Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

PROJECT: STDF/PG/316

MTF/AZE/007/STF- STDF/PG/316 STRENGTHENING PHYTOSANITARY INSPECTION AND DIAGNOSTIC SERVICES IN AZERBAIJAN

FINAL REPORT

DECEMBER 2019

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PROJECT INFORMATION

Beneficiary
The State Phytosanitary Control Service under the Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Azerbaijan (SPCS)
The State Customs Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan (SCC)
Azerbaijan Food Safety Agency (AFSA)

Project number and title
MTF/AZE/007/STF- STDF/PG/316
Strengthening Phytosanitary Inspection and Diagnostic Services in Azerbaijan

Budget
Total project value: USD 1 120 000
Approved STDF contribution: USD 1 120 000
Disbursed STDF contribution (i.e. during the project lifetime): USD 1 120 000

Period of implementation
February 2016-December 2018

Implementing Agency
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

Partners
This refers to key institutions (national, regional and/or international) co-implementing the project or having been formally recognized to play a key role in its implementation.

The Government of Azerbaijan
The World Bank's Agriculture Competitiveness Improvement Project (ACIP II)
The State Plant Protection Service of Latvia
All-Russian Plant Quarantine Centre (VNIIKR)
International Maize and Wheat Improvement Centre (CIMMYT)
The Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock of Turkey
Administration of the Republic of Slovenia for Food Safety, Veterinary Sector and Plant Protection

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACIP II: The World Bank's Agriculture Competitiveness Improvement Project

AFSA: Azerbaijan Food Safety Agency

ASAN: Azerbaijan Service and Assessment Network

BTOR: Back-to-office Report

CIMMYT: International Maize and Wheat Improvement Centre

IC: International Consultant

IPPC: International Plant Protection Convention

LoA: Letter of Agreement

LTO: Lead Technical Officer

SCC: State Customs Committee

SPCS: State Phytosanitary Control Service

UAIMS: Unified Automated Information Management System

VNIIKR: All-Russian Plant Quarantine Centre

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Phytosanitary measures are both the basic and the most important instruments of a country in terms of preventing the introduction and spread of pests, and ensuring environmental and food safety at national level. In addition, such measures support the quality of production and improve the image of a country in the eyes of international counterparts who are willing to trade. After gaining independence, Azerbaijan paid great attention to the development of a strong plant protection organization and the State Phytosanitary Control Service (SPCS) was established under the Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

The mandate for the SPCS was determined as ensuring the phytosanitary safety of the Republic of Azerbaijan with regard to the import, manufacture, storage and processing of plants and plant products. The service carried out the centralized administration of plant protection and certification in the country through the control of plants and plant protection products, the gathering and dissemination of information and the setting of standards and methodologies for inspection. The SPCS carried out the testing and analysis of plants and plant products through the Republican Quarantine and Examination Centre (with three regional laboratories), the Republican Toxicology and Quality Control Centre (with three regional laboratories) and the Republican Plant Protection Centre (with 57 regional plant protection centres and 17 mobile plant protection groups). However, SPCS lacked capacities (both qualified staff and equipment) to perform the responsibilities under its mandate at the level required by international standards.

The State Customs Committee (SCC) was responsible for the clearance of imported and exported products and ensuring that the quarantine inspection and laboratory diagnostics of regulated articles within plants and plant products were carried out by the SPCS and that the required documentation was complete. The SCC also had phytosanitary inspectors who conducted surveillance of imported materials at border points.

In 2018, the Government of Azerbaijan established the Azerbaijan Food Safety Agency (AFSA); which was tasked with a broad mandate in the field, including the responsibility of providing phytosanitary services and protection within the country. AFSA has taken over the responsibility of phytosanitary-controlled quarantine facilities and plant quarantine materials to detect harmful organisms in a timely manner; detecting, conserving, neutralizing and re-processing proven plants, plant products, pesticides, biological preparations, agrochemicals and other plant protection products or taking appropriate measures to eliminate them; arranging and carrying out the registration of plant protection products and agrochemicals; and investigating the phytosanitary situation in the country and carrying out plant protection measures to control the entry of plant pests, diseases and herbicides. The responsibility of inspections conducted at border points has also being transferred to AFSA, with AFSA taking over inspections at Haydar Aliyev Airport and carrying out the secondary and more detailed inspections for materials identified as carrying potential risks by customs agents. With the transfer of key responsibilities related to phytosanitary control, AFSA became one of the main project beneficiaries.

Project STDF/PG/316, "Strengthening Phytosanitary Inspection and Diagnostic Services in Azerbaijan", aimed to support the beneficiary organizations in three areas: the inspection of imported plants and plant products; certification for their exports; and phytosanitary laboratory diagnostics. The project was approved by the STDF Working Group on 15 October 2013 for a total contribution of USD 1 120 000 and

the contract was finalized on 31 July 2014. Following the endorsement of the Government of Azerbaijan, the project started the implementation of activities on February 2016 and, at the October 2016 meeting, the STDF Working Group endorsed an extension of the project until the end of August 2018, to accommodate a project duration of 30 Months. On August 2018, the STDF Working Group endorsed another no-cost extension to the project until the end of December 2018, so that the project could accommodate the changing needs related to the establishment of AFSA.

During project formulation, risks such as communication problems among beneficiary organizations, a lack of additional funding and the limited number of qualified staff, were considered. As a result of project implementation, a number of capacity-building activities, both in Azerbaijan and abroad, helped to build a roster of qualified inspectors for import inspection (40 from SPCS and 20 from SCC), for export certification (80 from SPCS) and laboratory technicians (17), while the provision of modern equipment was expected to support the effective application of the knowledge acquired. With changes in staff and multiple rounds of training, which also provided opportunities for the new staff to participate, more than 150 experts benefited from the capacity-building activities provided by the project. In addition, the preparation of 12 laboratory diagnostic protocols, 17 operational procedures for the phytosanitary laboratory and 14 operational procedures for the control of imported/exported plants and plant products, as well as the strengthening of the reference collection of the phytosanitary laboratory, will serve as a basis for proper functioning of the system.

As mentioned above, with the transfer of phytosanitary control functions to AFSA, timely support during the most critical period of its formation was provided by FAO. This support, which included high-level consultations from international experts, the involvement of AFSA staff in training/workshops, and the provision of live and distance technical advice, was greatly appreciated by the management of AFSA and paved the way for a close collaboration between the newly established agency and FAO. It was also of critical importance as other donors and international organizations, such as the World Bank, chose to take a more cautious approach and interrupted their activities until the reorganization arrangements were finalized and the new structures became clear. The engagement and the support that FAO was able to provide during this crucial period, effectively ensured an awareness of international standards while establishing the new structures and procedures. This led the Agency to consider FAO a strategic partner and to request further technical assistance in other fields as well, to which FAO responded by providing additional technical support through the Technical Cooperation Project TCP/AZE/3703. This project aimed to provide advisory services to AFSA, facilitate discussions between AFSA and other line ministries during the institutional reform process and strengthen AFSA's capacity. The specific issues to be addressed included support on food law and secondary regulations, advisory support to the AFSA decision-making, cross border controls and capacities for food safety controls.

Overall, the project provided infrastructural and capacity development support to achieve a strengthened phytosanitary control system aimed at providing a high level of inspection and diagnostic services to maintain the phytosanitary protection required for agricultural production and ecosystems in the country. The improved capacities and practices are expected to reduce the potential impacts of phytosanitary risks on agriculture and the environment and to facilitate international trade.

As a result of the activities conducted by the project between February 2016 and December 2018, the National Phytosanitary Control System was strengthened in three fields: (i) inspection of imported plants and plant products; (ii) certification of exported plants and plant products; and (iii) phytosanitary laboratory diagnostics. As listed above, the project significantly contributed to the creation of a roster of experts, both inspectors (140 in total) and laboratory staff (10 in total), provided the current services with modern equipment, including laboratory equipment, inspector kits, computers and other minor items. In addition, it created a methodological basis on the different aspects of phytosanitary control, particularly operational procedures on import/export control and diagnostic services, developed the skills of management staff and established relations between different governmental bodies, as well as contacts between the national authorities in Azerbaijan and their counterparts in other countries.

A core lesson learned is the importance of the structural organization of phytosanitary management in the country. The organizational rearrangements in the field have created difficulties in ensuring the continuity of the capacities that have been built. The sustainable improvement of phytosanitary control and protection depends on institutional structures that can support, coordinate and ensure the quality of inspections and diagnostic practices. The development of guidelines and procedures under the project will contribute to the strengthening of the institutional structure and consistency of procedural processes.

Another important dimension of ensuring the consistency and sustainable improvement of phytosanitary services is to retain qualified staff in place and to have them supervise and provide on-the-job training to the newly recruited staff, so that the capacities developed are sustained within the field and increased capabilities are disseminated. It is important to promote self-improvement, acknowledge and award professional competency.

2 BACKGROUND

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Quarantine Service of Azerbaijan was established as a department under the Ministry of Agriculture. In the formative years of independent Azerbaijan, the funding allocated was not sufficient for the Plant Quarantine Service to perform its duties effectively. The situation improved as a result of the successful implementation of the FAO project TCP/AZE/3201 to strengthen the phytosanitary service in 2002-2004. Azerbaijan has since become active in the phytosanitary area, participating consistently in annual key meetings of the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC), the European and Mediterranean Plant Protection Organization and the European Commission. However, despite the improvements made over the past ten years, SPCS was still faced by numerous challenges in its ability to implement effectively its mandate in plant health.

In order to realize the single window service provision approach, a computerized import permit system was established to regulate the import of plants and other goods. The permits were issued only at the main SPCS office. SCC also developed a computerized system, which involved providing SCC pre-border regional offices equipped with quarantine laboratories with the means to record the imported products and was aimed at reducing the risks associated with imported plants and plant products after customs clearance. The system that was initially established was called VAIS (single automated information system). The system was integrated between the State Customs Committee and the State Phytosanitary Control Service under the Ministry of Agriculture. After the transfer of responsibilities to AFSA, the Agency established the AQTIIS (Azerbaijan Food Safety Information System) based on VAIS. The system

currently includes records on phytosanitary, veterinary and food safety trends and is integrated with the State Customs Committee. There are plans to integrate the system with other governmental bodies and agencies as well.

The principal challenge to be addressed by this project was "the lack of capacity by SPCS to ensure the phytosanitary security of imported/exported consignments of regulated articles, particularly the detection and diagnosis of plant quarantine pests". Regional inspection points were contemplated in national legislation; these could consist of places designated by SPCS as points for the further inspection of high-risk commodities or consignments. SCC would cooperate with SPCS by informing it of consignments that were suspect and that required intervention. These regional points might include diagnostic facilities or treatment facilities to ensure the effectiveness of trade flows (import and export). The precise operation of these authorized points requires coordination and agreement among SPCS, SCC and other relevant bodies in Azerbaijan.

The formulation of the project was, thus, supported by the SPCS under the Ministry of Agriculture and the SCC as well. FAO continued to work with the two institutions during the project, including the initial extension that was granted by the STDF Secretariat on October 2016, which took into consideration that project activities had only started in February 2016, following the approval of the Government of Azerbaijan. In 2018 significant institutional changes were carried out, particularly related to phytosanitary control. The Government established AFSA, which subsequently took over some of the main functions of SPCS, such as the inspection of imported plants and plant products and certification of those to be exported, as well as diagnostic services. Taking into consideration these changes, it was important to support AFSA at the earlier stages in order to ease the transitional period. During this period the project started to work together with AFSA as well, including the extension period until the end of December 2018, which was endorsed by the STDF Secretariat on August 2018, in order to accommodate the changing needs related to the organizational, institutional and coordination arrangements in the field of phytosanitary control.

The project aimed to ensure that the proper regulatory safeguards were instituted, either through initial controls or through additional mechanisms, in order to reduce the potential impacts of phytosanitary risks on agriculture, the environment and the economy. The overall objective was the improved provision of inspection and diagnostic services by the authorized bodies in order to maintain the necessary level of phytosanitary protection for agricultural production and to preserve the ecosystems in the country.
To achieve this objective, the project team established three outputs during the inception phase, as follows:

I. Pest diagnostics service strengthened

- Central Plant Quarantine Laboratory equipped
- SPCS and relevant SCC staff professionals, including laboratory experts, trained in the field of pest diagnostics
- Standard documented operational procedures for laboratories, including sampling and diagnostic protocols, developed
- Collection of reference samples required for pest diagnostics created

- Strategic plan for the improvement and development of Central Plant Quarantine Laboratory and diagnostic capacity approved

II. Management of import regulatory system improved
- Capacity for inspection and pest risk reduction improved at border points
- Priority procedures written and distributed
- Inspectors trained in import control procedures
- Language and management skills of the authorized staff in the field improved

III. Pre-border inspection and export certification system in Azerbaijan improved
- SPCS inspectors trained in export certification
- Computerized database on import requirements of importing countries created
- The necessary documented procedures for export certification developed

The original project beneficiaries (until the end of 2017) were management and technical inspection and pest diagnostic staff of SPCS and SCC responsible for the management of the phytosanitary system in Azerbaijan. Secondary beneficiaries of the project were producers and farmers, in terms of the expected reduction in costs for the eradication or management of quarantine pests and leading in turn to a positive impact on the environment and ecology as a whole. Other beneficiaries included exporters of plants and plant products and the trading partners of the Republic of Azerbaijan as the result of an increase in the confidence of its ability to ensure the phytosanitary security of exported consignments. AFSA was added to the list of the main beneficiaries in 2018 (after taking the key responsibilities over from SPCS).

The abovementioned log-frame was slightly revised during later stages of the project, as follows:
- The format of the log-frame was slightly modified in December 2016 and shared with the STDF Secretariat. In the document, the project outputs were titled as outcomes. The entries in the reporting framework have thus been retitled as Output 1, 2 and 3 and the items under each of the outputs as Activities. The indicators were also improved and the targets were set out clearly.
- The original list of equipment mentioned in Annex 3 of the Project Document was revised in 2016 and in 2018, based on the actual needs of SPCS and AFSA. A constant process of consultations with the international consultants (ICs) was beneficial in determining the final needs of the laboratory to enable it to operate at the level required by international standards. The laboratory management and staff were not familiar with some of the equipment proposed, but had an opportunity to investigate its use and benefits during study tours, leading them to appreciate the benefit of having the capacity to operate such machinery in order to be able to deliver more effective and better-quality results. The STDF Secretariat was informed of this in the respective project progress reports.
- The form of the training to improve management skills was diversified to include study tours for the management staff of the beneficiary organizations and to address the most immediate needs of the management staff appointed responsible for operating the new structure related to plant protection. Study tours were organized to countries with strong phytosanitary systems for the management staff of AFSA[1], SPCS and SCC, for inspectors and for the laboratory staff of Baku

[1] The Agency has hired new senior level staff who need capacity-building in the phytosanitary control area.

Regional Experimental Laboratory No. 2 of the Food Safety Institute[2]. Training in presentation skills and risk communication was also provided.

- A no-cost project extension until the end of 2018 was requested so that the new management of AFSA could be involved in the training and the emergent needs of the Agency could be identified. The official request was sent to the STDF Secretariat in July 2018 and a project extension until 31 December 2018 was granted.
- Output 3.2 "Computerized database on import requirements of importing countries created" was achieved through cooperation between SPCS and SCC in 2017. A Unified Automated Information Management System (UAIMS) was developed by SPCS. In addition to the originally planned system/database of requirements of importing countries, the creation of an E-certification system to facilitate export certification and international trade, as well as to create a modern Web site for SPCS, was considered. The STDF Secretariat approved these activities in February 2018. However, the establishment of AFSA and the transfer of the key responsibilities of SPCS to the Agency delayed the plans. AFSA expressed a preference for developing new modules/additions for services such as E-certification and the registry of producers and exporters in order to integrate them into the current one-window state certification system.

3 PROJECT GOAL

The project aimed to ensure that proper regulatory safeguards were instituted, either through initial controls or through additional mechanisms, in order to reduce the potential impact of phytosanitary risks on agriculture, the environment and the economy. The overall project objective was the improved provision of inspection and diagnostic services by SPCS, SCC and AFSA to maintain the necessary level of phytosanitary protection for agricultural production and ecosystems in the country.

4 PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION AND MANAGEMENT

Overall, most of the envisaged project activities were successfully implemented during the project.

- A plan on the modernization of the diagnostic laboratory was prepared in 2016.
- The Republic Quarantine Expertise Centre of SPCS and, subsequently, Baku Regional Experimental Laboratory No. 2 of the Food Safety Institute were provided with modern laboratory equipment in 2017-2018 (a list of major equipment is included in Annex 5).
- Sixty inspectors and 17 laboratory staff members were trained in basic inspection and pest diagnostics during sessions held in June 2016, April 2017 and June 2018; as well as through study tours to Latvia in October 2016, July-August 2017, October-November 2017 and December 2018; to Russia in March 2017; to Turkey in April-August 2017; and to Slovenia in December 2018.
- Twelve laboratory diagnostic protocols and 17 operational procedures for laboratory diagnostics were prepared in 2016-2018. These were approved by AFSA in 2018.
- The reference collection of Baku Regional Experimental Laboratory No. 2 of the Food Safety Institute was strengthened by the project through the provision of 25 samples of pests/harmful organisms.

[2] Previously, the Republic Quarantine Expertise Centre. It was transferred to the Food Safety Institute on 20 June 2018.

- Management-level staff of SPCS, SCC and, subsequently, AFSA participated in study tours to Latvia in October 2016, Turkey in May 2017 and Slovenia in December 2018.
- A strategic plan for the improvement and development of the Central Plant Quarantine Laboratory and diagnostic capacity of Azerbaijan was developed in 2017 and updated in 2018.
- Sixty inspectors were trained in the phytosanitary control of imported plants and plant products through respective training sessions held in May 2016, June 2017, and May 2018.
- Eighty inspectors were trained in various aspects of export certification through training sessions held in September 2016, September 2017 and November 2018.
- Sixty inspector kits were procured for SPCS (20 kits[3]) and SCC (40 kits) in January 2018, to be used in training sessions and during the daily work of inspectors.
- Office equipment, including three computers, printer, photo camera and projector (see Annex 5), were procured for SPCS in June-August 2016.
- A design of the inspection point in Khachmaz, based on a mission of the IC in April 2017, was prepared by FAO.
- Language courses were provided for 20 staff members of SPCS/AFSA and SCC in 2016-2018. Of these, 13 successfully finalized the course, while four reached Level B (three intermediate and one upper-intermediate) of English proficiency.
- The establishment of the UAIMS in SPCS was technically supported by international experience gained through the study tours to Latvia in October 2016 and to Turkey in May 2017, and through discussions with FAO consultants throughout project implementation. The system was established by SCC in January-March 2017. Subsequently, AFSA was supported by consultations on the establishment of the new system, integrated into the one-window electronic platform for state-provided services.
- Operational procedures on various aspects of the control of imported and exported plants and plant products (14 procedures), as well as a tomato export certification programme, were prepared in 2017-2018.

The Head of the SPSC served as the National Focal Point in facilitating the implementation of the project. After AFSA's assumption of duties and responsibilities in the Phytosanitary field, the National Focal Point was also re-appointed by the Government of Azerbaijan as the head of plant health department in AFSA. The FAO recruited a Project Manager, who served together with Administrative and Operational Support from the FAO Partnership and Liaison Office in Azerbaijan and the technical supervision of the Lead Technical Officer and other relevant Technical Officers in FAO Head Quarters, the Chief Technical Advisor and the Funding Liaison Officer as the members of the Project Task Force to manage project implementation.

Agreements were carried out with the State Plant Protection Service of Latvia, the All-Russian Plant Quarantine Centre (VNIIKR), the International Maize and Wheat Improvement Centre (CIMMYT), the Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock of Turkey, the Administration of the Republic of Slovenia for Food Safety, Veterinary Sector and Plant Protection for the organization of study tours in specialized fields of phytosanitary controls in each of the abovementioned countries.

[3] The number of inspector kits given to SPCS was smaller than that given to SCC, as SPCS had been provided with similar bags under the TCP/AZE/3201 project, implemented in 2002-2004.

Monitoring was conducted by the project team, under the supervision of the FAO Representative in Azerbaijan, who acted as the Budget Holder for the project and the Funding Liaison Unit at the FAO HQ. The Monitoring was done on the basis of the Logical Framework Matrix and progress reports with information on the level of achievement on each of the indicators compared, against the intended targets, were prepared and submitted to the donor's review.

5 PROJECT OBJECTIVE, OUTPUTS AND ACTIVITIES

5.1 Project objective

The project aimed to ensure that proper regulatory safeguards were instituted, either through initial controls or through additional mechanisms, to reduce the potential impacts of phytosanitary risks on agriculture, the environment and the economy. The overall project objective was the improved provision of inspection and diagnostic services to maintain the necessary level of phytosanitary protection for agricultural production and ecosystems in the country.

Before the launch of the project, one of the problems was cooperation and information exchange between SPCS and SCC. As there was no active communication or common action on import inspections between the two services there was a lack of coordination with regard to the protection of the agricultural sector and the environment against the introduction and spread of new plant pests. To prevent the possible introduction and spread of new pests in the country, a large amount of effort and resources was required. Within the framework of the project, experts on diagnostics, inspectors and managers from all related bodies were engaged in the activities related to import inspection. Common training in pest diagnostics and theoretical training, in the form of both lectures and group work, were carried out. There were also practical training events and study trips to other countries such as Latvia, Turkey and Slovenia. The decision to involve all services in joint training activities contributed to the improvement of collaboration among the responsible bodies (SPCS, SCC and AFSA) at the level of both inspectors and managers. As a result of the improved cooperation between the services and the improved skills of inspectors and diagnosticians, new quarantine pests [such as Callosobruchus maculatus Fabricius, Colorado potato beetle (Leptinotarsa decemlineata Say), Citrus acne (Dialeurodes citri Ashmead)] were detected and diagnosed and 44 infested consignments were rejected in 2017 and 28 of them were rejected in 2018. This brought an invaluable benefit to the agriculture sector and environment of Azerbaijan. An improvement in phytosanitary status strengthens confidence among trading partners and increases export potential.

Improved cooperation between exporters and the Government's inspection structure (first with SPCS and then with AFSA, which has taken over the functions of SPCS, as well as a significant number of the responsible staff) can be mentioned as an additional example. Before the launch of the project there were no common meetings and seminars and, as a result, exporters did not understand the importance of phytosanitary certification and were not informed routinely about import requirements. Azerbaijani export potential was thus not utilized at its full potential. In response to this, the project initiated a tomato export certification programme and organized seminars for exporters.

Improved export potential benefits the whole of Azerbaijani society as exporters received knowledge regarding import requirements for tomato-growing and certification, and the phytosanitary authorities had an opportunity to address and inform exporters and producers directly. Fruit and vegetable producers and exporters appreciated the start of this cooperation, which is now practised not only in Baku but also in other regions, such as Ganja. Several national phytosanitary events were organized to reach producers and exporters directly, informing them of the structure for certification, establishing closer relations and receiving feedback on the issues and challenges that are faced in the field.

5.1.1 Output 1: Pest diagnostics service strengthened

The plan for the modernization of the Central Plant Quarantine Laboratory[4] was prepared in 2016 and reviewed in August 2017. The laboratory was provided with modern equipment and consumables (major equipment is listed in Annex 5) in 2016-2018.

[4] Indicated in the Project Document as noted. The title refers to the Republic Quarantine Expertise Centre which was reformed to Baku Regional Experimental Laboratory No. 2 of the Food Safety Institute in June 2018.

FAO provided a number of capacity-building activities for inspectors (136) and laboratory staff (17) on various aspects of pest diagnostics both in Azerbaijan and abroad. These include: three rounds (one for each year of project implementation) of training in basic inspection and pest diagnostics held in June 2016, April 2017 and June 2018 in Baku; on-the-job training for laboratory staff in August 2017 and June 2018; training in the validation of laboratory methods in June 2018; training trips of laboratory staff to Riga, Latvia in October 2016, July-August 2017, October-November 2017 and December 2018; training trips to Moscow, Russian Federation, in March 2017; training trips to Ankara, Eskishehir, and Bolu, Turkey, in April-August 2017; and training trips to Ljubljana, Slovenia, in December 2018.

Following cooperation, in the form of training trips and an in-country survey on soil-borne diseases conducted in April-August 2017, with the International Maize and Wheat Improvement Centre, a comprehensive report was prepared by CIMMYT and shared with FAO in January 2018. The report is expected to serve as a foundation for further research and monitoring of soil in Azerbaijan. Furthermore, 12 diagnostic protocols and 17 operational procedures for the phytosanitary laboratory were developed in 2017-2018.

The reference collection within Baku Regional Experimental Laboratory No. 2 was enriched by the addition of samples of pests and harmful organisms provided by VNIIKR (Trogoderma Granarium Everts, such as 5 sprays of Larvae fixed in 70% ethyl alcohol, a Microslide of epipharynx and larvae, a Microslide of larvae sensiles, 5 Imagos fixed in 70% ethyl alcohol, a Microslide of imago mentum, a Microslide of female imago sensils, a Microslide of imago wings, a Microslide of male imago genitals; Male imago genitals of Tuta Absoluta (Povonly) in a test tube, an Imago Microslide of Franliniella Occidentalis Pergande, 2 Zoosporangians microslades and dried potato tubers with derivatives on the petri cup of Synchytrium Endobiocticum (Schilbersky) Percival; a Microslide and a petri dish of infected wheat grain with Tilletia Indica Mitra; 2 petri dishes of Culture in Levan Media and a test tube of Erwinia Amylovora (Burrill) Winslow et al.; 2 test tubes of culture fixed in 30% glycerine and 2 test tubes of DNA of Ralstonia Solanacearum Race 1 (Smith) Yabuuchi et al.; a test tube of DNA of Xylella fastidiosa Wells et al.; a tube of Liofilated Isolate of Plum Pox Potyvirus; a test tube of Dry Cysts and a Microslide of Globodera Rostochiensis; a Microslide of Flobodera Pallida (Stone) Behrens; a Seed, herbarium material of Acroptilon Repens DC were delivered by the IC on pest diagnostics, Ms. Natalia Sherokolava; and 200 gr of Ditylenchus Destructor on Dehydrated potato sprout and 100 ml of Ditylenchus Dipsaci on Dehydrated Onioins delivered by *L'Agence nationale de sécurité sanitaire de l'alimentation, de l'environnement et du travail*, France in 2018).

Finally, the strategic plan for the improvement and development of the Central Plant Quarantine Laboratory and of diagnostic capacity was prepared by FAO consultants and approved by the Head of SPCS in 2017. This was further improved in 2018, on the basis of the current plans/vision of AFSA.

5.1.2 Output 2: Management of import regulatory system improved

The project focused on several training sessions for inspectors, with an emphasis on the control of imported plants and plant products. These were held in May 2016, June 2017 and May 2018, with the participation of more than 60 inspectors. In addition, training trips to Riga, Latvia, in 2016 and in December 2018, and to Antalya, Turkey, in May 2017 helped inspectors from SPCS, AFSA and SCC to broaden their vision on respective topics based on international experience.

Among other achievements in the area of the control of imported plants and plants products should be mentioned the preparation of the design for Khachmaz inspection point in April 2017, and numerous consultations between FAO, the World Bank and the beneficiary organizations.

In order to support the discussions between SPCS, SCC and AFSA in early 2018, the IC on import/export regulations, Mr. Ringolds Arnitis, organized a workshop on international phytosanitary regulations, rights, obligations and responsibilities for the management bodies of the three beneficiary organizations on 5 April 2018. In addition, AFSA was provided with online consultancy services during its establishment period in subsequent months. This helped AFSA to ensure a smooth transition of duties from SPCS and to avoid possible incongruities in the international trade and export of products from Azerbaijan.

In total, the project team developed 14 operational procedures in cooperation with representatives of SPCS and AFSA, as listed in Annex 3.

The procurement of 60 inspector kits (inspector bags with required inspection tools) for SPCS and SCC provided the inspectors of both beneficiary organizations with additional tools to be used during training sessions and in their daily activities. These kits were highly appreciated and the IC on import/export regulations noted in subsequent training a progressive improvement in the capacity of the inspectors as a result of the application of these kits and tools. During the closing workshop, the kits were described by counterparts as a major project contribution, indicating that organizations in the field will pursue the increased application and further supply of such kits.

Language courses for 20 (11 from January 2018) staff members of SPCS and SCC between October 2016 and December 2018 were among the activities provided for SPCS and SCC. Fourteen people successfully finalized the training, with three arriving at level B (intermediate) and one receiving an upper-intermediate certificate.

Training courses on project management, and the improvement of presentation and negotiation skills of management staff in the phytosanitary field had been planned from the outset of the project: the main contribution for the achievement of this target was the series of study tours held for management staff to Latvia, Turkey and Slovenia in 2016-2018 (described above). Such study tours were considered important because they allowed the management of the organizations to witness modern arrangements in place, and to better understand and apply the best international practices and standards in phytosanitary management in practice in other countries. They also provided a valuable opportunity for management staff at the newly established AFSA to discuss with their counterparts the challenges faced in coordinating control functions in a variety of fields and to establish an effective system for a single inspection and certification authority for all matters related to food.

Two training sessions on presentation skills were also provided to the management staff of all three beneficiary organizations on 20-21 November and 22-23 November 2018.

In addition, based on the needs expressed by AFSA senior management, an interactive and scenario-based risk communication training was provided to representatives from all related organizations in the field on 28-29 November 2019. The training was designed to increase the capacities of the officials in terms of the effective provision of information to the public, the discrediting of possible misinformation and the maintenance of credibility of the governing structure in times of crises, when public health and safety may be threatened.

The activities were implemented within the budget, although the reorganization in the field of phytosanitary services presented a major challenge in organizing the training meant for capacity

development at both management and technical levels. From the end of 2017, when the intended change was announced, until almost the last quarter of 2018, the details of organizational structure and the people who would be appointed to management positions for the long term were not clear. This delayed the finalization of procedures as well, as they were prepared in 2017 but had to be renewed according to the changes in the institutional structure and had to be cleared by the new managers who were to be appointed.

It is also of note that the volume of imported goods inspected rose from 113 887 tonnes in 2016 to 117 535 tonnes in 2017 and 120 476 tonnes in 2018.

5.1.3 Output 3: Pre-border inspection and export certification system in Azerbaijan improved

The capacities of national inspectors on export certification were strengthened through three rounds of training provided by the IC on import/export regulations, Mr. Ringolds Arnitis. The training sessions were held in September 2016 (in Baku, with a practical trip to Khachmaz region), in September 2017 (in Baku with practical visits to Meyveli and Keshle points of Absheron region) and in November 2018 (in Baku with a practical trip to Khachmaz region). The inspectors were also provided with an opportunity to observe international procedures on export certification during trips to Riga, Latvia, in October 2016 and December 2018 and to Antalya, Turkey, in May 2017. During these activities, the participating inspectors underwent theoretical and practical training in export certification and the IC had the opportunity to follow up on the experiences gained and to further improve the practices of the inspectors in the field, in coordination with the managers responsible for them.

UAIMS was developed in SPCS, with support from SCC, in 2017. In line with recommendations made by the IC on inspection points and the IC on import-export regulations, SPCS requested the establishment of an E-certification system, the registry module to UAIMS, which would further ease the work of SPCS and contribute to the improved monitoring of imported/exported plants and plant products. After receiving the consent of the donor in early 2018, the project started preparations to implement the re-designed activity. However, with the creation of AFSA and the transfer of the abovementioned responsibilities from SPCS to this entity, the plan had to be revised: in particular, the need for revision was linked with AFSA's intention to use the existing databases/systems of Azerbaijan Service and Assessment Network (ASAN) services[5] present in the country and to develop new modules/additions to the current system, such as E-certification and a registry of producers and exporters, to be integrated into one-window state certification systems.

The project team also prepared 14 operational procedures covering different areas of export certification: four of these were prepared in 2017 and approved by the Head of SPCS, while another six were finalized during the establishment of AFSA. The final four procedures were pending the approval of the AFSA management at the end of the project. The ten approved protocols have been printed and distributed to the inspectors working in the field.

[5] "ASAN service" centres are the entities that provide the services rendered by state bodies in an integrated and coordinated manner.

In addition, based on the request from SPCS in 2017 and the current needs of the country, the project organized two missions of the IC on phytosanitary issues (May 2017 and July 2018), which included the preparation of the tomato export certification programme, the presentation of the programme to stakeholders and the organization of a workshop on procedures of tomato export on 17-18 July 2018.

80 staff members were trained in laboratory diagnostics and identification of quarantine pests, 73 staff members at border points were trained in inspection and 84 staff members were trained in export certification. The activities were implemented in a timely manner and within the allocated budget. The continuity of the staff engaged in inspections presented a challenge, since because of the changes in the organizational structure; new and unexperienced staff were being recruited and the opportunity on building on previous trainings became limited for some of the participants.

6 CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

6.1 Gender

The project management team strived to ensure that all the staff of the beneficiary institutions received the same opportunities to access information, to be involved in the capacity-building activities of the project and to benefit from them. The counterparts were also encouraged to nominate women participants for training and other activities. Fifty-five of the total number of 199 participants of training/workshops/study tours were women. It is worth noting that most inspectors in Azerbaijan are men, while phytosanitary laboratory staff members are mainly women. Nevertheless, the project team made a significant effort to ensure the equal participation of the staff. It is also important to note that the availability of participants played a significant role in determining the participants of the training sessions.

6.2 Environmental aspects

Strengthened human capacities and the availability of modern equipment to identify and diagnose pests and harmful organisms will ensure a more efficient and effective control of plants and plant products imported into or exported from Azerbaijan. The trained staff will also contribute to land monitoring activities in the country. This should ensure an improvement in environmental protection against external and internal threats.

7 SUSTAINABILITY

The project aimed to achieve sustainable results based on the following aspects:

Capacity development

One of the main project targets was building national human capacities in the phytosanitary area. As a result, 150 local staff members of SPCS, SCC and AFSA were trained in phytosanitary regulations, international rights, obligations, responsibilities, the phytosanitary control of imported/exported plants and plant products, and laboratory diagnostics through capacity-building activities organized both in Azerbaijan and abroad. The availability of 140 trained inspectors and ten qualified laboratory experts will allow AFSA (as well as SPCS and SCC) to use their services to fulfil the responsibilities of the National Plant Protection Organization of Azerbaijan, as prescribed in international agreements and Azerbaijani legislation.

Improved coordination

The project initiated discussions and coordination among the three governmental bodies with responsibilities in the area of phytosanitary protection. FAO's expertise and the project provided a neutral ground for collaboration and open discussions. The project's activities encouraged heightened contact and communication among SPCS, SCC and AFSA, at both management and staff level. At the closing workshop, representatives from all three organizations acknowledged the importance of the newly established practices of coordination among them and, while recognizing the need for further improvements to ensure effective cooperation, the project was given credit for having provided the basis for this development.

Human Rights-based Approach (HRBA) – in particular Right to Food and Decent Work

The selection of the districts in which training sessions were held and the beneficiaries to be involved was carried out in a transparent manner, in agreement with SPCS, SCC and AFSA. Participants of the training sessions received constant capacity-building support. AFSA possesses the list of participants of all training sessions and tours. During the reorganization in the field of phytosanitary control, it was also noted that the number of local experts working in this field was limited (in the context of the current needs of Azerbaijan). More staff needed to be hired and the capacity development provided by the project will serve as a basis for existing staff to train the new recruits. In general, a strong phytosanitary system is

expected to contribute significantly to a safe environment and the provision of safe food products, and to support the rights of Azerbaijani population to food and decent work.

Technological sustainability

The trained local experts and the modern equipment provided by the project will facilitate the further promotion/development of phytosanitary control in Azerbaijan, in accordance with internationally accepted rules, standards and procedures.

Economic sustainability

Effective and efficient phytosanitary control will ensure that imported/exported plants and plant products correspond to international and local standards as well as to the requirements of importing countries. It is expected that the number of possible notifications from other countries will be minimized, that the quality and pest-free status of Azerbaijani products exported to other countries will be ensured, and that trade with other countries will be supported and widened. Overall, a strong phytosanitary control system will further strengthen the position of Azerbaijan as an actor in international trade.

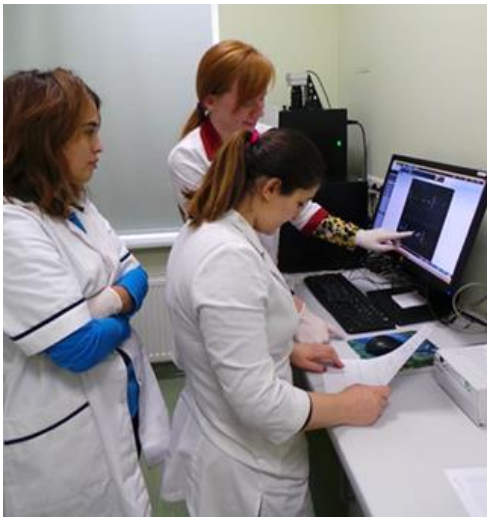
In addition, the increased capabilities of the local phytosanitary staff members will provide them with better chances to achieve higher-quality results, leading to greater appreciation of their work. Increased trade, in its turn, will create more demand for Azerbaijani plants and plant products, increasing the need for qualified staff to perform phytosanitary controls and for local farmers and companies to enhance their production. All these factors will contribute to strengthen Azerbaijan's economy in the future.

8 FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

The STDF contributed with USD 1 120 000 for the implementation of the project activities, in line with the funding agreement signed between FAO and the STDF on 31 July 2014. Following the late start of the project as a result of delays in the governmental approval process, in October 2016, the end date was moved to 31 August 2018. Based on the current needs of the country and the progress of the project, FAO requested a budget revision in October 2017; this was approved in February 2018. Subsequently, because of institutional changes in the phytosanitary control system of Azerbaijan that led to a period of uncertainty regarding the related governing structures, FAO requested a no-cost extension of the project until 31 December 2018. This was approved in August 2018.

9 LESSONS LEARNED

Throughout project implementation, several assumptions held true. The reduction of pest risks was made possible by the collaborative efforts of the beneficiary organizations: based on the existing legislation and division of responsibilities, SPCS focused on carrying out export certification, monitoring pests, ensuring plant health inside the country and conducting pest diagnostics in the laboratory, while SCC inspected the import of plants and plant products at the borders, with support from SPCS. Later, with the involvement of AFSA, all three organizations worked together to provide better services and maintain the phytosanitary situation in Azerbaijan. The establishment of AFSA and further support by the ACIP II project also contributed to addressing the limited funding with regard to the development of phytosanitary capacity.



The number of capacity-building activities conducted enabled the beneficiaries to work with qualified national staff using modern equipment. Pest diagnostics in the laboratory is particularly worthy of note. During the three-year project, the skills of experts in diagnostics were raised significantly from basic level. In such disciplines as nematology and mycology they are now able to work at the level of international standards.

During the reorganization of the governing structure in the field there was a risk that the capacity of those who had benefited from training might be lost. To avoid this, FAO shared the message with the management body of the Food Safety Agency with regard to the need to preserve the level of capacity achieved by the human resources available, and drew attention to the training/workshops/study tours organized under the project, sharing the lists of participants of all capacity-building activities for the Agency's consideration.

Finally, the language barrier still exists and its elimination for significant numbers of people requires an ongoing commitment and further training. The English language training courses organized by FAO for several experts in 2016-2018 were greatly appreciated, and the experts and management team members stated that they had significantly increased their capacities to be able to benefit from the international experience during the implementation of the project.

In addition, during the transition of the phytosanitary responsibilities to AFSA, the management of AFSA asked the project to provide continuous online consultancy services from the IC on import-export regulations to support changes in the export certification system, documentation flow and responsibilities of officials at different levels. The online support provided assisted the creation of an effective structure that fulfils the obligations prescribed by the IPPC and International Standards on Phytosanitary Measures. The structure for phytosanitary functions with a vertical integration chain of command was established in order to successfully protect the territory from the introduction and spread of pests and to ensure export phytosanitary certification.

Additional processes supported by the consultant included:

i) informing all Contracting Parties to the International Plant Protection Organization, the IPPC Secretariat in Rome and the European and Mediterranean Plant Protection Organization in Paris about changes in the official phytosanitary management structure in the country;

ii) preparing a new model of Phytosanitary Certificate and Phytosanitary Certificate for re-export and sending them to all National Plant Protection Organizations and Embassies by indicating their date of entry into duty as 1 July 2018;

iii) directly contacting the National Plant Protection Organizations of the largest trading partners, such as the Russian Federation;

iv) establishing the phytosanitary unit/department at the central level of AFSA, with clear functions, rights and obligations, particularly for international relations;

v) agreeing on the need to keep the National Phytosanitary Laboratory as a separate structure under the new Scientific Institute/Centre, to be used only for plant pest diagnostics. It was also proposed that the goal be set for the Laboratory to be accredited in five years through further strengthening; and

vi) considering the establishment of phytosanitary laboratories in regions, taking into account workloads and financial aspects. The importance of establishing a system for delivering samples was also discussed.

AFSA authorities expressed their gratitude for the support and recommendations provided during the establishment period, indicating that these had helped them to avoid any mistakes that may have challenged the credibility of the organization or have impeded a smooth transition of functions and staff. This process was highly valued with regard to maintaining international trade in a secure and efficient manner and to achieving the goal of increasing exports to key markets such as the Russian Federation.

The main elements of the project's success were:

- understanding the need for, and creation of, the methodological basis for phytosanitary operations (during both the inspection and the laboratory diagnostics);
- focusing on building national human capital instead of concentrating solely on the provision of the necessary equipment;
- providing national staff with modern equipment and inspection kits to ease its day-to-day work;
- supporting dialogue between beneficiary organizations and helping them to strengthen bonds with international counterparts; and
- establishing cooperation between government institutions and producers/exporters.

To sum up, the project covered critical gaps in the phytosanitary control system of Azerbaijan: a solid blend of human capital, cooperation and collaboration among institutions, along with modern equipment supported by the documented operational procedures corresponding to international standards, as planned, has successfully addressed the issues identified at the beginning of the project.

The main issues faced by the project team during implementation were connected to uncertainties linked with the establishment of AFSA and respective delays for ACIP II.

At the outset, it was planned that the STDF project would focus on capacity-building activities, and ACIP II, regarding the establishment of the completely new laboratory, including the procurement of the required equipment. However, by the end of 2016, it was noted that the Government had stopped the construction of the new laboratory and the activities of ACIP II were interrupted. In 2018, with the establishment of AFSA, the Government decided to establish the Food Safety Institute under AFSA, including Baku Regional Experimental Laboratory No. 2 (previously the Republic Quarantine Expertise Centre of SPCS); both projects thus had to adapt their work plans to current conditions.

In addition, the establishment of the computerized database on the import requirements of importing countries and the provision of training to improve management skills for the staff of SPCS, SCC and, later, AFSA could not be implemented during the establishment period of AFSA. Management skills were improved during the study tours made by SPCS, SCC and AFSA management to Latvia, Turkey and Slovenia with different organizational structures and functions, as well as presentation skills and crisis communication training events that were identified as immediate needs by the beneficiaries.

With regard to the computerized database on the import requirements of importing countries, the UAIMS was developed by SPCS in 2017. However, additional plans to create an E-certification system to facilitate export certification and international trade, as well as a modern Web site for SPCS, were put on hold with the establishment of AFSA. AFSA has stated that it intends to develop new modules/additions to the current systems in order to integrate services such as E-certification and a registry of producers and exporters into the one-window state service systems. Further information on the project results can be found at: http://www.standardsfacility.org/PG-316

10 RECOMMENDATIONS AND FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS

I. Establishment of the Baku Regional Experimental Food Safety Laboratory of AFSA. The WB-funded ACIP II planned to continue to support this action until 2020. Further training of the diagnosticians from the AFSA laboratory is needed in order to maintain the competence of the experts obtained during the project. Participation in international meetings and expert groups will provide additional recognition of the laboratory experts and results of import/export certification. The training plan for the technicians and the plan for purchasing the equipment should be followed. Forthcoming FAO projects can respond to the needs for capacity development in the future.

II. Development and approval by AFSA of the additional operational procedures and methodological documents on import/export control and phytosanitary diagnostics, based on the needs identified. The project created linkages between AFSA and producers, importers and exporters and this cooperation should continue. Regular meetings will be the sources of information sharing and would be useful to identify needs for new guidelines and diagnostic protocols. Closer cooperation with producers, importers and exporters will ensure information exchange and a better understanding of SPS matters.

III. Construction of modern inspection border points by AFSA, using the plan prepared by the STDF project for the Khachmaz inspection point. The inspection post in the most active export certification place will enhance export certification procedure, quality and security. The creation of such inspection points should be considered in other border points in Azerbaijan. However, this should be based on an analysis of the effectiveness of the investment in Khachmaz.

IV. Implementation of the tomato certification programme prepared by the project. The programme will increase phytosanitary security in tomato production and exports. Tomato growers and exporters will benefit from standardized operational procedures in the production and certification processes. Based on the outputs, similar export certification programmes and protocols could be developed for other agricultural products and export commodities, such as apple, pear and pome fruit.

ANNEX 1. LOGICAL FRAMEWORK

Results chain	Indicators	Baseline	End Value	If applicable/ follow-up action to be taken
Impact: To reduce the potential impacts of phytosanitary risks on agriculture, the environment and the economy	1. Crop yields 2. Number and spread of pests 3. The number of agricultural products per capita	1. 100 % 3. 8.19 tns	1. 108.99 % 3. 8.78 tns	
Project outcome: The improved provision of inspection and diagnostic services by the SPCS and SCC for maintaining the necessary level of phytosanitary protection for agricultural production and ecosystems in the country	1. Value and volume of exports 2. Volumes and rate of commodity inspection and regulatory pest diagnostics conducted	1. USD 335 892 2. # of expertise inspections: 10,434 # of Agrochemical tests.: 108	1. USD 585 473.9 2. # of expertise inspections: 41,048 # of Agrochemical tests: 9,092	

Results chain	Indicators				If not achieved, explain why	If applicable/ follow-up action to be taken
	Indicators	Baseline	End target (*expected value at project completion*)	Achieved		
Output 1: Pest diagnostics service strengthened	Number of examinations conducted monthly using modern laboratory equipment	0	45-50	50 (100%)		
	Number of personnel trained in laboratory diagnostics and identification of quarantine pests	0	60	80 (133%)		AFSA to seek more opportunities for capacity building of the staff, particularly through ACIP II
	Number of modernized laboratories	0	1	1 (100%)		
	Number of operational procedures and diagnostic protocols developed	0	27	29 (107%)		
	Number of pest species in collections of SPCS	533	600	558 (37%)	Phytosanitary Laboratories Network was investigated throughly in order to provide samples of pest species, but requested samples were not available. It became evident that the target set was unrealistically high	
	Number of strategic plan for diagnosis	0	1	1 (100%)		AFSA to follow up with any updates to be made to the strategic plan

Results chain	Indicators				If not achieved, explain why	If applicable/ follow-up action to be taken
	Indicators	**Baseline**	**End target (*expected value at project completion*)**	**Achieved**		
Output 2 (cont.): Management of import regulatory system improved	Number of trained inspectors at border	0	60	73 (122%)		AFSA to seek more opportunities for capacity-building of the staff, particularly through ACIP II
	Number of procedures developed and distributed	0	14	10 (71%)	Four procedures were developed but had not been approved by AFSA management at the end of the project	
	Number of SPCS and customs inspectors trained in inspection	0	60	73 (122%)		AFSA to seek more opportunities for capacity-building of the staff, particularly through ACIP II
	Number of staff trained in General English	0	10	14 (140%)		
	Number of trained specialists with B level of proficiency in English	0	4	4 (100%)		
	Number of staff provided with management skills training sessions	0	5	16 (320%)	Study tours were organized for management staff and presentation and risk communication skills training was conducted	
Output 3: Pre-border inspection and export certification system in Azerbaijan improved	Number of inspectors trained in export certification	0	80	84 (105%)		AFSA to seek more opportunities for capacity-building of the staff, particularly through ACIP II
	Number of computerized system developed and used by SPCS	0	1	0 (0%)	UAIMS was established in SPCS with support from SCC in mid-2017. FAO also focused on establishment of E-certification system and creation of modern Web site for SPCS. However, following its establishment, AFSA took over this activity, citing the need to adhere to its own vision for the certification of exported plants and plant products as well as the desire to integrate it into its own one-window electronic services already in place	AFSA to follow up with establishment/ improvement of the current E-certification system. ACIP II project could support this
	Number of export procedures established	0	7	13 (185%)	Of the 14 procedures developed, one is directly focused on imports and one is focused on exports. The remaining 12 have dimensions that deal with both imported and exported plants and plant goods	

ANNEX 2. CONTACTS LIST

Name, Surname	Position	Representing organization	Contact details
Khayala Dadashova	National Project Coordinator	AFSA, Head of Phytosanitary Department	+994507710076
Taleh Shamiyev	National Consultant	Baku Regional Test Laboratory	+994504170120
Damed Sultanov	Chief	Ministry of Agriculture, Plant Protection Centre	+994503660867
Arif Gasrmov	Chief	SPCS, PQS - Baku-Absheron region	+994557603131
Habil Gahramanov	Chief	SPCS, PQS - Yevlakh region	99450364-21s4
Mahammad Ibrahimov	Chief	SPCS, PQS - Shabran region	+994506472391
Tehmez Abilov	Inspector General	SPCS, PQS - Baku-Absheron region	+994503334820
Ilham Khutrayev	Chief	SPCS, PQS – Balakan region	+994519541010
Reshad Abdulzade	Inspector General	SPCS,PQS- Baku-Absheron region	+994559391939
Safar Aliyev	Chief	Chief	+994503640479
Alekperov Yusif	Chief	SPCS,PQS - Fizuli region	+994506461550
Ismailov Rovshan	Chief	SPCS,PQS -Tovuz resion	+994503714324
Mirdayanat Sultanov	Chief	SPCS, PQS - Bilesuvar region	+994552528812
Cavid Quliyev	Chief adviser in risk management sector	AFSA	Javid.guliyev@afsa.gov.az
Arif Aliyev	Landing specialist	AFSA	Arif.eliyev@afsa.gov.az
Parvin Idrisli	Chief consultant	Ministry of Agriculture	Parvin.idrisli@gmail.com
Namiq Qedirov	Leading consultant	Ministry of Agriculture	Namiq.1990.qadirov@gmail.com
Farid Mansurov	Leading specialist	AFSA	Farid.mansurov.92@gmail.com
Perviz Nasurullayev	Leading inspector	The State Customs Committee of Azerbaijan	pnesrullayev@gmail.com
Jafar Guluzade	Chief of transborder cooperation division	The State Customs Committee of Azerbaijan	055 403 93 99
Teymur Agayev	Chief	SPCS,PQS - Lenkaran region	Teymuragayev205@mail.ru
Irade Ibrahomova	Press secretary	Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources	Irada_ibrahimova@mail.ru
Sevda Allahverdiyeva	Leading consultant	Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources	Taxminq_sa@mail.ru
Orxan gahramanli	Consultant	Ministry of Agriculture	orkhangahramanli@yahoo.com
Parvin Idrisli	Senior consultant	Ministry of Agriculture	Parvin.idrisli@gmail.com
Aytan Pirverdiyeva	Specialist	Food Safety Institute	Aytan.pirverdiyeva@gmail.com
Ayaz Neymatli	Chief accountant	Agrosale LLC	+994502866170

ANNEX 3. DOCUMENTS PRODUCED DURING THE PROJECT

Document Title	Prepared by	Purpose/Information on	Date(s) of preparation/issue	No of pages
Project Progress reports				
First project progress report	Project team	Project progress, 28 February-31 August 2016	September 2016	9
Second project progress report	Project team	Project progress, 1 September 2016-28 February 2017	March 2018	11
Third project progress report	Project team	Project progress, 1 March 2017-31 August 2017	September 2017	17
Fourth project progress report	Project team	Project progress, 1 September 2017-28 February 2018	March 2018	17
Fifth project progress report	Project team	Project progress, 1 March 2018-31 August 2018	September 2018	18
Other Documents				
Strategic plan for development of the Republic Quarantine Centre under SPCS	National consultant on pest diagnostics	Strategy for development of Republic Quarantine Centre under SPCS	Approved on 7 March 2017	19
Back-to-office Report (BTOR)	Plant protection and production officer, FAO (Lead Technical Officer [LTO] of project)	Mission including information about the inception of the project	February 2016	11
BTOR	IC on import/export regulations (Project Team Leader)	Mission including information about the inception of the project	February 2016	5
BTOR	IC on pest diagnostics	Mission including information about the inception of the project	February 2016	5
BTOR	IC on import/export regulations (Project Team Leader)	Mission including training in import regulations for inspectors from SPCS1 and SCC2	May 2016	6
BTOR	IC on pest diagnostics	Mission including training in basic inspection and pest diagnostics for inspectors from SPCS and SCC	June-July 2016	14
List of Laboratory Equipment	IC on pest diagnostics with support of national consultant on pest diagnostics	List of laboratory equipment to be bought as per project Activity 1.2	July-August 2016	21
BTOR	IC on import/export regulations (Project Team Leader)	Mission including training in export certification for inspectors from SPCS and SCC	September 2016	6
List of Laboratory Equipment	IC on pest diagnostics with support of national consultant on pest diagnostics	List of the laboratory equipment to be bought as per project Activity 1.2	November 2016	22
Final Report by SPPS of Latvia	SPPS	Results of training trip of SPCS and SCC staff to Latvia to participate in training sessions in October 2016 as per Letter of Agreement (LoA)	December 2016	24
BTOR	Plant protection and production officer, FAO (LTO)	Mission including information on annual project activities assessment	December 2016	3

BTOR	IC on import/export regulations (Project Team Leader)	Mission including information on annual project activities assessment	December 2016	5
Final report highlighting the results of the training programme of VNIIKR	VNIIKR	Final report regarding provision of laboratory training sessions for experts from SPCS and SCC	March 2017	16
BTOR	IC on inspection control points	Mission results including schemes/plans for renovation works of the Khachmaz inspector point	April 2017	11
BTOR	IC on pest diagnostics	Mission results including training in basic inspection and pest diagnostics for inspectors from SPCS and SCC, held in SPCS	April 2017	18
Interim report by CIMMYT based on LoA	CIMMYT	Results of first part of training programme held in April-May 2017	May 2017	13
BTOR	Plant protection and production officer, FAO-SEC (LTO)	Mission including information on annual project activities assessment and planning	May 2017	7
BTOR	IC on phytosanitary control	Mission to Azerbaijan to support elaboration of phytosanitary export certification procedures for tomato fruits and to summarize information on phytosanitary requirements for growers, packing house, operators, exporters of tomato	May 2017	11
BTOR	IC on pest diagnostics	On results of study tour conducted in Antalya, Turkey, with support of Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock of Republic of Turkey	May 2017	7
BTOR	National consultant on import-export regulations	On results of study tour conducted in Antalya, Turkey with support of Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock of Republic of Turkey	May 2017	6
BTOR	IC on import/export regulations (Project Team Leader)	Mission results including training in import inspection of consignments of plant and plant products for inspectors from SPCS and SCC	June 2017	7
BTOR	IC on import/export regulations (Project Team Leader)	The results of mission to Azerbaijan including training in export certification for inspectors of SPCS and SCC	Mission dates: 17-24 September 2017	5
Final report of the phytosanitary laboratory diagnostics training for the experts of SPCS in Latvia	State Plant Protection Service of Latvia	To highlight results of phytosanitary laboratory diagnostics training of laboratory experts of SPCS (8 experts in 2 groups – in July-August and October-November 2017)	Training dates: 1st group – 24 July-11 August 2017; 2nd group – 16 October-3 November 2017 Report submission date: 21 November 2017	49
BTOR of IC on import/export control	IC on import/export regulations (Project Team Leader)	Monitoring/project progress mission	Mission dates: 6-10 December 2017	3
Practical Guidance for Phytosanitary Procedures on Tomato Export	IC on phytosanitary control	Guidance for phytosanitary procedures on tomato export	Report submission date: 26 January 2018	20

Final report for training programme for laboratory experts of SPCS organized in cooperation with CIMMYT	CIMMYT	To highlight results of soil-borne diseases programme in Azerbaijan (Baku-Absheron, Ismayilli, Shaki, Barda, Kurdamir) and Turkey (Ankara, Bolu, Eskishehir) in April-August 2017	Report submission date: 22 February 2018	16
BTOR	IC on import/export regulations (Project Team Leader)	Mission details (2-7 April 2018) with information on workshop on "International requirements, rights and obligations in phytosanitary framework"	Report submission date: 12 May 2018	29
BTOR	IC on import/export regulations (Project Team Leader)	Mission details (28 May-3 June 2018) with information on training in import control of plants and plant products	Report submission date:	5
BTOR	IC on phytosanitary control	Mission details (15-20 July 2018) with information on the workshop on tomato export certification programme	Report submission date:	8
Tomato export certification programme	IC on phytosanitary control	Final version of tomato export certification programme	Report submission date:	5
BTOR	IC on import/export regulations (Project Team Leader)	Mission including training in export certification for inspectors from SPCS and SCC	November 2018	6
BTOR	IC on import/export regulations (Project Team Leader)	Mission including final workshop	December 2018	4
Operational Procedures on Import-Export Control				
Sampling Methodology	National consultant on import-export regulations	Standards for samples taken from products for export and import under quarantine control	December 2018	27
Inspection Methodology for materials for export	National consultant on import-export regulations	Methodical guidelines/operational procedure on phytosanitary inspection of plants and plant products before export	December 2018	21
Phytosanitary Quarantine Inspection Methodology	National consultant on import-export regulations	Methodical guidelines/operational procedure on identification of plant quarantine organisms at control points	December 2018	27
Inspection Methodology for Phytosanitary Monitoring	National consultant on import-export regulations	Methodical guidelines for actions in the detection of a quarantine organism during pest monitoring	December 2018	39
Import Phytosanitary Inspection Methodology	National consultant on import-export regulations	Methodical guidelines/operational procedure on control of imported plants, plant products and objects in contact with them	December 2018	24
Sampling Methodology	National consultant on import-export regulations	Methodical guidelines/operational procedure on sampling, registration and dispatch to the National Phytosanitary Laboratory	December 2018	9
Protocol registration Procedure	National consultant on import-export regulations	Operational procedure for registration of the protocol on phytosanitary control points	December 2018	7
Operational Procedure for Phytosanitary Certification	National consultant on import-export regulations	Operational procedure on registration and issue of phytosanitary certificates	December 2018	10
Fumigation procedure guideline	National consultant on import-export regulations	Methodological guideline for implementing neutralization (fumigation) measures	December 2018	17

Phytosanitary Inspection Protocol	National consultant on import-export regulations	Checklist and registration forms for phytosanitary inspection	December 2018	4
Package inspection protocol	National consultant on import-export regulations	Methodical guidelines on inspection of and sample taking from wood and wooden packaging materials	December 2018	14
Protocol for leaves and greens inspection	National consultant on import-export regulations	Methodical guidelines for safety inspection of and sample-taking from planting materials, cut flowers, greens and leafy vegetables	December 2018	18
Protocol for potato inspection	National consultant on import-export regulations	Methodical guidelines for safety inspection of and sample-taking from consumable potatoes	December 2018	11
Protocol for fruits inspection	National consultant on import-export regulations	Methodical guidelines for safety inspection of and sample-taking from fruits	December 2018	18
Protocols and operational procedures for Laboratory Diagnostics				
Khapra Beetle Identification	National consultant on pest diagnostics	Guidelines for inspection and identification of *Trogoderma granarium Everts*	December 2018	34
Wheat Karnal Bunt Identification	National consultant on pest diagnostics	Guidelines for inspection and identification of *Tilletia indica Mitra*	December 2018	18
Tomato Spotted Wilt Virus Identification	National consultant on pest diagnostics	Guidelines for inspection and identification of tomato spotted wilt virus	December 2018	12
Knapweed Identification	National consultant on pest diagnostics	Guidelines for inspection and identification of *Acroptilon repens (L.)*	December 2018	11
Fire Blight Identification	National consultant on pest diagnostics	Guidelines for inspection and identification of *Erwinia amylovora*	December 2018	21
Stem Nematode Inspection	National consultant on pest diagnostics	Guidelines for inspection and identification of *Ditylechus Dipsaci* and *Ditylenchus Destructor* Thorne	December 2018	16
Tomato Leaf Miner Inspection	National consultant on pest diagnostics	Guidelines for inspection and identification of *Tuta Absoluta*	December 2018	23
Potato Wart causing Fungus Inspection	National consultant on pest diagnostics	Guidelines for inspection and identification of *Synchytrium Endobioticum*	December 2018	20
Plant Wilt causing bacteria Inspection	National consultant on pest diagnostics	Guidelines for inspection and identification of *Ralstonia solanacearum* race 1	December 2018	21
CTV Inspection	National consultant on pest diagnostics	Guidelines for inspection and identification of *Citrus tristeza closterovirus*	December 2018	13
Potato and Plant Cyst Inspection	National consultant on pest diagnostics	Guidelines for inspection and identification of *Globodera rostochiensis* and *Globodera pallida*	December 2018	24
Annual Ragweed Inspection	National consultant on pest diagnostics	Guidelines for inspection and identification of *Ambrosia Artemisiifolia* L.	December 2018	12
Operational procedures for Phytosanitary Laboratory				
Documentation Procedure	National consultant on pest diagnostics	Procedure for development, adaptation/agreement, approval, actualization and archiving of laboratory documents	December 2018	4
Employment Assessment Procedure	National consultant on pest diagnostics	Procedure for assessment of competence of employees	December 2018	2

Sample Processing Procedure	National consultant on pest diagnostics	Procedure for the delivery, reception, registration and marking of samples	December 2018	4
Sample Transfer Procedure	National consultant on pest diagnostics	General procedure for processing/ movement of samples of quarantine materials during examination in laboratories of Republic Quarantine Expertise Centre	December 2018	3
Sample Storage Procedure	National consultant on pest diagnostics	Procedure for storage of samples (before and after reception)	December 2018	2
Work Log Keeping Procedure	National consultant on pest diagnostics	Procedure for filling in work logs	December 2018	1
Working Environment Monitoring Procedure	National consultant on pest diagnostics	Procedure for monitoring state of environment	December 2018	3
Customer Reception Procedure	National consultant on pest diagnostics	Procedure for customer visits to laboratory	December 2018	2
Appeals Processing Procedure	National consultant on pest diagnostics	Procedure for reviewing claims, complaints and proposals	December 2018	4
Customer Information Confidentiality Procedure	National consultant on pest diagnostics	Procedure of confidentiality of information and property rights of customers	December 2018	2
Testing Surfaces Management Procedure	National consultant on pest diagnostics	Instructions for dish washing in Republic Quarantine Expertise Centre	December 2018	2
Laboratory Staff Terms of Reference	National consultant on pest diagnostics	Responsibilities, authorization and functions of laboratory staff	December 2018	6
Reagents and Consumables Reception and Preservation Procedure	National consultant on pest diagnostics	The procedure for registration and storage of chemical reagents and consumables	December 2018	5
Reporting Procedures	National consultant on pest diagnostics	Instructions for creating reports on the conduct of analyses after application of quality control	December 2018	2
Laboratory Equipment Maintenance Procedure	National consultant on pest diagnostics	Procedure for calibration, verification and intermediate inspection of equipment and measuring instruments	December 2018	7
Quality Assurance Manual	National consultant on pest diagnostics	Quality manual in the Republic Quarantine Expertise Centre	December 2018	9
Reagents and Consumables Management Procedure	National consultant on pest diagnostics	Management of reagents and consumables	December 2018	3

ANNEX 4. TRAINING AND STUDY TOURS

No	No. of partici-pants	Activity	Place	Date
1	42	Inception workshop	Baku, Azerbaijan	9 February 2016
2	28	Training workshop on import inspection for inspectors of SPCS and SCC (first round)	Park Inn hotel, Baku, Azerbaijan	24-26 May 2016
3	31	Training in basic inspection and pest diagnostics for inspectors of SPCS and SCC (first round)	Park Inn hotel, Baku, Azerbaijan	28-30 June 2016
4	33	Training in export certification of plants and plant products for inspectors of SPCS (first round)	Baku, Absheron Marriott Hotel; field visit to Khachmaz region, Azerbaijan	27-29 September 2016
5	9	Training trip of management staff and inspectors of SPCS and SCC to Riga, Latvia	State Plant Protection Service of Latvia in Riga and field visits in Latvia	9-14 October 2016
6	3	Training trip of laboratory staff of SPCS to Riga, Latvia	State Plant Protection Service of Latvia in Riga	17-21 October 2016
7	6	Training trip of laboratory staff of SPCS and SCC	VNIIKR, Moscow, Russian Federation	13-17 March 2017
8	12	Working group meeting with phytosanitary inspectors involved in tomato export certification and production side inspection	The State Phytosanitary Control Service, Baku, Azerbaijan	4 May 2017
9	8	Study tour for management staff and inspectors of SPCS and SCC	Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock of Turkey, Antalya Administration, Zirai Karantina and field visits in Antalya, Turkey	22-26 May 2017
10	3	Training trip of three laboratory experts of SPCS under programme on soil-borne diseases agreed with CIMMYT (part A of the programme)	Ankara, Eskishehir, Bolu, Turkey	3 April – 15 May 2017
11	37	Training in basic inspection and pest diagnostics for inspectors of SPCS and SCC (second round)	SPCS, Baku, Azerbaijan	4-7 April 2017
12	56	Survey of soil conducted by experts of SPCS and CIMMYT under programme on soil-borne diseases (part B of programme)	Baku-Absheron, Gobustan, Ismayilli, Shaki, Barda, and Kurdamir, Azerbaijan	12-21 June 2017
13	32	Training workshop on import inspection for inspectors of SPCS and SCC (second round)	Marriott Absheron hotel, Baku, Azerbaijan; field visits to Meyveli and Keshle inspection points in Baku-Absheron, Azerbaijan	13-15 June 2017
14	3	Training trip of laboratory experts of SPCS under programme on soil-borne diseases agreed with CIMMYT (part C of programme)	Ankara, Turkey	2-14 July 2017
15	4	Training trip of the laboratory staff of SPCS (first group)	State Plant Protection Service of Latvia in Riga	23 July – 13 August 2017
16	41	Training in export certification of plants and plant products for inspectors of SPCS (second round)	Baku, Absheron Marriott Hotel; field visit to Khachmaz region, Azerbaijan	19-21 September 2017
17	4	Training trip of laboratory staff of SPCS (second group)	State Plant Protection Service of Latvia in Riga	16 October – 3 November 2017

[6] Three participants of the training programme with CIMMYT, Director and Deputy Director of the Republic Quarantine Expertise Centre

18	51	National phytosanitary event: "Meeting between SPCS and the producers and exporters of plants and plant products from Baku-Absheron, Aran and South regions of Azerbaijan"	Hilton Hotel, Baku, Azerbaijan	15 November 2017
19	56	National phytosanitary event: "Meeting between SPCS and the producers and exporters of plants and plant products from Northern and Western regions of Azerbaijan"	Ramada Plaza hotel, Ganja, Azerbaijan	27 November 2017
20	14	Training workshop/round table discussion on "International requirements, rights and obligations in phytosanitary framework"	AFSA, Chinar Plaza, Baku, Azerbaijan	5 April 2018
21	30	Training workshop on import inspection for inspectors of SPCS and SCC (third round)	Holiday Inn Hotel, Baku, Azerbaijan; field visits to Meyveli and Keshle inspection points in Baku-Absheron, Azerbaijan	29-31 May 2018
22	10	On-the-job training for laboratory experts of the Republic Quarantine Expertise Centre	SPCS, Baku, Azerbaijan	18-19 June 2018
23	30	Training in basic inspection and pest diagnostics for inspectors of SPCS and SCC (third round)	Hyatt Regency Hotel, Baku, Azerbaijan	20-22 June 2018
24	13	Training in validation of the laboratory methods for the experts of Baku Regional Experimental Laboratory No. 2 of the Food Safety Institute	The State Phytosanitary Control Service, Baku, Azerbaijan	23, 25 June 2018
25	33	National phytosanitary event: "Meeting between AFSA, SCC and the producers and exporters of plants and plant products of Azerbaijan"	Park Inn hotel, Baku, Azerbaijan	29 June 2018
26	14	Workshop on tomato export certification programme	SPCS, Baku, Azerbaijan	17 July 2018
27	32	Training in export certification of plants and plant products for inspectors of SPCS (third round)	Hotel Pullman, Baku, Azerbaijan	5-9 November 2018
28	19	Training in presentations skills development	Food Safety Institute,	20-23 November 2018
29	12	Training in risk communication skills	Holiday Inn Hotel, Baku, Azerbaijan	28-29 November 2018
30	72	National phytosanitary event: "Meeting between AFSA and the producers and exporters of plants and plant products from regions of Azerbaijan"	Ganja, Azerbaijan	21 December 2018
31	34	Closing workshop	Hotel Pullman, Baku, Azerbaijan	19 December 2018

ANNEX 5. MAJOR ITEMS OF EQUIPMENT PROVIDED

Quantity	Item	Cost (USD)
1	Computer, HP EliteBook 840 G2	1 250
1	Photo camera EOS 600D	775
1	Projector, Epson EB-S17	640
1	Colour printer, HP LaserJet MFPM477fdn	1 323
1	Computer, HP EliteBook 840 G3	1 485
1	Microscope, Leica MC190 HD	14 576
1	Cyst separation station	9 956
1	Laminar flow cabinet/Laminar box	9 857
1	Orbital shaker for flasks	2 917
1	Computer, desktop, HP ProDesk 400 G4 SFF	1 127
1	Stereomicroscope with Stand K LAB and double spot illuminator	12 158
1	Computer, desktop, HP Elite desk 800 G2	817
1	Growth chamber, model KBWF 240, with light and humidity	20 822