has been established – facilitating expanded connections and outreach with Rural Communities.

5.5 STRENGTHES AND WEAKNESSES

There are many strengths

- Important need has been identified and exploratory work done
- Key adaptations made that offer learning opportunities
- UNCTAD competency in arena of international trade policy and legal frameworks was a key contributor to enabling policy dialogue with Ministries of trade on Gi potential for poverty alleviation in LDCs.
- Some good partnerships formed, and other potential ones identified
- An important contribution to the UNCTAD arsenal of advice on trade policy options

The main weaknesses were:

- The scope was too broad given the short time frame and limited resources available. At the same time, it was conceptually well defined to include information sharing with key national ministries as well as with RCs, and establishing connections between them. Spreading out resources in nine LDCs also did not allow for sustained support or analysis. Longer term strategy for ongoing involvement is needed before embarking on such broad based and short term activities. This was addressed by the Project by insertion in DTIS workplans, but ongoing involvement of UNCTAD may still be required.
- Prior analysis identified many components of products VC, but not addressed
- Expectation of RC's ability to gain attention of trade officials unrealistic in all LDC contexts, though some situations were more favorable than others. Baseline conditions were more conducive to progress, eg., in Cambodia, Senegal and Mozambique.
- Focus on RCs generally outside of UNCTAD expertise and a more integral and sustained involvement of Implementing Partners is needed. In future projects requiring RC engagement, such cooperation could be designed in a more integral manner..
- Product selection and RC identification not based on feasibility analysis of GI potential
- Project reports included rich details of experience sharing of GI experiences that were presented in National and Regional Workshops. This wealth of information could have been compiled in information sharing modes for outreach publications or pamphlets for wider dissemination.

- Gender integration not conceptualized in a comprehensive way in project design.

6. CONCLUSIONS

6.1 OVERALL MERIT AND WORTH OF THE PROGRAMME

By and large, the project has met its immediate objectives of improving understanding of GI potentials by RCs and national governments in the project countries. Policy level interest has also been generated, benefitting from consultations and information sharing that was carried out in the Regional Workshops. In comparison, RC level results are however more limited¹² and from the interviews that were conducted in this evaluation, though contacts and dialogue was established in workshops, follow up engagement with officials was not possible to ascertain. RC representatives expressed that their ability to take action was limited. They also attributed this to their generally weak levels of organization and connections with improved market chains to export markets.

The Project is commended for giving attention to empowering RCs with information as well as opportunities for engaging with officials from Ministries of Trade/Commerce. However given the power imbalance between government and RCs in LDCs, there is ongoing need for encouraging such exchanges. There is a clear value in keeping attention on RCs in GI promotion, to assure that their concerns are kept central, and improvements in their living conditions can be achieved.

Results offer an opportunity to revisit the Results Chain and offer a more feasible approach for follow up activities by UNCTAD or others. Though the project was designed to keep RCs at the center stage and enhancing their capacity was intended to be attained with information on product quality and production standards, and lobbying for recognition, this capacity building needs a long term strategy given their weak levels of organization and connections with VC actors in the marketing and export chains.

Potentials of GI for trade and poverty reduction are more widely recognized in countries and RCs covered by this project. This has provided an opportunity for more detailed feasibility studies that could enable LDC governments to identify and promote GI products. The Project's focus to ensure sustainability by integration of GI issues in DTIS's in project countries will ensure continuation of the efforts. Many follow up activities have been noted in this regards as well, as noted earlier.

Another notable merit of the Project was an adaptation made to add an international Workshop for information sharing held in Geneva to engage WTO delegates from LDCs. This workshop significantly enlarged the stakeholder reach and interest from this effort.

6.2 LESSONS LEARNT

1. RCs in LDCs generally poorly organized and lack capacity to engage with or influence trade policy makers on GI support. Submissions by RCs will not get attention by governments due to resource constraints, unless they are also supported by detailed feasibility analyses. However, good coordination within governments is a pre-requisite for concerted action to take place.

¹² Engagement with RCs was established by the project and implementing partners to facilitate information sharing, elaboration of 'books of specifications', and production of a proposal submitted to the Govt. of Senegal by a women's cooperative in the Casamance. Results achieved indicate that a wide gulf and power imbalance exists that limits capacity of RCs to engage with national governments.

2. Organizational capacity of RCs is an important precondition for GI efforts to succeed, and these generally are the result of national govt., policies. In countries such as Cambodia and Senegal, associations of VC actors and facilitators are being established to assist in promoting agricultural productivity and quality as well as moving it along the supply chain to demand centers and export. Such institutional developments help with integrating VC actors, and support agencies such as for agriculture, small business development, credit, etc. The existing cooperatives in Ethiopia, some of which are product oriented, eg., for coffee also provide a foundation for developing GI. In all these cases, the initial policy support for y production and marketing was a pre-condition for such systems to be established. Countries where such systems of producer and VC organizations exist offer a better opportunity for RCs to benefit from GI production initiatives.
3. For the two-way flows of information between RCs and national trade ministries that was envisaged by the project, RCs have to be more organized and have better ability to advocate/influence policies. This is at present not evident in the LDCs where interviews were conducted.
4. There is a need for focus on safety and quality standards for promoting traditional products, and this was a key aspect of national workshops. However there is no indication that this can be complied with by RCs without them gaining better access to VCs that recognize this improved quality and offer improved remunerations to producers for this effort.
5. UNCTAD's comparative advantage with policy level engagement in Ministries of trade and commerce is of great value in assisting the integration of GI potentials for expanding trade with poverty reduction. At the same time, key partnerships are critical in order to connect strategies and their design with other institutions of national governments in LDCs where decisions made can influence the success of GI efforts. Partnerships with other UN agencies such as FAO and ITC that were included in this project can be strengthened, and incorporated in follow up work at the inception stage.
6. Regional workshops, where international experiences were shared, appear to have had the most positive effect on influencing opinions of national policy makers, and also RC representatives on the potential for GI.
7. Detailed feasibility studies for potential GI products in expanding export volumes and also reducing poverty were cited most frequently by trade ministry officials interviewed – as the main challenge to allocation of scarce national resources for promoting GI production by national governments.
8. Gender integration seen in a limited manner, and a better conceptualization in project preparation would have assured better integration.
9. Engagement with WTO officials from LDCs was a valuable information sharing experience and such opportunities in future can be explored and utilized.

7 RECOMMENDATIONS

1. One of the important contributions of this project was information sharing on different experiences with setting up and promoting GI products. This information was presented in Regional and National workshops conducted. Reports that describe this information and the policy, legal, institutional, economic and gender aspects of GI product implementation would assist in dissemination of this information. This analysis could also be expanded to include other key aspects such as : impacts on foreign trade, GI value chain processes and constraints, prices comparisons, and incomes for producers and other VC actors.

2. Development and dissemination of different country experiences based on the information produced from this project. There is a clear indication of growing demand from other LDCs for UNCTAD support in establishing GI production, the experiences and learning from this project can be utilized in extending the work to other countries.
3. Documentation for policy dialogue will be key to the future expansion of recognition of GI production opportunities. Policy briefs could be prepared from the detailed experiences to assist in UNCTADs ongoing engagement with ministries of Trade/Commerce.
4. Expanding partnerships with UN agencies with complementary mandates for promoting international trade and agricultural value chains. Integration of both trade policy with involvement of RCs can be facilitated with an expanded and more direct partnership with FAO in follow up work.
UNCTAD can also expand its partnership with ITC which assists countries to expand exports , and can incorporate GI potentials in its export strategy work with LDCs.
5. Expand the engagement begun in this project with LDC delegates to WTO and WIPO. Results of this project indicate that backing of these delegates benefited this work.
6. RCs need ongoing support for building their capacity and also for organizational development to integrate them in VCs chains that will offer better markets and prices for their products. This is not an area of comparative advantage for UNCTAD, but the documentation of project experiences in effective RC institutions could be a useful contribution.
7. Gender integration needs a more comprehensive framework at the design stage of projects to ensure attention to women workers and entrepreneurs along the VC.
8. Provide long term technical assistance to countries to assist them to deepen understanding of GI complexities and to adapt to national situations.

ANNEXES

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Annex 6	Comparison of Initial and Final Situation in Project Countries