THE CZECH REPUBLIC

**PROJECT OF DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION** **BETWEEN**

**THE CZECH REPUBLIC**

**AND**

**THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA**

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| **Institutional support within organic farming in the Republic of Moldova** |

**2017-2021**

**CZECH DEVELOPMENT AGENCY**



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| **Project title: Institutional support within organic farming in the Republic of Moldova** | | **Project number:**  MD-2016-070-RO-31110 |
| **Partner country**:  Republic of Moldova | **Region/Locality:**  Chisinau, regions of Moldova | |
| **Sector orientation of the project:**  Agriculture | | |
| **Estimated project start date:**  month / year  6/2017 | **Estimated project end date:**  month / year  6/2021 | |
| **Total amount of financial resources on project from** Foreign Development Cooperation of the Czech Republic (CZK)**:**  15 900 000 CZK | **Total amount of financial resources on project including co-financing (CZK)**: | |
| **Implementing institutions:**  **Czech Development Agency**  Nerudova 3, 118 50 Praha 1  Contact person: Petra Mojžíšová  Tel.: 251 108 128  E-mail: mojzisova@czechaid.cz  **Central Institute for Supervising and Testing in Agriculture**  Hroznová 2,  Brno 656 06  Contact person: Ing. Ludmila Šípková  Tel.: (+420) 733 612 566  E-mail: [ludmila.sipkova@ukzuz.cz](mailto:ludmila.sipkova@ukzuz.cz) | | |
| **Partner institution**  Ministry of Agriculture and Food Industry of the Republic of Moldova | | |

**List of abbreviations**

AA Association Agreement

ACSA **National Agency for Rural Development**

ADA Austrian Development Agency

ANSA/NFSA National Food Safety Agency of the Republic of Moldova

CARANTINA National Centre for Verification and Certification of Vegetable Products and Soil

CB Control Body

CDA Czech Development Assistance

CIB Comprehensive Institution Building

CZ Czech Republic

CzDA Czech Development Agency

DCFTA Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement

EBRD European Bank for Reconstruction and Development

EC European Commission

EIB European Investment Bank

ENI European Neighbourhood Instrument

EU European Union

FDOV Facility for Sustainable Entrepreneurship and Food Security

GIZ Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit

MAFI Ministry of Agriculture and Food Industry

MOLDAC National Accreditation Center of the Republic of Moldova

NIF Neighbourhood Investment Facility

PIN People in Need

PPPs Plant Protection Products

ÚKZÚZ Central Institute for Supervising and Testing in Agriculture

UNFPA United Nations Population Fund

US United States

USAID United States Agency for International Development

USD United States Dollar

WBWorld Bank

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# Executive summary

The project *„Institutional support within organic farming in the Republic of Moldova”* is based on outcomes already achieved through previous projects focusing on organic farming in Moldova supported by the CzDA and on the current need to improve state administration, which was particularly expressed in the Initial project proposal submitted by the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Industry of the Republic of Moldova (MAFI).

At present, the Republic of Moldova does not meet all the requirements laid down by the European legislation and European standards in the area of organic farming. This means that the export of organic agricultural products is limited to the European Union countries. At the same time, due to an unstable legal environment, there is little investment in this area.

Moldova has to reinforce its institutional structure in the field of organic farming in accordance with the EU requirements, which include the implementation of functional administration, establishment of official inspection, harmonization of legal regulations, as well as launching an operational system for unified approval of inputs to organic farming and strengthening the competency of local laboratories within organic farming.

Improvement in capacity, transparency and credibility of state institutions in the field of organic farming in the Republic of Moldova will help to overcome export barriers for organic products to the EU as well as clarifying the legal environment for potential foreign investors.

With regard to improvement in the field of public awareness and education on good agricultural practices, a system will be implemented for the recommendation of organic agro-technological procedures, species and varieties suitable for organic farming. The project includes practical training in the recipient’s institutions, as well as study visits to the Czech Republic. Key experts will transfer their knowledge, experience and best practices to the project beneficiaries through training, workshops and seminars. Subsequently, the acquired knowledge will be passed on to their colleagues via the training of local experts. The project will increase the level of education of those who are interested in the area of nonconventional agriculture.

This project will not only have a direct impact on the beneficiaries’ institutions, but will also bring a substantial improvement to the administrative and professional capacities of other relevant institutions responsible for agriculture and rural development and will increase public awareness of the benefits of a fully functional state role in organic farming. The functional system will have positive impact on the agricultural sector in Moldova.

Implementation of the project and development of the related institutional mechanism will increase the benefits from organic farming. Given the scattered distribution of agricultural land in Moldova, organic farming shall particularly benefit Moldovan small-scale farmers.

The Czech Republic has implemented extensive EU legislation regarding organic farming and experts from the Central Institute for Supervising and Testing in Agriculture (ÚKZÚZ) are able to offer their experience and assist in the adoption of a similar system, taking into account the local environment and divergence of the Republic of Moldova. As far as the project leadership is considered, ÚKZÚZ has considerable experience in similar types of project.

# Project Background

## Socio-Economic Situation

Despite recent progress, Moldova remains one of the poorest countries in Europe. With a moderate climate and productive farmland, the economy of Moldova relies heavily on its agriculture sector, including fruit, vegetables, wine, and tobacco. Moldova is dependent on the annual remittances of about $1.12 billion from approximately one million Moldovans working in Western Europe, Russia, and other post-Soviet countries.

With a small amount of natural energy resources, Moldova imports almost all of its energy supplies from Russia and Ukraine. Moldova signed the Association Agreement (AA) and the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement (DCFTA) with the EU in fall 2014, connecting Moldovan products to the world’s largest market. Still, a $1 billion asset-stripping heist of Moldavian banks in late 2014 delivered a significant shock to the economy in 2015; the subsequent bank bailout increased inflationary pressures and contributed to the depreciation of the leu. Moldova’s growth has also been hampered by endemic corruption and the Russian import ban on Moldova’s agricultural products.

Over the longer term, the economy of Moldova remains vulnerable to corruption, political uncertainty, weak administrative capacity, vested bureaucratic interests, high fuel prices, Russian political and economic pressure, and unresolved separatism in the region of Transnistria.[[1]](#footnote-1)

Moldova has experienced rapid economic growth in the past decade, which has been accompanied by reductions in poverty and good performance in shared prosperity. Nonetheless, Moldova still remains one of the poorest countries in Europe and faces challenges in sustaining the progress.[[2]](#footnote-2)

In 2016, expected poverty stands at 41%. As the economy stabilizes and investor confidence improves, Moldova is expected to slowly regain its growth momentum reaching its full potential by 2017-2018; slight reductions in poverty may follow.[[3]](#footnote-3)

Moldovan economy is focused mainly on agricultural production and food processing with orientation to eastern markets. Moldova has no significant mineral resources. Almost all of the energy for consumption of the country has to be imported from abroad. At the same time, the vast part of the competitive industry is concentrated in the area of Transnistria[[4]](#footnote-4), which is not under the control of the government[[5]](#footnote-5). In Moldova, proceeding from the cultivated areas and the percentage of population involved in farming, organic production has all the necessary premises to become a key element of the national agriculture.

A crucial problem of Moldova is migration. The inhabitants are temporarily or permanently leaving the country, which negatively affects the social structure and economic development of the country.

## Government policy and activities of donors in the sector

The future of Moldova is significantly influenced by the prospect of integration to the EU. Building on these efforts, the international treaty ”*Stabilization and Association Agreement*“ was endorsed at the end of 2013, in which Moldova committed itself to a gradual fulfilment of the criteria set for the EU members and the European standards (including gradual harmonization of legislation and policy with the EU's *acquis communautaire*. The programme ”*European Neighbourhood Partnership Action Plan*“ defining principles and medium term priorities of the country was agreed upon and it was established as a tool for the preparatory process.

Key development and strategic document of Moldovan government is *”Moldova 2020: National Development Strategy: 7 Solutions for Economic Growth and Poverty Reduction”* approved by the Parliament in June 2012, which presents a strategy of cohesive and sustainable development of the society[[6]](#footnote-6). AA/DCFTA came into force on 1 July 2016. The government committed itself to continuing reforms and implementing measures in line with the adopted documents. In the longer term, however, the situation remains unpredictable and there are many factors that can reverse the current situation.

Since 2008, Moldova has become a beneficiary of a large amount of financial and expert support in the area of rural development from various international organisations as well as from development agencies. Beside the EU (the European Commission and Member States, such as, in particular, Austria (ADA), Sweden (SIDA), Germany (GIZ), Italy (ITA), Great Britain (DFID) and the Czech Republic) one of the most important donors is the USA (USAID). Moreover, there are also multilateral donors, such as EBRD (*European Bank for Reconstruction and Development)*, EIB (*European Investment Bank),* WB *(World Bank),* or United Nations agencies*.* Countries likeSwitzerland or Japan also belong among active donors. Projects of the donors are mostly focused on increasing the benefits of agricultural production and development of commodity markets with agricultural production.

Large funds have been earmarked for the implementation of the Association Agreement and DCFTA. This support is implemented through programs of CIB (Comprehensive Institution Building) and twinning projects. Other tools include broadcast Advisors (EU High Level Policy Advisors) and budgetary support (which is currently suspended).

Several projects are in progress under the Neighbourhood Investment Facility (NIF). Within the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI) and Single Support Framework for EU Support to the Republic of Moldova (2014-2017) three priority sectors were approved to promote fast and effective implementation of the Association Agreement and DCFTA.):

• Public administration reform

• Agriculture and Rural Development

• Reform of the police and border management

The indicative budget for the years 2014 – 2020 is set to 610 mil. EUR, the specific allocation of funds will depend on the successful implementation of existing programs.

## The context of cooperation

The Czech Republic has been supporting Moldova through development cooperation since the late 1990s. The Republic of Moldova has been chosen by the government resolution in 2004 (Principles of foreign development cooperation after accession of the Czech Republic to the EU[[7]](#footnote-7)) as one of the countries with cooperation programme for Foreign development cooperation of the Czech Republic. Moldova belongs to the priority countries with the programme for development cooperation (“programme countries”)[[8]](#footnote-8).

Czech development assistance in Moldova is highly rated and well received. The assistance is targeted primarily at the environment, agriculture and social development (including education, social and health services). The Czech Republic is also well respected within the donor community and has signed up for the role of the EU supporting facilitator, which has the will and ability to coordinate donors with each other and with partner governments. In the forthcoming period, particular attention should be paid to the transfer of the Czech Republic’s experience of political and economic transformation. Development cooperation with Moldova is well (inter)connected with other activities/aspects of the foreign policy of the Czech Republic (the Transformation Cooperation Programme, the Eastern Partnership).[[9]](#footnote-9)

Development cooperation is therefore carried out in this country on the basis of a specific cooperation program – currently the program for the development of cooperation with Moldova 2011 – 2017[[10]](#footnote-10). The collaboration focuses on the following sectors:

• General environmental protection,

• Water supply and sanitation,

• Government and civil society,

• Education, social infrastructure and services,

• Agriculture, forestry and fishing.

The CzDA actively cooperates with major multilateral and bilateral donors operating in Moldova. Cooperation at various levels of intensity occurs mainly with development agencies such as GIZ, ADA, USAID, UNFPA and Slovak aid.

**In the field of organic farming, CzDA has supported the following projects:**

**• Support of the development of organic agriculture in Moldova (Caritas Czech Republic)**

The development objective of this development project, which was implemented between 2011 and 2014 in cooperation with a Moldovan company ProRural Invest, was to enhance the competitiveness and efficiency of Moldovan small and medium scale farmers. The specific objectives of the project include support of these farmers regarding transition to organic agriculture, enhancing competitiveness, promoting organic farming sector in general and integrating Moldova into the European trade with organic products. The project aimed at continuous training of producers in the field of agricultural crops in farming techniques according to the principles of organic farming and creation of marketing strategies and business plans. Examples of “good practice” to strengthen the competitiveness and efficiency through organic production were distributed among the audience and presented to Moldovan experts. During the year 2013, a series of training courses in the field of production (fruit), creation of business plans and marketing of organic farming on the basis of previous support were implemented. Moreover, two schemes for the sale of organic products and for the encouragement of enterprise in the process of drying were launched.

**• Development of organic agriculture in Moldova (People in Need)**

The project implemented between 2011 and 2014 focused on the promotion of organic agriculture in Moldova, particularly through capacity building of farmers, farmer associations and consultation centres. The main goal was to support the access for local farmers and associations to the investment funds and stimulate the demand for the organic products in Moldova. The project has also strengthened the awareness of the public and government about the benefits of organic agriculture in Moldova and proposed a national action plan for its development. In 2013, a series of activities aimed at the promotion of organic farming, such as presentations at farmers’ markets. The project was also supported by USAID in 2013 under the Emerging Donors Challenge Fund.

**• Support of the application of organic products in the internal and foreign market (People in Need)**

The project, being implemented between 2015 and 2018, builds on the results which were achieved under the previous support of organic farming in Moldova, initiated in response to a demand of Moldovan farmers exporting organic products. The project aims at expanding the current set of farmers who are producing in the organic farming mode, and simultaneously connects them with specific customers both in foreign and domestic markets. Apart from CzDA, the project is co-financed by the Dutch Facility for Sustainable Entrepreneurship and Food Security (FDOV) and USAID.

**• Support to the Development of Organic Farming and Trade with Organic Products Between the Republic of Moldova and the Czech Republic (BIOVIVA)**

The project realized within the Programme Development Partnership for the Private Sector between 2016 and 2018, aims at supporting Moldova’s organic agriculture system and increasing the number of local farmers certified to export to the EU market. The project is complementary to the one realized by the People in Need.

# Problem analysis

Thanks to the quality of its soil, climate conditions, the immediate vicinity of the single European market and the Association Agreement concluded with the EU, Moldova has favourable initial conditions for the development of organic farming. The support of the organic farming sector has become one of Moldova’s priorities.

As one of the first post-Soviet countries, Moldova adopted a law on organic farming and subsidies were paid. Not only with respect to subsidies, political support is the key factor in the development of the organic farming sector. Its deficiency or the lack of changes in the policy of the central government in Moldova, which has discontinued support for organic farming since 2011, demonstrated a rapid decline in motivation of Moldovan farmers to move towards ecological standards (increasing labour while reducing revenues and profits). The decline in interest was not only among the group of conventional farmers, but also among those who were at that time undergoing the period of transition.

In Moldova, organic farming private control was introduced and it became a guarantee of the state system and harmonization with EU requirements. As mentioned above, the CzDA also supported several projects for the development of organic farming (implemented by Caritas Czech Republic, People in Need, PRO-BIO Ltd.), where a government guaranteed functional system within organic farming sector was naturally assumed. But after the abolition of subsidies for organic farming, the position of the respective department of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Industry (MAFI) weakened. The situation led to the abolishment of the state guarantees of the organic farming system and started the transition of the farmers back to the conventional farming method. Since August 2016, organic farming has been getting support again in the form of subsidies. Therefore, it can be expected, that there will be an increase in the number of farmers using organic farming methods and the need for institutional support will consequently amplify.

The findings of the Comprehensive assessment of international development cooperation of the Czech Republic in the agriculture sector in Moldova report have confirmed that the support for organic agriculture in Moldova has good prospects and can be described as an ideal destination for Czech Development Assistance (CDA). However, institutional support for the development of organic agriculture in Moldova is still rather weak.

Based on the previous analysis, the areas showing main weaknesses in the system of checks and supervisions are characterised as follows:

* **MAFI and official control within organic farming**

Law on the organic agriculture no. 115 – X VI from 2005 appoints MAFI to be the responsible and supervisory authority. Organic farming is roofed, due to a serious staff shortage, rather formally (occupied so far only by one head of department and one employee). Conduction of mandatory registers can be characterized as limited and without continuous updates. The Ministry does not register all supervisory authorities and their clients, which can be viewed as a serious shortcoming. There is no official control system in practice. There are no manuals, guidelines or procedures for administrative staff (sampling guidelines, procedure on the performance of official controls, any Guidebook of supervision, Guidebook for registration of operators, Guidebook for Control bodies, Publication of an up-dated country report and annual report available).

* **Legislation**

For a country which is not an EU member, the task of meeting all the requirements for the entry to the EU market is a challenging issue as it requires adapting the laws according the EU standards. In Moldova, organic farming legislation is not fully harmonized with the EU law, so the farms and control organizations make a direct use of the EU rules.

The basic pieces of relevant legislation include:

* Act no. 115/2005, on organic agricultural production;
* Decree no. 149/2006, which lays down detailed rules for Law;
* Government Regulation no. 1078/2008;
* Technical regulations on organic production and labelling of food products;
* Regulation Government No.884 / 2014, rules for the use of national trade mark within organic farming.

The legislative system is further complemented by Decision MAFI (No. 16/2010 on the conditions for registration of subject of organic farming, No. 9/2009 on the establishment of a commission to authorized bodies and certification and inspection No. 49/2015 – Commission for granting trademark EZ Moldova).

The previous analysis revealed that although particular pieces of legislation were continuously (fully or partially) added and updated, not all of them are compatible with the EU standards, and some include national arrangements hindering the process of harmonization with the EU law. In this respect, it is also necessary to clarify the rules of the legislative process in the concrete division of issues between the law and the governmental regulation and resolution of procedural rules and sanctions.

* **Inspection and certification**

By the law, the supervisory authority is MAFI, which, in cooperation with the national accreditation body (MOLDAC), authorizes certification and supervisory authorities. Currently the national authorities do not have an approval to issue certifications for the export to the EU.

Due the fact, that the national legislation is not currently equivalent to the European Regulations (Law no. 115 is not equivalent to EU Regulation 834/2007), the MOLDAC cannot certify the Certification Bodies to the requirements of ISO / IEC 17065 and EU Regulation 834/2007. For this reason the Certification Body in organic agriculture field cannot indicate in the Certificate of Conformity that the organic product is produced in compliance with the requirements of EU Regulation 834/2007. In the end, the certified organic product by these national certification bodies cannot be placed on the European market.

Positive fact for achieving the project goals is that MOLDAC supported the evaluation of the counterparts made by the European Cooperation for Accreditation (EA) during the 14.02-25.02.2017. Through this evaluation, based on transparent criteria and clear procedures established by the European and International Accreditation Bodies (EA, IAF, ILAC), MOLDAC has to ensure the compliance with the ISO / IEC 17011: 2006 requirements, the provisions of the Law No. 235 from 01.12.2011, as subsequently amended and supplemented, [Regulation (EC) No 765/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 9 July 2008 setting out the requirements for accreditation and market surveillance relating to the marketing of products and repealing Regulation (EEC) No 339/93](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/AUTO/?uri=CELEX:32008R0765&qid=1499948791260&rid=1).

MOLDAC requested the evaluation on the following accreditation schemes:

* Testing laboratories - ISO / IEC 17025
* Calibration laboratories - ISO / IEC 17025
* Medical laboratories - ISO 15189
* Product certification bodies - ISO / IEC 17065
* Quality management system certification bodies - ISO / IEC 17021 and ISO / IEC TS 17021-3
* Food safety management system certification bodies - ISO / IEC 17021 and ISO / TS 22003
* Inspection bodies - ISO / IEC 17020

MOLDAC passed successfully the evaluation, closed all nonconformities and it is currently waiting for the (TFG) Task Force Group's decision.

It is assumed that in September 2017, at the Multilateral Agreement Council (MAC) will be taken a positive decision for MOLDAC recognizing, and MOLDAC will receive the certificate of recognition at the EA (GA) General Assembly from October 2017.

Only after MOLDAC will be recognized, the legal document issued by the accredited certification body will be recognized in the EU.

In the field of organic products, it could be possible to do so, only after Law equivalence. The Law equivalence is very important part of this project. After the harmonization of the legislation, it will not be required the double accreditation, which was identified among others as a crucial inadequacy.

Concerning the international certification bodies accredited in EU, these shall be registered and recognised by Ministry of Agriculture and Food Industry. On the territory of Moldova, certification is performed by foreign CBs currently without registration within MAFI. This finding is one of the inadequacies discovered during the previous analysis.

Another externality that must be kept in mind is the capacity of certification bodies. Should the export of organic products to the EU countries be achieved, a credible control body (CB) must be implemented.

However, certification must also be economically achievable for small and medium-scale farmers. Ideally, these local entities would receive international accreditation, so they could provide certificates that are automatically valid in the EU.

Credible certification is the key condition for the intervention logic of the projects supported by the international development cooperation work. Clear prerequisite for the sustainability of the outcomes of these projects is the ability to export to the EU. Unless this condition is fulfilled in the near future, organic production of organic farmers will certainly not be sustained because is not able to withstand in the rising competition from more efficient methods of the industrial agriculture applications.

There is no contract between the local control body (CB) and MAFI and no auditing system from the side of MAFI towards CB. In this respect, the project will support MAFI in appointing the control body and launching the auditing system.

Currently, there is only one local CB operating in Moldova (Certificate-Eco). This CB lost the accreditation according to the norm ISO 17065 valid for the EU to be the control and certification subject. The problem is that the national accreditation body (MOLDAC) is not currently harmonized with the EU standards. This is the main reason (apart from others) why Certificate-Eco is not approved for export of products from Moldova to the EU. Within Moldova there are operating international CBs (e.g. Control Union – NL, Organic Standard – UA, AB Cert – D, Ceres – RO, etc.) with the approval to export to the EU. That is why the production for export is certified by foreign CBs. But these CBs are operating without the registration at MAFI (this will be solved by the project activity regarding harmonisation of the legislation). Other problem is that this service is not affordable for small and medium producers.

**There are 2 possible solutions:**

1. A system of state supervision will be established in Moldova, including the national CB. Moldova will then reach the list of third countries with the equivalency of supervision with the EU. This way of solution is very complex and long-lasting. The first step is to prepare legislation in accordance with the EU norms, followed by the establishment of a control and supervision mechanism, inclusion of laboratories, finalised by a challenging application within the European Commission, which by audit will verify the state of play and subsequently decide about the equivalency. This process will take several years.

2. The control system will be based on private CBs, who will be contracted by MAFI. This shall be included in the legislation. There are particular requirements for this system (e.g. local place of business, responsible personnel, use of the national language, provision of statistical data, etc.). This system is also mentioned in Regulation No. 834/2007.

MAFI will establish a system of subsidies so that only those who will cooperate with CBs registered by MAFI will gain the donation.

Particular requirements for the EU approval are laid down in particular legislation. International CBs already have this approval and this would be valid also for the local place of business. There is no need to ask for approval.

* **Challenges for the government in other projects supported by the CzDA**

Incompatibility of laws and formal state administration together with the lack of long-term guaranteed state aid produce significant challenges for the effectiveness of other ongoing projects funded by the CzDA. Unresolved possibilities to certify product development and raw organic farming reduce the incentive for the further development of the sector in Moldova.

* **Passivity of stakeholders and impacts on the state administration**

Instability and inefficiency of the system of subsidies without a long-term perspective do not provide sufficient support and motivation for organic producers, and do not enhance organic farming in the shaping of national interest organizations, which require remedy to the current situation in its formation and could contribute even more to the EU projects and CzDA ongoing activities in the Republic of Moldova.

The above mentioned weaknesses must be taken as a challenge to the Moldovan government which could keep pace with the recent dynamic development of organic farming, driven by the growth of intercrops on arable land and export of raw materials to the EU (now mainly included in the Dutch development project ”Prograin“ and the project ”PRO-BIO“ sponsored by the CzDA).

The EU initiated and still guides the development of organic farming NGOs, organic farmer unions, consumer and research structures, including legislation, inspection and certification.  
Weak and active non-governmental sector of organic agriculture is a further limit for the good function of the state administration in Moldova. The Ministry lacks coordinated impulses and is unable to respond. Organic farming NGOs slowly develop pressure on the state to develop the system of functional organic farming and to increase the professional and political importance of the organic sector. The state may delegate certain powers to private, academic and non-profit sector.

* **Laboratory**

It is obvious that among the biggest issues in the organic sector is the lack of laboratories that could test all the relevant residues, which are required in organic farming. The producers are required to send the samples for analysis abroad, e.g. to Bulgaria. As a result, the prices are very high and the process is also significantly time-consuming. Furthermore, there were situations when the sent samples were lost or damaged. It is necessary to establish a national lab that could provide all the analysis, starting with soil and finishing with the final product.

**There are many obstacles for the development of the organic sector in Moldova. The most crucial obstacles are the following:**

* **The competent authority (MAFI)** has sufficient competencies given by the law, but does not fully implement them. There is a staff shortage in the Organic Farming Department. The system of the state supervision and official control needs to be established and consequently implemented.
* **MAFI does not register all supervisory authorities and their clients, which is considered as a serious shortcoming.**
* **Legislation** has not been adapted according to the Council Regulation No. 834/2007. An update must be carried out, otherwise a parallel activity will continue (currently certification is not carried out according to the Moldovan law, but according to the EU rules).
* **Moldovan CBs are not authorised to certify export to the EU, whereas foreign CBs are not affordable for local farmers.**
* **There is no unified opinion on the length of the transition period**. In many agricultural enterprises, which were originally organic, the observance of organic farming rules and inspection has lapsed. These are now returning to the previous system
* **Non-existent system of granting exceptions for organic farming.**
* **Lack of communication between the state institutions and public sector. The information from state institutions is not transmitted to the public sector and the public awareness is therefore insufficient.** There is a lack of information campaigns, brochures, bulletins, annuals etc.
* **Regarding inputs, the lists of fertilizers and plant protection products are not up-dated and not available on-line for public. There is no list of bio-seeds available.**
* **Lack of laboratories that could test all the residues required within organic farming.**
* **Common varieties of minor crops, which are normally used for organic farming in the EU, are not registered in Moldova.**
* **A system of recommendations and agro-technological procedures suitable for organic farming in Moldova has not been established.**

# Stakeholders Analysis

## Stakeholders/partners of the project

**Ministry of Agriculture and Food Industry (MAFI)**

*162, Stefan cel Mare ave., MD-2004 Chisinau*

***Contact person:*** *Ms Marcela Stahi (head of the department responsible for organic farming)*

MAFI is the main host country partner. MAFI is responsible for policy making in the area of organic farming, developing draft regulations and ensuring the control of this area in Moldova.

MAFI as the central state administration body in the field of organic production and is responsible for creating drafts and supervision of laws passing the legislative process and other rules and regulations regarding the production of organic farming. Furthermore, according to the Law on organic farming production, MAFI is the authority responsible for empowering authorities to inspect and certify.

MAFI is the competent authority, which has sufficient competencies given by the law, however, it does not implement these competencies sufficiently. The area of organic farming belongs within the structure of MAFI included into the Department of Organic Farming. Staff shortage in the organic farming department is the biggest issue.

MAFI will closely work with ÚKZÚZ to ensure smooth-running of this joined project.

The roles and responsibilities of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Industry, as the main beneficiary, are as follows:

* Provide the project team with all the information relevant for the project implementation, which is available and not covered by any confidentiality agreements and will fully cooperate with experts in order to achieve the best results;
* Ensure cooperation of its employees with the Project management and the experts related to the Project implementation during the project;
* Provide assistance in obtaining copies of local laws, regulations and information, which may affect the experts regarding the performance of obligations;
* Facilitate the identification of suitable office space for the experts. Proposed review work will require significant travelling within the country and some travelling abroad may be required to address one or more specific activities.
* Participate in the drafting of the training program and take part in the training program as a participant and group coordinator.
* Support the staff at the department of organic farming.

**State Commission for Variety testing within MAFI**

*Nacionalnaja Komissia after Ispitanie to sort rastenij*

*162, Stefan cel Mare ave., MD-2004 Chisinau*

***Contact person:*** *Mr Mihail Machidon (president)*

The Commission provides testing of varieties for legal protection and registration of varieties, and registers the operation of testing stations.

**The Commission can be helpful in the establishment of the system for recommendation of organic agro-technological procedures, species and varieties suitable for organic farming.**

**Research Institute of Field Crops SELECTIA**

*28, Calea Iesilor str., Balti, MD 3101*

***Contact person****: Mr. Boris Boincean*

The Research Institute can be helpful in the establishment of a system for recommendation of organic agro-technological procedures, species and varieties suitable for organic farming.

**National Agency for Food Safety (Agentia Nationala pentru Siguranta Alimenterol) (NFSA, ANSA)**

*Str. M. Kogalniceanu 63 (b.203), MD-2005 Chisinau, Moldova****Contact persons:***

*Mr Gheorghe Gaberi (general director)*

*Mr Mihail Negrescu (Head of Division for pesticides and fertilizers control)*

The ANSA (NFSA) was established in 2013 in the Republic of Moldova by merging the Sanitary-Veterinary and Animal Products Safety Agency with the General Inspectorate on Phytosanitary Supervision and Seed Control. It is responsible for the implementation of state policy to regulate and control food safety and veterinary field, animal husbandry, plant protection and phytosanitary quarantine, seed control, quality primary products, food and feed. According to Law No. 249 of 10/24/2013 amending and supplementing certain acts, the National Agency for Food Safety is an administrative authority under the Government of the Republic of Moldova.

With its 1,400 employees, ANSA is responsible for the whole chain, starting with the fields and finishing with the consumer. There are 37 regional offices in the districts with 25-35 employees.

**UKZUZ will cooperate with ANSA mainly within the bio-seed part of the project. If possible, the cooperation should expand in compliance with MAFI decision regarding the authorisation of ANSA to conduct official controls within organic farming, which model is suggested by UKZUZ.**

**Centre of Quarantine, Identification, Arbitration Expertise and Production Disinfection State Enterprise “National Centre for Verification and Certification of Plant Products and Soil”** **(CARANTINA)**

*4Mestereul Manole Str., MD – 2044, Chisinau*

***Contact person:*** *Mr. Nicanor Cernautan (director)*

Under the government decision, the State Enterprise “Centre of Quarantine, Identification, Arbitration Expertise and Production Disinfection” was reorganized, by the merge (absorption) of the state enterprise “State Centre for Certification of Seed Material” and State Enterprise “Centre of Standardization and Establishing of Quality of Fodder and Cereal Products”. The new institution is named the State Enterprise “National Centre for Verification and Certification of Plant Products and Soil” (NCVCPPS). The number of employees reaches 54.

Main activities of the laboratories under the NCVCPPS are as follows: carrying out analysis for detection and identification of damaging organisms (viruses, fungi, bacteria, insects, nematodes); carrying out analyses for the identification of pesticide residues; carrying out laboratory tests for the determination of quality parameter for seed and plant material, cereals, products derived from cereals, animal feed, prime material for animal feed etc., carrying out analyses for the determination of GMO; providing scientific and technical consultancy for the development and implementation of monitoring of phytosanitary plans; attendance of trainings for phytosanitary inspectors; participation in interlaboratory tests (ring tests)/efficiency (proficiency tests).

All the laboratory testing is provided according to SM SR EN ISO 17025:2006; The Diagnostic Investigation Department of the Centre operates in two sections:

I. Section for Phytosanitary Quarantine (DPQ) that performs tests in three laboratories:

1. for microbiological testing,

2. for morphobiometrical testing,

3. for molecular biology testing.

II. Section for the Quality of Products (DQP) that performs tests in three laboratories:

1. for chemical testing, including pesticide residues testing,

2. for physical-chemical testing,

3. for quality certification of seeds.

The main objectives of DPQ are: diagnosis of the entire spectrum of vegetable production coming from import, export and re-export, in order to avoid ingress of phytosanitary quarantine in Moldova and for the purposes of application of the international standards for phytosanitary quarantine; determination of pesticide residues in soil and plants produced by non-animal origin.

The centre is a state enterprise that is self-managed. The Centre provides services also for the private sector. The fees for the laboratory testing provided by the Centre are approved by the Administrative Council of the enterprise under the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Industry.

Based on the questionnaire prepared by experts from the National Reference Laboratory, within the previous analysis, the following facts regarding the laboratory for determination of pesticide residues (“National Centre for Verification and Certification of Plant Products and Soil” (NCVCPPS)) can be formulated:

* The laboratory fulfils basic assumptions for the determination of pesticide residues in the samples from the controls of keeping the procedures in organic farming.
* The laboratory fulfils basic assumptions for the determination of pesticide residues in products grown in organic farming.
* The laboratory is equipped with suitable instruments – Gas Chromatograph/Mass Spectrometer and Liquid Chromatograph/Mass spectrometer (GC- MS/MS a LC-MS/MS).
* The laboratory is accredited according to EN ISO/IEC 17025, quality system is established.
* The methods are validated in compliance with DG SANTE N 11945/2015 requirements.
* Laboratory staff is experienced in the determination of pesticide residues in plant products.
* Sampling is carried out by the inspectors of ANSA for official control.

**Based on the previous analysis, this laboratory was chosen by MAFI to be a partner in launching the analyses of relevant pesticide residues in products grown in organic farming for the purposes of the official control. The project will focus on strengthening the competency of this local laboratory in organic farming issues.**

**State Centre for Certification and Approval of Phytosanitary Products and Fertilizers**

*Location:  16 A Sarmizegestusa Street, Chisinau*

***Contact person****: Mr. Vladimir Mosoi*

The State Centre for Certification and Approval of Phytosanitary and Fertilizers is a state enterprise and it was created under the Government Decision no. 897 of 8 December 1994 on approval and usage in agriculture of plant protection products and fertilizers. The main tasks of the State Centre are:

* regulation of the assortment of plant protection products (PPPs) and fertilizers, harmless for humans and environment, used in agriculture and forestry;
* organization and checking up the state trials of PPPs and fertilizers in cooperation with scientific research institutions of the Academy of Science and the Ministry of Agriculture;
* organization of the meetings of Interdepartmental Council for registration of PPPs and fertilizers;
* publications of the State Register of Phytosanitary Means and Fertilizers allowed for the usage in the Republic of Moldova.

**This centre will be the main partner for the establishment of an operational system for unified approval of inputs to organic farming.**

**Other stakeholders are competent state institutions at different levels. These are for example:**

**Agency for Interventions and Payments for Agriculture (AIPA)**

*Location:  15 th floor, 162, Stefan cel Mare ave, Chisinau*

*Contact person: Mr. Ciubuc*

In addition to the Department of organic farming at MAFI, the sector of organic farming is regulated by the Agency for Interventions and Payments for Agriculture (AIPA), which annually lists Government Regulation regarding the extent of subsidies in agriculture (organic farming is the priority). The deadline for applications is set at the end of October and the support is paid for the previous year to entrepreneurs in agriculture who met a certain set of criteria.

The Agency of Interventions and Payments for Agriculture was created by Government Decision no. 60 of 4 February 2010, and it is an administrative body under the Ministry of Agriculture, responsible for managing financial resources intended to support farmers, monitoring the distribution of the resources and for the quantitative and qualitative evaluation of the impact of the state support measures on the farmers. The Agency was created for the purpose of the management of national and the EU funds in the future. About 80 % of the financial sources the Agency has administered so far were national financial sources, the other 20 % came from the World Bank and the European Commission.

As for the structure and approach, they are similar to the EU Payment Agencies. The Agency has a very good cooperation with the Czech Payment Agency. During autumn 2016, a Twinning project for the capacity building of the institution will be launched in order to further accreditation to the EU standards. One of the institutions from the consortium of institutions that will manage the project implementation is the Payment Agency from the Czech Republic.

**Organic Value Chain Alliance (MOVCA)**

*28 Grigore Vieru Str. Chisinau*

***Contact person****: Ms. Kelsey Walters (President)*

Considering the private sector, the Associations representative of organic farming will be involved in the project, too.

MOVCA, non-governmental, non-profit organization, was established on a voluntary basis with the help of foreign partners (Prograin Organic, KB - Walcoma LLC, USA) with a view of associating producers in organic farming and promoting its development. MOVCA presented an action plan for 2016 with the idea of management structure and membership base and a wide range of activities. Negotiations to clarify the possible scope of cooperation were held, particularly in the fields of public administration, monitoring and recommendation.

The Organic Value Chain Alliance (MOVCA) is a membership-based business association for organic agriculture and products in the Republic of Moldova. Its members include growers, shippers, processors, certifiers, farmer associations, distributors, importers, exporters, consultants, retailers, active consumers, and others. Its members democratically elect MOVCA’s Board of Directors. MOVCA’s member organic businesses work together as allies through networking, advocacy, and other initiatives to encourage and protect organic farming practices, and to share messages about the positive environmental and nutritional attributes of organic products with consumers, the media, and policymakers. MOVCA’s mission is to promote and protect organic agriculture with a unifying voice that serves, engages, and encourages its diverse members from farm to the marketplace.

MOVCA was created to give opportunities for organic farmers by unifying their efforts and to discuss pressing issues with the state in order to solve their problems.

**People in Need (PIN)**

PIN is a non-governmental, non-profit and non-political organization that carries out its activities throughout the entire territory of the Republic of Moldova. UKZUZ is prepared to cooperate closely with the PIN to share and coordinate activities within organic farming.

**National Agency for Rural Development (ACSA)**

ACSA is a non-governmental, non-profit and non-political organization that carries out its activities throughout the entire territory of the Republic of Moldova.

The mission of the Agency is sustainable development of rural communities through setting up and developing a professional network of information, consultancy and training service providers for agricultural producers and rural entrepreneurs. ACSA is opened to develop activities in the area of organic farming. It has a consultant specialized in this sector.

ACSA has 35 regional centres and each of it has a service provider, which have 2-3 regional consultants and 10-12 local consultants. Each consultant has adequate skills and training in general issues (technological, marketing, legal, and economical). Each service provider has a consultant in viticulture, vegetables, horticulture and one in organic and biological agriculture. ACSA has a contract with MAFI and its total budget for 5 years is 5 million euros for the implementation of five types of the services: technological, livestock and phytotechnical sector, economical sector, marketing and legal aspects. During the last 15 years, they had implemented about 100 projects. The biggest project budget was about 5 million dollars financed by the Millennium Challenge Corporation and the lowest budget was 20 000 dollars.

Collaboration between MAFI (Moldova), the Central Institute for Supervising and Testing in Agriculture (Czech Republic) and the partners mentioned above will help to ensure maximum efficiency not only by providing financial sources but also human resources and will contribute to achieving the best possible results.

## Target groups

The **main target group** are the employees of state institutions for whom a complex *tailor-made training programme* will be prepared. It will include complete training of the staff of relevant authorities in legislation, new methodology, performance of official control, laboratory issues, certification process, and a subsequent control together with a special training for employees, including those who will be involved in the process of administrative procedure.

The **final beneficiaries** of the project will be the agricultural entrepreneurs in the area of organic farming. By reinforcement of institutional structure in the field of organic farming, by strengthening the competency of local laboratory within organic farming, by supporting the national certification body, both local and foreign organic trade will be supported. By establishing a **system for recommendation of varieties suitable for organic farming**, farmers will have a wider possibility of choice of species and varieties. Due to the state guaranteed system, organic farmers will be able to produce and sell products at higher prices. In addition, the customers from both farmers and public are beneficiaries of the project – they will obtain assurance that the product they purchase meets all the parameters common in the EU countries. The involvement of organic farmers in the established system will guarantee the accessibility of state subsidies.

## Support of the project from beneficiary

The main beneficiaries will be the state institutions in Moldova, which will provide facilities and human resources, including their time flexibility. These institutions will take full responsibility for the continuous functioning of the newly established system in the future, its sustainability including the financial one. Human resources mean that the employees of the institutions who will participate in trainings, workshops and study visits to the Czech Republic, will continue to work closely with the project implementers to perform various activities (these will be proposed directly by individual institutions) and will be synergistic in the development of interim reports, including participation in any monitoring and evaluation missions of the Czech Republic. State institutions will fully pay the salary of its employees participating in various activities of the project, including travel expenses (transportation) in Moldova.

Background means for example facilities for training, seminars, and roundtable discussions, providing access to relevant places and land during the performance of exemplary controls, etc.

# Logframe matrix (see Annex No.1)

## Objective

The objective of this project is the reinforcement of organic farming sector in the Republic of Moldova in accordance with the EU requirements.

## Purpose

The project purpose is to increase the capacity, the transparency and the credibility of state institutions in the field of organic farming in the Republic of Moldova.

Sufficient flexibility, stability and sustainability of the system is a must for its further development and improvement. Particular outputs of the project as well as activities contributing to their accomplishment are hereinafter described.

**The outcomes of the project are as follows:**

* Reinforcement of institutional structure in the field of organic farming**,**
* **Operational system for unified approval of inputs to organic farming,**
* Strengthened competency of local laboratory within organic farming,
* Established system for recommendation of organic agro-technological procedures, species and varieties.

**General preconditions applying to the whole project:**

* **Capability of the personnel and experts to implement the project,**
* **Key staff in the beneficiary institutions appointed and willing to cooperate,**
* **Well-defined future needs in the organic farming sector,**
* **Stable and sustainable political situation and determination to following the pro-European course.**

### Output No. 1: Reinforced institutional structure in the field of organic farming

**Activity** **1. 1. Establishment and implementation of the system of state supervision and official control in the area of organic farming**

Strengthening and optimizing the state administration, especially in the area of supervision of control and certification, will play an important role along with the harmonization of legislation (the drafting of relevant legislation). The development of a functional system of the role of the state in organic farming, which would be in accordance with EU legislation, would lead to the ability of Moldovan farmers to export products from their organic farming to the EU.

First of all, an optimal structure of the state supervision of organic farming and organic food production including trade has to be proposed. Choosing the most suitable system for the conditions in Moldova and its subsequent implementation will be a highly significant activity of this project. Secondly, the system of the state supervision of organic farming inspection including human recourses has to be implemented. Improvement of the system and criteria of registration of organic operators (organic farmers, processors and traders), creation of a system for approving exemptions from the organic farming inspection system and further on setting up rules for sampling and interpretation of pesticide residues within the official control of organic farming are crucial. The methodology for all involved state bodies performing state administration will be formulated. Documents mentioned hereinafter will be prepared for relevant Moldovan staff:

* Manuals, guidelines and procedures for administrative staff,
* Sampling guideline for official controls,
* Guidebook for granting exceptions regarding bio-seeds,
* Guidebook for supervision,
* Guidebook for registration of operators,
* Guidebook for Control bodies.

The increase of the personnel within MAFI is required as well as the appointment of relevant inspectors. Sufficient capacity of qualified staff of MD state administration and at least 3 - 4 persons at the department for organic farming at the Ministry are assumptions for the project implementation and for the appointment of relevant inspectors. The increase in personnel is already included in the reorganisation scheme of MAFI.

Taking into consideration the shortage of staff at the Organic farming department (MAFI), it is suggested that an “advisory board for organic agriculture” should be established, and that all the activities of the committee will be closely devoted to the project implementation based on MAFI needs, in particular the coordination and organization service, including technical assistance for organic department, e.g. preparation of documentations regarding the implementation of the aforementioned project activities. The preliminary frequency of meetings is 4 times per year, the exact frequency will depend on MAFI needs. Particular agenda will be closely set up according to the project outputs. The meetings of this advisory committee will be coordinated with the Steering committee.

All outputs of this activity (esp. the Guidebooks) will be submitted to the CzDA as annexes of the interim report.

**Activity** **1. 2. Elaboration of a draft of harmonized legislation including interpretation of rules for organic agriculture**

Further component of this output is to ensure that all the relevant pieces of Moldovan legislation in the area of organic farming are fully in line with the EU legislation. A complete analysis of the current legislation, including drafted legislation and detailed comparison with the relevant EU legislation will be conducted; hence, the main output of this activity will be a comprehensive proposal of new legislation – Act and technical subordinated legislation, that will be fully harmonized with *the acquis communautaire*, which will help to establish a legal environment prevailing in the Member States. Another significant activity will be the compilation of publications describing and interpreting rules for organic agriculture (Council Regulation No. 834/2007) in Moldovan conditions.

MAFI will be the main party responsible for the realization of this activity. All outputs of the activities will be submitted to the CzDA as annexes of the interim report. The main outputs are as follows:

* Evaluation report of Moldovan organic law (including recommendations),
* Draft of a harmonized organic law,
* Training materials,
* Lists of attendance,
* Photos,
* Publication of interpretation of harmonized legislation according to Moldovan conditions.

**Activity** **1. 3. Support to MAFI in the process of appointment of control body**

Another crucial issue is the setting of rules for the operation of private or state control bodies (CB) and their registration in Moldova.

The main output of this activity will be the establishment of the system for appointment of the control body.

The advisory board for organic agriculture will be established. UKZUZ along with the advisory board will be responsible for the realization of this activity, with MAFI as the local implementer. All outputs be submitted to the CzDA as annexes of the interim report. The main outputs of the activity are as follows:

* Methodology for the appointment of the control body by MAFI,
* Draft of subsidy towards certification,
* Contract between MAFI and at least 1 CB, which will be approved to certify both for local and foreign markets.

The responsible implementer is UKZUZ and outcomes by this committee will be sources of verification.

UKZUZ will establish a system of private certification with the use of private CBs. There will be a contract between CBs and MAFI. Based on that contract, MAFI will issue the authorisation for CBs to operate within Moldova. In order to eliminate the disproportionate prices of services of foreign CBs, a special subsidy for organic farmers will be established which will partially cover the costs of the certification for organic farming. The subsidy will cover only registered organic operators. The role of UKZUZ will be to offer assistance to MAFI in establishing such a procedure. Currently, there is a political will towards subsidy within organic farming.

**Activity** **1. 4. Advice and coaching sessions, sharing of experience by means of seminars, workshops and study visits**

During the project implementation period, advice and coaching sessions and sharing of experience will be provided. Tailor-made training programme for involved institutions performing supervision and official controls, advice and coaching sessions, sharing of experience during seminars and workshops will ensure knowledge transmission. Finally, the transfer of know-how will be ensured during the study visit in the Czech Republic. Attendance of relevant state body at international conferences, seminars (for example Biosummit annually held in Prague, Biofach DE, etc.) will be covered by this activity.

**Activity** **1. 5. Support of professional public awareness within organic farming**

Given the lack of communication between state institutions and experts mentioned above, coupled with the transfer of knowledge to the state institutions involved, seminars for other relevant stakeholders will be held. This activity will mainly focus on an information campaign. For example, the activity will include publishing of up-dated country report, annual reports, improving web pages with organic information, presentation the new legislation and the benefits that will arise after the approval, etc.

**The assumptions for successful implementation of the above mentioned activities** **are:**

* Availability of the qualified Moldovan state administration staff (sufficient capacity of the staff at MAFI, appointed inspectors),
* Cooperation between all the state stakeholders within the organic farming sector,
* Commitment of relevant authorities to cooperate in the legislation process, including passing of proposed legislation by the beneficiary,
* Existing local control body which will be appointed by the state (MAFI).

**Objectively verifiable indicators of this result are as follows:**

* 100% organic farms under the process of state supervision (base line 0 %) and official control launched and conducted in at least 5 % of organic registered operators (baseline 0 %) (2Q/2020),
* Introduction of the draft of harmonized legislation to the Parliament by MAFI and in case of implementing regulations/acts passing process within Ministry Baseline 2016 – 40 % of harmonization. (4Q/2019),
* At least 1 control body approved by MAFI (4Q/2020)

**The following will serve as sources of verification:**

* Evaluation report,
* Plan of controls,
* Register of controls,
* Draft of harmonized organic law (Act, technical subordinate legislation – Ministerial Orders),
* Contract between MAFI and at least one Control body.

MAFI will be the local implementer for this output. All outcomes of the above mentioned activities will be submitted to the CzDA as annexes of the interim report. The main outcomes are as follows:

* Evaluation report of Moldovan organic law,
* Draft of harmonized organic law, including recommendations (Act, technical subordinate legislation – Ministerial Orders),
* Publication of the interpretation of harmonized legislation according to Moldovan conditions,
* Manuals, guidelines and procedures for administrative staff,
* Sampling guidelines for official controls,
* Guidebook for granting exceptions regarding bio-seeds,
* Guidebook for supervising,
* Guidebook for registration of operators,
* Guidebook for Control bodies,
* Register of controls,
* Plan of controls,
* Training materials,
* Lists of attendance,
* Photos.

### ****Output No. 2: Operational system for unified approval of inputs to organic farming****

Detailed analyses and assessment, subsequent draft of functional system for the authorisation of inputs approved within organic farming will be the first step. Secondly, the unique methodology for assessment of agricultural inputs approved for in organic farming will be set up; this will include rules for fertilizers, plant protection products (PPPs) and organic seeds including setting the rules for approval of the use of conventional seeds. Further elaboration and implementation of the lists of approved inputs within organic farming will be provided; this activity will consist of elaboration and implementation of three individual databases, i.e. for fertilizers, plant protection products and organic seeds. The lists will be published and available online.

The transmission of expert know-how will be assured through advising and coaching sessions in the course of the whole project, via seminars and workshops, and will be supported by study visits to the Czech Republic.

**Activity 2.1. Setting up the rules for the assessment of agricultural inputs approved for in organic farming**

Firstly, this activity includes detailed analyses and assessment and a subsequent draft of functional system for the authorisation of inputs approved for in organic farming. Secondly, a unique methodology for the assessment of agricultural inputs approved for organic farming will be set up; this will include rules for fertilizers, plant protection products and organic seeds including drafting the rules for the approval of the use of conventional seeds.

**Activity 2.2. Elaboration and implementation of updated lists of approved inputs in organic farming**

The activity includes elaboration and implementation of the lists of approved inputs in organic farming. This activity will consist of elaboration and implementation of three individual databases, i.e. for fertilizers, plant protection products and organic seeds. The lists will be published and available online.

**Activity 2.3. Advice and coaching sessions, sharing of experience by means of seminars, workshops and study visits**

The transmission of expert know-how will be assured by advising and coaching sessions in the course of the whole project, via seminars and workshops, and supported by study visits to the Czech Republic.

**The assumptions for successful realisation of the above mentioned activities** **are:**

* Passing of the proposed methodology,
* Agreement of concerned state institutions.

**Objectively verifiable indicators of this result are as follows:**

* Regularly updated operational lists of approved inputs in organic farming (100% updating in compliance with EU rules) (4Q/2019)

**The following will serve as sources of verification:**

* Approved methodology,
* List of approved inputs.

The implementing local party for this output will be the State Centre for Certification and Approval of Phytosanitary Products and Fertilizers. All outputs of the activities will be submitted to the CzDA as annexes of the interim report. The main outputs are as follows:

* Unique methodology for the assessment of agricultural inputs approved for organic farming,
* Up-dated lists of inputs (fertilizers, plant protection products) published online,
* List of bio-seeds published online,
* Training materials,
* Lists of attendance,
* Photos.

### ****Output No. 3:**** Strengthened competency of local laboratory in the field of organic farming

This output will cover laboratory activities specialized in the field of tracing analyses of pesticide residues and other substances not authorized in organic production.

**Activity 3.1 Strengthening the laboratory regarding identification of pesticide residues in organic farming**

By strengthening the competency of the local laboratory in the field of organic farming, not only the state administration but also the private stakeholders will have the possibility to use the capacity of the local laboratory. In addition, frauds, i.e. usage of unauthorised inputs will be discovered and eliminated. As a positive effect of this support, the local laboratory will be able to lower the costs of testing (local laboratory in comparison with external ones).

Within the process of strengthening the laboratory’s competency to identify pesticide residues in organic farming, first, detailed analyses and assessment of the compatibility of work procedures with the EU standards have to be conducted. Secondly, elaboration of the methodology for sampling in organic farming and for interpretation of the results will be provided. There is a need to define the procedure for the determination of pesticide residues in the samples from the controls in organic farming in compliance with the scope of the Registry of authorized substances in Moldova and with a list of unauthorized substances based on the previous cases and investigations and to implement it into practice. Activities for the determination of pesticide residues in products grown in organic farming will cover:

* Harmonisation of the scope of analytes with the current scope of pesticide residues according to the COMMISSION IMPLEMENTING REGULATION (EU) 2016/662 of 1 April 2016 concerning a coordinated multiannual control programme of the Union for 2017, 2018 and 2019 to ensure compliance with maximum residue levels of pesticides and to assess the consumer exposure to pesticide residues in and on food of plant and animal origin,
* Training in the selected methods of determination of pesticide residues (e.g. Single residue methods),
* Updating (or defining, if needed) the procedure of validation of methods for pesticides analysis with identification limits lower than 0.01 mg/kg in required matrices,
* Introduction of testing methods of at least 20 natural toxins (mycotoxins),
* Reviewing the sampling method for pesticide residues control for plant products to comply with the EU legislation,
* Verification of the correctness of the results via participation in Proficiency tests and comparisons of results with National Reference Laboratory Brno (Czech Republic) – at least 2 ring tests, and 5 comparative tests.

The strengthening of the laboratory will be achieved also by particular training activities focused on increased competitiveness:

* Ways to increase economical running of the laboratory,
* Ways to increase credibility of the laboratory,
* Ways to increase efficiency of laboratory workflow,
* Ways to revise the price list of laboratory analyses.

**Activity 3.2 Proposal and purchase of laboratory equipment**

Another significant activity will cover the purchase of necessary laboratory equipment. This will lead to increased efficiency and reduced test costs. It has to be based on mandatory analysis and carried out according to the EU legislation. Preliminarily, the air-conditioning and the nitrogen generator are planned to be obtained. The final recommendation for the purchase will be specified after a detailed analysis and assessment of the compatibility of work procedures with the EU standards.

A very important part of accomplishing this output will be the training of the lab personnel, focusing on the specifics of organic farming samples and interpretations of the results through advice and coaching sessions, sharing experience in the form of seminars, workshops and study visits to the Czech Republic (in particular the National Reference Laboratory). Altogether, approximately 8 laboratorians will be informed and 3-4 of them will be trained in specific methods.

**Activity 3.3 Financing the sampling and testing within the pilot state supervision and control**

As a support of the laboratory, the rest of activities will include the financing of pilot sampling including relevant laboratory analyses of organic farming enterprises, raw materials and organic foods during real organic farming official inspection system in Moldova. In cooperation with MAFI, there will be at least 10 organic farms (with different scope of production) selected for pilot testing and at least 100 samples will be taken and analysed. After the analysis, there will be at least 100 assessment reports.

**Activity 3.4 Advice and coaching sessions, sharing of experience by means of seminars, workshops and study visits**

The transmission of expert know-how will be assured by advising and coaching sessions in the course of the whole project, through seminars and workshops and supported by study visits to the Czech Republic. At least 10 laboratory staff members will be trained in Moldova and 5 persons in the National Reference Laboratory in the Czech Republic.

**The assumptions for successful realisation of the above mentioned activities are:**

* Availability of the qualified staff,
* System of official control in practice.

**Objectively verifiable indicators of this result are as follows:**

* Analyses of relevant pesticide residues in products grown in organic farming for the purposes of official control (at least 250 residues),
* 100% analyses required from official control and supervision performed (4Q/2019),
* Baseline 0%.

**The following will serve as sources of verification:**

* Reports from bilateral exchange of samples,
* Report from proficiency test,
* Results of testing,
* Official agricultural statistics.

The local partner for the implementation will be the National Centre for Verification and Certification of Vegetable Products and Soil (CARANTINA).All outputs of the activities will be submitted to the CzDA as annexes of the interim report. The main outputs are as follows:

* Training materials,
* Scope of analytes,
* Methods validation data,
* Report on participation in proficiency tests,
* Lists of attendance,
* Photos.

### ****Output No. 4:**** Established system for recommendation of organic agro-technological procedures, species and varieties

As for the recommendation of varieties, deep analysis of the current responsibilities and activities regarding recommendation of agro-technological procedures, species and varieties suitable for organic farming has to be carried out. In close cooperation with Moldova State Variety Office and with the State research institute SELECTIA, the system and methodology for recommendation of agro-technological procedures, species and varieties suitable for organic farming will be established. As a practical part, pilot production and small-plot trials will be established.

Within variety testing, trainings on site, advice and coaching sessions, sharing of experience through seminars, workshops and study visits mainly focused on organic farmers will be organised. In particular, at least two “field days” per year will be organised along with seminars for experts.

**Activity 4.1. Establishment of a system for recommendation of agro-technological procedures, species and varieties suitable for organic farming**

In close cooperation with the Moldova State Variety Office and with the State Research Institute SELECTIA, the system and methodology for recommendation of agro-technological procedures, species and varieties will be established.

Recommendation will be established in two systems:

Pilot – plant trial (in case of Winter wheat for food industry),

Small – plot trial (in case of the rest of species).

**Activity 4.2. Establishment of site trials in order to recommend agro-technological procedures, species and varieties suitable for organic farming**

The in situ trials will be established in particular locations selected by the State Variety Office and the State Research Institute SELECTIA. The locations of Chisinau and Balti have been suggested.

In each location there will be at least 2 hectares, where the area for organic purposes shall be allocated. The special sowing plan will be established and particular species, chosen by partners (State National Variety Office and State research institute SELECTIA), will be tested. The suggested groups of plants are leguminous plants, grains and special species including also those suitable as inter crops and green manuring.

The equipment essential for technology of cultivation suitable for organic farming will be provided (e.g. weeding tine-harrow for mechanical weed control instead of chemical one).

**Activity 4.3. Advice and coaching sessions, sharing of experience by means of seminars, workshops and study visits**

Within variety testing, trainings on site, advice and coaching sessions, sharing of experience through seminars, workshops and study visits mainly focused on organic farmers will be organised. In particular, approximately two “field days” per year will take place with seminars and workshops for experts. Expected attendance is 40 participants per field day.

**The assumptions for successful realisation of the above mentioned activities are:**

* Sustainability of the established system through financing from national sources and establishment on state land,
* Convenient climatic conditions.

**Objectively verifiable indicators of this result are as follows:**

* Recommendation of organic agro-technological procedures and varieties suitable for organic farming in practice (2Q/2019),
* Accessible list of recommended agro-technological procedures, species and varieties suitable for organic agriculture for professional public (1Q/2021).

**The following will serve as sources of verification:**

* Report on trials

The main local partners for implementation will be the State National Variety Office and State Research Institute SELECTIA. All outcomes of the activities will be submitted to the CzDA as annexes of the interim report. The main are as follows:

* Guidelines for recommendation of varieties suitable for organic farming,
* List of recommended agro-technological procedures, species and varieties suitable for organic agriculture,
* Report on trials,
* Lists of attendance from field days,
* Photos.

# Implementation procedure and monitoring

In compliance with the EU legal regulations on organic farming, the Czech Ministry of Agriculture, as a competent authority, has delegated its control activities to UKZUZ namely in organic primary production. Thus, UKZUZ has been carrying out official controls in organic farming since 1/1/2010. Since that date, UKZUZ has also taken over delegated controls from private control bodies. These delegated controls are carried out for the State Agricultural Intervention Fund (SZIF). Inspectors of UKZUZ, according to their regional competency, perform official controls. Experts from the UKZUZ also prepare relevant legislation in cooperation with the Ministry of Agriculture. Besides the experts from UKZUZ, there will be other experts from relevant institutions and stakeholders from the field of organic farming involved (Ministry of Agriculture of the Czech Republic, Bioinstitut, experts from certification bodies, stakeholders etc.)

The Central Institute for Supervising and Testing in Agriculture (UKZUZ) is the main implementer within the project. Besides the experts from UKZUZ, experts from relevant institutions and stakeholders connected to organic farming (Ministry of Agriculture of the Czech Republic, Bioinstitut, experts from certification bodies, stakeholders etc.) will be involved.

The time schedule of the realisation of each activity will be a part of the project fiche, see Annex 2 – Plan of activities.

Every six months an interim report will be prepared and submitted to the CzDA, which will describe the situation of the project, including the activities performed. This report will be processed by UKZUZ in cooperation with beneficiary partners. The process of European recognition of the national accreditation body (MOLDAC) will be monitored.

At the end of the project, the Final Report will be prepared.

# Factors of quality and sustainability of project results

## Participation and beneficiaries’ ownership of the project

The project is based on the project identification of the topic submitted by the Ministry of Agriculture of Moldova (MAFI), which is the local partner of the project. The project was formulated with emphasis on the needs of the agricultural sector of Moldova in accordance with the development strategy of the country. The main partner in Moldova and the beneficiaries are mainly state institutions with an eminent interest in the project. Obtaining access to the EU market is important for the export of agricultural production. Moreover, it is a further step towards a progressive alignment with the EU, including harmonization of the Moldavian legislation with the *acquis communautaire.*

Besides the contracting authority (Czech Development Agency), it was mainly the Central Institute for Supervising and Testing in Agriculture (UKZUZ) that participated in the issue of identification and subsequent formulation of the project.

All relevant comments were incorporated into the project document. Formulated project outcomes are based on identified needs of beneficiaries and their options. The outcomes that will serve for the development of institutions and individuals involved in the project can be considered exclusive property of the beneficiaries. The emphasis on active participation of the partners and beneficiaries in all phases of the project allows the beneficiaries to identify and articulate their needs and consequently influence the content of project activities in a significant way. Thus, it creates the preconditions for the beneficiaries to identify with the activities and project outcomes better and to consider the project de facto their own.

## Side impacts (effects) of the project

Significant side impacts of the project include stabilization of the regulatory environment in the area, which allows foreign companies to invest in the production of organic farming and at the same time facilitates business development in this area within the state.

Of no lesser importance is the link to the actual organic production which due to the availability of better transparency and legitimacy will have greater possibilities of placement not only on Moldovan but also on international market.

## Social and cultural factors

In terms of cultural factors, the project reflects and respects the local environment and the existence of regions with special status (e.g. Transnistria). Despite the fact that the main part of the project must be implemented at the national level, some steps will be also consulted with the competent authorities and institutions of the regions. While using individual specifics, it shall be possible to come to a mutual conclusion.

In addition, seminars and workshops should be, if possible, held in the whole territory of Moldova.

## Equal access of women and men

Due to the traditional perception of women and men position in the territory, this matter will be dealt with very carefully. Women will be involved in the project, whenever possible and as much as possible, but at the same time with respect to the local culture and traditions. Especially in the field of government, where women are significantly represented, their representation will be supported by their equal proportion together with men. During the project implementation, the principle of equal access for women and men will be applied.

## Appropriate technology

In case of purchase of the equipment, local conditions will be always taken into account to prevent its deterioration, or reduction of utilization.

## Impact on the Environment

Supporting the state administration within organic farming will surely have positive impact on the environment and will highly contribute to the concept of sustainable agriculture. It is generally accepted, that organic farming, when its main principles are respected, is more beneficial to natural resources than conventional farming.

According to the results of comparative research by the Swiss DOK (a project comparing biodynamic, organic and conventional agricultural systems) and numerous other studies, with the current level of knowledge, the following conclusions can be formulated:

Organic farming has bigger influence on protection of natural elements and landscape than conventional agriculture. Plant and animal biodiversity on arable land, permanent grassland, in field margins and neighbouring biotopes is more diverse in organic agriculture than in conventional agriculture. In addition, diversity of cultivated crops is more significant under organic management compared to the conventional one. A higher content of organic matter is found in organically farmed land compared to conventional land. An agro-ecosystem under organic management is often more diverse and, in relation to the method of farming, has a higher potential for protection against soil erosion. It can be said, that organic farming means less of a threat to surface and subsurface water and is therefore often recommended for protected water-source areas. The most problematic gases are carbon dioxide, nitrous oxide and methane. A number of studies prove that the level of carbon dioxide emissions per hectare can be as much as 50 % lower under organic farming, in comparison to conventional. Practically all published calculations show that surplus nutrients prove to be lower under the organic system of farming than under the conventional system. In addition, energy efficiency, calculated for both annual and perennial plants, is usually significantly higher in ecologically oriented enterprises.

From these brief references, it is obvious that organic agriculture, after evaluation of environmental indicators, can be labelled as a production system, which has fewer negative effects on the environment and resources than conventional agriculture.[[11]](#footnote-11)

## Economic and financial viability of the project

A functioning system of the state administration will be one of the prerequisite conditions for meeting the criteria for Moldova’s accession to the EU in agriculture. It is anticipated that the subsequent operation will be financed from the state funds of Moldova in the future.

## Management and organization

The main Czech promoter is the Central Institute for Supervising and Testing in Agriculture (UKZUZ), who will be responsible for the overall project coordination and communication with the local partners. The main project partners are the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Industry of the Republic of Moldova (MAFI), National Food Safety Agency of the Republic of Moldova (ANSA), Centre of Quarantine, Identification, Arbitration Expertise and Production Disinfection (CARANTINA), State Centre for Certification and Approval of Phytosanitary Products and Fertilizers, national certificate body and local partner within potential co-financing from USAID.

MAFI, which is the national authority responsible for official supervision within organic farming, will be responsible for the organization and coordination of the individual activities in the project site.

In all the phases of the project implementation, UKZUZ will closely cooperate with Moldovan partners, especially with MAFI. The Project Steering Committee, composed of representatives of all relevant organizations mentioned above, will be established. The Committee will meet quarterly and will be responsible for the proper monitoring of all ongoing activities and detailed planning of future activities or for any changes.

Trainings, workshops and all other activities (preparation of legislation, preparation of optimization of the state administration, preparation of methods, etc.) will be carried out mainly by the staff of the Central Institute for Supervising and Testing in Agriculture (RNDr. Jaroslav Staňa, Ing. Jiří Urban, Ing. Miroslav Florián, Ph.D., Ing. Martin Prudil, Ing. Pospíchalová), experts from the Czech Ministry of Agriculture, experts from Bioinstitut, experts from certification institutions and other relevant experts. Thanks to the wide range of experts coming from the government and experts, trouble-free coverage of all activities will be provided.

# Analysis of risks and assumptions

The most important general condition for successful implementation of the project, except for the absence of natural disasters, global economic or political crises, is a stable political situation in the project country and interest of the government in the establishment of a new system of the state supervision of organic farming that is common in the EU countries.

Individual project activities will be closely linked to the development of the capacity of the state institutions, coupled with their strengthening competencies, staffing will be important primarily for the policymaking and supervision (MAFI). However, if there is no significant increase of the staff within MAFI, some components of the newly introduced system will not be fully functional. To achieve the project goal the important assumption is that the national accreditation body (MOLDAC) will receive the certificate of European recognition.

# List of annexes of the project document:

Annex 1: Logframe matrix

Annex 2: Plan of activities

Annex 3: Budget structure for Czech ODA project

1. Central Intelligence Agency, The World Factbook, Moldova. Dostupné z: <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/md.html> [29. 9. 2016] [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Poverty reduction and shared prosperity in Moldova – progress and prospects. Dostupné z: <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/168451467995808859/Poverty-reduction-and-shared-prosperity-in-Moldova-progress-and-prospects> [29. 9. 2016] [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. <http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/moldova/overview> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. BusinessInfo.cz, 2012. Interaktivní exportní profil zájmových zemí: Moldavsko. Dostupné z: <http://www.businessinfo.cz/cs/clanky/interaktivni-exportni-profil-zajmovych-zemi-moldavsko-21505.html#!> [31.7.2016] [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. National Bureau of Statistics of the Republic of Moldova 2012. Present population, as of January 1 by Districts and cities and Years. Dostupné z:<http://statbank.statistica.md/pxweb/Dialog/view.asp?ma=POP0110_EN&ti=Present+population,+as+of+January+1+by+Districts+and+cities+and+Years&path=../quicktables/EN/02%20POP/POP01/&lang=3> [23. 7. 2013] [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Moldova 2020. National Development Strategy: 7 Solutions for Economic Growth and Poverty Reduction, s. 8. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Zásady zahraniční rozvojové spolupráce po vstupu ČR do EU. Dostupné z: http://www.businessinfo.cz/files/archiv/2005/070628\_zasady\_zrs.doc [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Koncepce zahraniční rozvojové spolupráce České republiky na období 2010-2017. Dostupné z: http://www.mzv.cz/jnp/cz/zahranicni\_vztahy/rozvojova\_spoluprace/koncepce\_publikace/koncepce/koncepce\_zrs\_cr\_2010\_2017.html [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Development Cooperation Strategy 2010-2017. Dostupné z: <http://czechaid.cz/wpcontent/uploads/2016/09/Development_Cooperation_Strategy_2010_2017.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Currently, a new programme for the period of 2018-2023 is being prepared. The focus on state administration is one of the stated goals. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Šarapatka, B., Urban. J. et al. (2009): Organic Agriculture, IAEI Prague, p. 338. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)