



## Terms of References – International expert on commercial standards for Fresh Fruits and Vegetables – Standards (FFV)

### 1. Contracting body

#### Hilfswerk International (HWI)

Grünbergstrasse 15/2/5,

1120 Vienna,

Austria

Type of organisation: NGO

### 2. Basic data

<b>Donor reference:</b>
ACA/2019/412-281
a
<b>Project title:</b>
Regional Integration and Capacity Building to Boost Agribusiness MSMEs Competitiveness and Trade Promotion in Central Asia (CANDY V)
<b>Countries of implementation:</b>
Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan
<b>Source(s) of funding:</b>
European Commission (EC)
<b>Project duration:</b>
01 January 2020 to 31 December 2022 (36 months)

### 3. Background

The Central Asian region, with its vast potential of producing fresh and dried fruit and vegetables, given the current trends for globalization and increased demand for food, is to address some challenging issues related to the diversification of traditional markets and finding new venues to sell its agricultural produce. Fruit and vegetable production in the region are mainly export-oriented, helping the countries address their internal social and economic issues.

For today, most of the reforms aimed at diversifying sales and finding new markets for the local agricultural produce, being implemented both at the national and at the regional level, are aimed at recognizing the international standards and making local producers comply with these.

It should be noted that substantial amount of work has been carried out in the region over the last two years, which resulted in cooperation between the Central Asian countries in terms of joint promotion of UNECE commercial standards related to sales and commercial quality control of agricultural produce.

Central Asian Working Group for Promotion of UNECE Commercial standards (CAWG) was created as part of this initiative, upon the request of export-oriented enterprises.

The CAWG consists of:

- Representatives of the government institutions: standardization bodies, ministries for economy, agriculture, and other agencies of the countries in the region (Republic of Uzbekistan, Republic of Tajikistan, Kyrgyz Republic and Republic of Kazakhstan);
- Industry associations, producers and processors;
- Experts on fresh and dried fruit and vegetable produce.



Producers, processors and exporters from the region participating in CAWG activities expressed their interest in building the capacity of their enterprises to implement UNECE commercial standards, namely acquiring hands-on knowledge of practical implementation of the methods for classifying and sorting the produce by classes, varieties, and other parameters in accordance with UNECE standard requirements.

This issue is particularly relevant for the countries of the region, where quality management systems are being implemented at enterprises, both in the production and in the delivery chains, to domestic and foreign retail chains. Building a network of external independent quality inspections is also of particular interest, as these will help producers classify and grade the produce in accordance with the requirements of UNECE standards during production and export phase, reducing the risk of retailers rejecting the produce. Retail chains in most countries require compliance with UNECE commercial standards.

Members of the CAWG consider the establishment of independent “inspections” under industry related Associations or other structures supporting the private sector, which would promote compliance of the products with the provisions of commercial quality standards.

HWI, in collaboration with the international partner Quality Austria (QA), Austrian Agricultural Cluster (AAC), and the French REDD SAS and the regional partner BIOs - Association of Fruit & Vegetable Enterprises (AFVE), Public Consulting Organization “Markazi Idorakunii Sifat” (Quality Management Centre) (MIS), the Union of Professional Consultants of TJK (UPCT), the Kazakhstan Association of Sugar, Food and Processing Industry (KASFPI) (partners in the consortium), and the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Uzbekistan (associate) is implementing the project CANDY V. The overall objective of the project is to contribute to the growth of agribusiness MSMEs in TJK, KGZ, UZB and KAZ, thus fostering the integration of CA countries in the global trade.

Our strategy is to empower CA BIOs to promote and sustainably support an enabling environment to improve the services to MSMEs and to enhance the overall business climate in the region. We suggest an action encompassing 4 countries – Tajikistan (TJK), Kyrgyzstan (KGZ), Uzbekistan (UZB) and Kazakhstan (KAZ). Even if they differ in their economic development, the action takes into account the common interest and demand of the private and public sectors in enhancing commercial quality and volume, food safety and traceability, product promotion and market access of regional agro-products and clustering - the 4 project pillars.

One of the most demanded BIOs services to export-oriented SMEs in the region is the assistance in implementation of UNECE commercial quality standards for FFV.

Upon request of regional BIOs, States authorities and food processing MSMEs the project team will provide capacity building for sector actors on UNECE commercial quality standards introduction and inspection for Fresh fruits and vegetables.

#### **4. Purpose of the contracted tasks**

Considering the need for practical knowledge on applying the methods of produce classification and sorting, grading, etc., according to UNECE standards, which will facilitate the establishment of effective quality management systems, these terms of reference are intended for an experts or group of experts engaged to conduct practical capacity building for CAWG participants.

The specialized capacity building shall include the following components:

1. Introduction to the organization of technological processes, compliant with the requirements of international marketing and quality management system standards and relevant guidelines;
2. Methodology of prior-to-export quality inspection at enterprises, considering sampling and analysis procedures and methods in compliance with the requirements of international marketing and quality management standards and relevant guidelines for fresh fruit and vegetable produce.

The training should be designed and conducted in a practical manner, e.g. show-how, so that the participants are enabled to introduce commercial management systems or conduct prior-to export inspection in further food processing enterprises (16 MSME planned to benefit from the project).

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During the training one enterprise will be selected as a demonstration site and case study subject, in which the new introduced commercial standards management system will optimize the current technological processes, to meet the requirements of international marketing and quality management standards and relevant guidelines.

The expert shall provide visuals and graphical presentation materials, such as educational films reflecting technological processes, process flowcharts and numbers of employees, protocols, regulations, etc. for all the above mentioned components.

Additionally **Guidelines for introduction and inspection** shall be developed, based on the existing and internationally harmonized guidelines and (if necessary) adapted to the local specifics, and provided to participants, so that they can use them in their practice after the training and after the end of the project.

The expert shall provide a report on the implemented capacity building, including recommendations on commercial quality management processes optimization, based on his/her experience and review of the case study subject enterprise.

Training participants, pilot enterprise and other organizational issues will be determined by the HWI Regional Manager and HWI Project Coordinator, in coordination with CAWG.

An expert or group of experts interested in this assignment shall indicate the number of workdays required to implement each of the above points.

The **materials** (programme, PP, etc.) for the training have to be **developed** in **English** and presented in electronic form to **Hilfswerk International** in Tajikistan at least **4 weeks prior to the training session** for translation into regional languages.

## 5. Deliverables

Bearing in mind the timetable in section 6 the following deliverables must be provided:

- Training materials (programme, schedule, PP presentations, distribution materials etc.) related to 5 - day training
- 5-day training on introduction of commercial standards in technological processes of food processing enterprises in one selected country of the Central Asia;
- Guidelines for introduction and inspection methods practise
- Report and recommendations for enterprises

All tasks are to be carried out and in compliance with the HWI Regional Manager and the HWI Project Coordinator.

## 6. Timetable

Task	Timeline
1 day on site case study visit to DDP packing facilities	May 2020
Training materials (programme, schedule, PP presentations, distribution materials etc) related to 5 - day training	May 2020
Conduction of 5 -day training	June – September 2020
Guidelines for introduction and inspection practise	October 2020
Report and recommendations for enterprises	December 2020

Above timeline is based on regular circumstances and can be subject to changes in case of external influence (e.g. complaints from potential bidders, delayed decision from Tender Commission).



## **7. Expected qualifications of the Contractor**

The Contractor shall fulfil the following qualifications:

- At least 5 years' experience in commercial standards for agricultural produce;
- Relevant university degree and proven competence
- Knowledge of EU & CISs markets and trends
- Good communication skills in English or Russian

## **8. Contracting body's approach to be considered**

HWI is an NPO founded with the aim of providing worldwide assistance to people in need, regardless of their heritage, gender or religion. HWI's work is oriented toward Austrian and international objectives of development cooperation. Therefore HWI expects all Contractors to respects its values as stated on the HWI website: <http://www.hilfswerk.at/HWI/english/about-us/mission-statement/hilfswerk-austria-international-mission-statement>

In regard to the contracted tasks HWI expects the outcome to consider

- the demand and needs of the target group(s) of the project,
- approaches and principles of the target country and
- sustainability aspects.

## **Annexes**

Annex B: HWI Code of Conduct

Annex C: HWI Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy