

ANNEX I

Description of the Action

1.1.1. Description

Overall objective: To contribute to increased productivity in Georgian agriculture and a reduction in rural poverty.

Specific objectives:

1. To support the establishment and strengthening of business-oriented farmers groups to promote increased effectiveness and competitiveness of small farmers in the agricultural economy.
2. To facilitate the creation of a more conducive, sustainable environment for the development of farmers groups in Georgia.

To attain the above objectives, Oxfam and co-applicant partners, here-on referred to as consortium partners, propose implementing an integrated programme of co-operative development and capacity building, technical trainings and demonstration units, networking support with state and private sector service providers and market actors, as well as advocacy to promote positive changes to policy and the regulatory framework. The project design reflects the importance of providing assistance and expertise to the nascent business-orientated farmers groups and co-operatives, whilst at the same time, promoting the potential long-term benefits of cooperation within rural communities and strengthening the existing policy environment.

Consortium partners have been working within the Georgian agricultural sector for many years and bring complementary skills and knowledge to support project planning and implementation. The basic *modus operandi* for the project, is that Oxfam, as lead applicant, will be responsible for overseeing the design, planning and monitoring of the various tools and systems that are to be used to conduct the activities (with input from co-applicant partners), whilst the three co-applicants will be responsible for delivery of the activities in their respective target regions. In addition Oxfam will be responsible for providing expertise in the field on marketing, gender analysis, disaster-risk reduction (DRR) and women's economic leadership. To ensure effective programme planning, coordination and implementation of project a Project Steering Committee (PSC) will be formed, which will include representatives of Oxfam, the partner agencies and stakeholders, where appropriate.

With reference to the Call for Proposals criteria for selecting locations, the target regions and selected districts chosen, are in areas where the partners have a permanent presence, or have already developed strong community relations and knowledge. They are also districts that have high poverty levels (in Shida Kartli and Mtskheta-Mtianeti), diverse ethnic composition (specifically Tsalka and Dmanisi), are in remote and mountainous regions (Tianeti, Dusheti, Akhmeta, Tsalka and Dmanisi) or have a high proportion of IDPs residing there (Shida Kartli, Mtskheta and Samegrelo). The overall delineation of municipalities and regions is as follows:

- **Action Against Hunger (ACF): Kvemo Kartli** (Dmanisi, Tsalka & Bolnisi municipalities¹) and **Samegrelo** (Zugdidi, Tsalenjikha & Chkhorotsku municipalities), **Kakheti** (Telavi)
- **Rural Communities Development Agency (RCDA): Mtskheta-Mtianeti** (Tianeti, Dusheti & Mtskheta municipalities)
- **Elkana: Shida Kartli** (Kaspi, Gori & Kareli municipalities), **Kakheti** (Akhmeta)

It is planned that across the five target regions Oxfam and partners will identify and select approximately 40 groups whose members will be the direct beneficiaries of the action. Of these groups, it is anticipated that a minimum of 30 will be supported to formally become established and register as co-operatives. The specific agricultural sectors that the partners have chosen to support - fruit, vegetables, hazelnuts and non-timber forest products - have been selected for the following reasons: (i) the experience of the pre-identified target groups in the given sectors; (ii) the presence of strong value chains in the target regions (including hazelnut production in Samegrelo, fruit production in Shida Kartli and Kakheti, potato production in Kvemo Kartli, NTFP in Mtskheta-Mtianeti); (iii) market demand for the selected products in Georgia and, potentially, abroad; (v) the potential for up-scaling

¹ Oxfam requests the inclusion of a third municipality in the Kvemo Kartli region, Bolnisi Municipality, that was not previously included within the concept note submitted.

production; (vi) opportunities for marketing support and; (vii) the sector-specific expertise of the partners; (viii) intense engagement of women in the selected sectors/commodities.

In the case that a co-applicant has a specific specialized knowledge, such as Elkana's experience in delivering training on organic farming and food safety, RCDA in DRR, or ACF in food security and agricultural development (specifically in the formation of co-operatives, informal groups, and the provision of agricultural facilities such as irrigation), then Oxfam and co-applicants will support one another in the delivery of certain activities. Synergies and expertise shared amongst the partners is seen as crucial for adding value and for the successful implementation of the action. Through this approach Oxfam and co-applicants aim to achieve the following project results.

Result 1: Business orientated and sustainable farmers groups developed in the Fruit and Vegetable, Non Timber Forest Products (NTFP) and Hazelnut sectors

With the passing of the Law on Co-operatives in July 2013, and the consequent amendments of the entrepreneurship code, tax code and Law on Grants, a real opportunity now exists to stimulate and develop the rural economy, through supporting the development of business orientated farmers groups and co-operatives. However to achieve this it will be necessary to provide assistance to help the groups establish themselves as co-operatives and offer continuous and comprehensive coaching and mentoring support during the initial stages of development. At the same time as enhancing their institutional capacities, the project also aims to increase their negotiating abilities and power within the market place.

Expected Achievements

- Baseline and end-line surveys conducted and results analysed and shared with key stake holders
- Farmers in target communities informed on co-operative law through the awareness-raising campaign
- All target farmers groups/co-operatives receive tailor made capacity building and organisational development support based on the Organisational development tool-kit developed
- At least 5-10 members from each of each target farmers group/co-operatives partake in 10 national and 11 international exchange visits / study tours
- At least 30 groups formally registered as co-operatives
- Market analysis report produced for all target agri-sectors and shared with stakeholders
- Key co-operative management representatives trained on negotiation skills
- At least 900 farmers and market actors attend 30 regional round table networking meetings
- Co-operative members successfully attend the regional annual food fair and one international fair

Proposed publications for Result 1 are: Co-operative Guide - a handbook manual for target farmer groups on agricultural co-operative organisation; information leaflets/ posters on NTFP products.

Activity 1.1 Conduct a Baseline and Endline Survey

Throughout the project timeframe the partners will strictly monitor and evaluate the project progress, to inform the direction and development of the project activities and determine if the proposed indicators and results are being met. The key tool in this monitoring process will be the baseline and endline surveys, which will be conducted at the beginning and at the final stage of the project.

These surveys will be composed of four separate and distinct studies, used to examine and analyse the core areas of change that the project aims to make. They will focus on: (a) the socio-economic situation of Georgian farmers in the target regions; (b) the value chains and markets that they are working in, and; (c) the role of women within the Georgian agricultural sector and business management and the specific barriers faced by women (d) farmers awareness of and attitudes towards the legislative and regulatory framework governing agriculture and rural development, including the new Law on Co-operatives. The survey respondents will include target farmer groups / co-operative members, as well as members from the broader community within the target regions. This will allow the project to determine the level of impact on the target group and compare this with those community members who are not direct beneficiaries of the project.

These surveys will be performed in each of the target municipalities and regions and will utilize ACF's Food Security Livelihoods Household Assessment and Oxfam's Gendered Enterprise & Markets

(GEM) approach and toolkit. This toolkit provides for an in-depth analysis of the household, farm and market system contexts and helps programmatic design in a way that ensures delivery of all three GEM outcome areas: (i) Power in Markets (ii) Women's Economic Leadership (WEL) and; (iii) Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and Climate Change Adaptation (CCA).

The four-pronged baseline survey (to be conducted in each target region) will assist in determining the exact scope, direction and content of specific activities, such as the requirements of the co-operative organisational development toolkit (see Activity 1.4), the needs for support with market promotion (Activity 1.7), training needs in DRR and climate change adaptation (Activity 2.6) and the required elements for Women's Economic Leadership Campaign (Activity 3.2). It will also be used to form appropriate policy advocacy interventions as well as awareness raising strategies on women's role in agricultural development. These findings will inform the project planning to ensure that efforts are taken to adequately promote women farmers involvement in business management and leadership roles and ensure equity in resource allocation and a balanced development programme that benefits both men and women farmers. Gender analysis will examine gender relations in the agriculture sector, within target regions, not just describing differences in gender roles but also assessing their causes. It will further attempt to analyse barriers and opportunities, as well as community-level and institutional policy issues, with regard to gender relations in target value chains.

The endline survey will be used to determine the level of change and lasting impact that the project has had in supporting co-operative development, increasing farmers' productivity, access to markets and income, women's economic empowerment and the effectiveness of the advocacy and lobbying initiatives. In addition to the baseline and endline surveys, periodic monitoring of the co-operative groups will be conducted to analyze their development and progress over the timeframe of the action. This monitoring will include an analysis of financial income, productivity (yields) and changing relations with service providers and market actors. These monitoring studies will be participatory in nature and co-operative members will be informed on self-monitoring, so they can determine, analyse, and assess their own progress.

The monitoring process will be overseen by Oxfam, who will recruit a full time Monitoring Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL) Officer that will lead the process for survey design, implementation and analysis. The MEAL Officer will be supported by a Monitoring and Evaluation team, comprised of experts from the co-applicant partner agencies, which will provide support regarding the development of the baseline and end-line surveys, and ACF will additionally provide support with the data entry and analysis. In addition Oxfam's regional lead on Livelihoods and global advisors on GEM and Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) will participate in post-survey analysis workshops. Field work and data collection will be performed by trained 'enumerators' and supervised by the partner agencies in their respective regions

Activity 1.2 Create an awareness-raising programme and guide on co-operatives

With the passing of legislation in support of agricultural co-operatives in July this year, a more conducive environment has been created for the formation and development of agricultural co-operatives in Georgia. The first step, however, should be a comprehensive and nationwide campaign, including media campaign, to ensure that farmers are aware of the new law and are knowledgeable on its provisions, including the legal requirements, obligations, as well as the advantages of cooperation.

Governmental policy dissemination plans are often limited in execution, so therefore to support this necessary information campaign, Oxfam and the project partners will develop and implement an awareness raising programme, reinforced with the production and publication of a user-friendly guide on agricultural co-operative organization and the newly passed co-operative law and regulatory framework. This programme will aim to clearly explain and lay out the process for the establishment of co-operatives and the benefits and advantages that it can bring. As many stakeholders will most probably also be working in this direction (including other ENPARD beneficiaries), it is proposed that this awareness programme and guide be developed in consultation with a broad group of organisations and interested parties working in the agricultural sector and then shared with government for its input and approval. In particular the project will be coordinated with the State Agency for Support of Agricultural Co-operatives (Legal Entity under the Public Law - LEPL) that is already established by the Ministry of Agriculture, as provided by the new law on agricultural co-operatives. In this way the awareness raising programme and guide will become a nationally recognized and approved methodology for disseminating information on the co-operative development process.

One possible mechanism that could aid this process is the newly formed GAARD (Georgian Alliance for Agriculture and Rural Development) initiative, that at present is an alliance of a number of international and national NGOs (including Oxfam, ACF, CARE, Mercy Corps, People in Need etc.) working in the agricultural development sector. It is anticipated that bilateral and multilateral donors, as well as national government and parliament representatives, will join this initiative in the coming months based on Oxfam's recent collaboration with national government authorities and parliament on the planned Co-operative Law, in partnership with other international development agencies operating in Georgia.

Activity 1.3 Awareness-raising and sensitisation on cooperation To properly and effectively disseminate information on the new law and co-operative, it will be necessary to conduct awareness raising activities throughout Georgia- The field staff of each partner agency will be fully briefed on all aspects of the new law and the contents of the guide and will be tasked to deliver information awareness sessions in the target regions designated within the proposed action. During the first year of the action the project will aim to cover a broad number of farming communities - and not only those where prospective farmer groups have been pre-identified. It is anticipated that ten communities per target municipality will be covered in this awareness raising campaign. The awareness raising sessions will take the form of public debate, where participants will be encouraged to ask questions, to ensure clarity and understanding on this new initiative. During the awareness raising sessions the published Co-operative guide (Activity 1.2) will be distributed to farmers and other participants, which will reinforce the information provided.

Since the new law will also have an effect upon service providers and market actors, in addition to raising awareness amongst farmers, it is also important that municipal representatives and other local decision makers are well informed. To this end the project partners will hold round-table meetings in each local authority office and an additional round table meeting with local service providers and businesses. At all these meetings the partners will request the support of representatives of the Regional Information and Consulting Centres (RICCs), or if possible representatives of the State Agency for Support of Agricultural Co-operatives, as it will demonstrate that this programme is not merely being promoted under ENPARD, but as a government initiative, and has their full support and involvement. This process will be reinforced through a local and national media campaign that will include newspaper articles/inserts, TV and radio broadcasts at regional and local level, and a documentary video.

Activity 1.4 Identify and select groups to be supported

Through previous project engagements (outlined in 2.1.2), and whilst planning the action, Oxfam and co-applicant partners have pre-identified formal and non-formal farmer groups working in the target sectors and regions, including two women's groups, who have expressed a keen interest and motivation to formalize or strengthen their cooperation, both to increase produce sales and achieve cost savings. During the awareness raising campaign, Oxfam and the partners will identify other groups that could be supported through the action. The selection of the groups will be based on the following formal criteria that are in line with ENPARD guidelines and principals: 1. Experience of working within the target agricultural sectors and regions 2. Evidence of previous collaboration and cooperation within each target group 3. High motivation to cooperate and participate within ENPARD programme 3.Strong business potential within target value chains 4.Level of existing or potential management capacity 5.Ability to invest in the development of the business (i.e. co-finance capital investment provided by the consortium) 6.Opportunities for women's participation and leadership, including identification of potential women leaders.

It is planned that across the four target regions Oxfam and partners will identify and select approximately 40 groups, with a minimum 30% women's membership, who will be recipients of development assistance and financial support. Of these groups, it is anticipated that a minimum of 30 will be supported to formally establish themselves and register as co-operatives. These will also include two groups supported by the local NGO, Rural Development for Future Georgia (RDFG). RDFG both support and participate in these groups and so will therefore be a beneficiary of the action, not a sub-contractor. The final selection process of farmer groups will be overseen by the Project Steering Committee, and once approved the groups will be formally notified by the committee. Immediately after approval a comprehensive capacity building and organisational development plan will be designed in collaboration with the groups.

Activity 1.5 Develop Toolkit for Capacity Building and Organisational Development for farmers groups / co-operatives

The proposed project aims to support farmers in becoming fully sustainable business orientated groups and co-operatives. Once the farmers have decided that they wish to work as groups or become legally registered co-operative bodies, they will need strong support and guidance in many of the aspects of business and co-operative development. A toolkit will therefore be prepared under Oxfam's supervision and with additional expertise from SEEDEV, a service provider which has extensive experience in supporting farmers' cooperation. The toolkit will draw ideas from success stories from other existing farmers groups and co-operatives in Georgia that will be analyzed under the EU approved Oxfam project, *"Improving Regional Food Security through National Strategies and Small Holder Production in the South Caucasus"*, (2013-2017).

The toolkit will have specific training modules that will cover most of the areas of operational and organisational development that the groups will need. These will include, but are not restricted to, the following areas: 1. Co-operative organisational structure 2. Operating principles 3. Statute development 4. Legal requirements 5. Financial management 6. Tax obligations 7. Negotiation skills 8. Business planning.

SEEDEV will provide Training-of-Trainers (TOT) for Oxfam and partners to deliver the above modules to the target groups. In addition they will introduce an Organizational Capacity Assessment Tool (OCAT) that has already been developed and will be adjusted to the local context. This tool will allow partners to monitor and evaluate the organizational development status of co-operatives.

In addition to these general training modules that will be provided to all group members, additional training modules will be developed for the identified co-operative management team. This will include general management training, leadership skills (including Women's Economic Leadership - WEL) and co-operative team building.

Activity 1.6 Deliver capacity building and organisational development for farmers groups / co-operatives

Once trained, the delivery of the capacity building and organisational development modules, will be performed by the co-applicant agencies in their respective regions and to target farmers groups (both the pre-identified groups and groups identified during the awareness raising campaign), including at least 30% women. At the outset, assessment meetings will be held to identify and agree with target groups the exact type of support they require. Each group will most likely be at a different stage in their development and will require different levels and types of support. Some groups may already be formed as co-operatives, and may only require support regarding the new law and their obligations to it. The toolkit and modules developed will therefore be utilized in a flexible manner, with the co-applicant agencies selecting the most appropriate support for each farmers group / co-operative. Tool kits will also be developed to support the active participation and leadership of women within farmer's groups, and reflect women's specific needs.

In many cases Oxfam and partner's staff will conduct the trainings, but for some specialised subjects such as financial management, the tax code and business planning, external expertise may be hired. Due to the relatively large number of farmers groups / co-operatives to be trained, the consortium intends to create a pool of professional training providers, who may work with each consortium partner. To ensure that the information provided to all the target groups is consistent and harmonised, these experts will have joint briefing meetings prior to service delivery and meet regularly to share ideas and debate issues raised during the training sessions. Where such issues and constraints exist that affect many of the co-operatives, these will be addressed by Oxfam and partner agencies in their advocacy work, including advocacy initiatives planned under Oxfam's EU funded Food Security action.

It is recognised that "one-off" trainings will not be adequate for many of the farmers groups / co-operatives to later operate independently - particularly in the area of financial management and tax obligations. Therefore a process of continuous support and coaching, during the action lifetime, will be organised for those farmers groups / co-operatives that require it. Oxfam and partners will also work together with the Ministry of Agriculture and other ENPARD beneficiaries to identify potential service providers (including financial services, agricultural input supplies and extension services), at both national and regional levels that could be supported to offer long-term mentoring and professional support to developing co-operatives.

To give target groups a wider understanding of how the co-operative movement is developing in other regions of Georgia, exchange visits will be organised to other co-operative groups, both within the action and to those supported by other ENPARD actors. In this way the co-operative members will

appreciate that they are part of a broader movement and will be able to exchange ideas and experiences with other group members.

Oxfam and partners will also support study tours and exchange visits with co-operatives from south-east Europe. As the idea of cooperation is only just emerging in Georgia, it would be beneficial for farmers groups to meet successful co-operatives from other post-socialist countries so that groups can learn from the experience of these co-operatives, including the constraints and benefits encountered. In planning this component Oxfam and partners have identified countries that have a similar development context to Georgia, and for this reason the action proposes to organise study tours to the Balkans, in particular Croatia and Serbia, It is expected that this will strengthen the nascent Georgian co-operatives understanding of the co-operative model and broaden their thinking on development opportunities. Again, the service provider SEEDDEV who are based in the Balkan region, will facilitate these visits.

Activity 1.7 Support establishment and registration of co-operatives Oxfam and partners aim to directly support farmers' groups through the process of registering and formally establishing themselves as co-operatives. This is an extension of the above activities and intends to create an enabling environment that will allow the farmers groups to overcome the initial challenges of becoming established.

Where requested, the action will facilitate target groups in organising and running initial co-operative meetings, at which the election of the management team, charter, formation of charter capital, operational procedures, internal policy documents and membership fees are discussed and decided. The elected management team of the co-operative will also be assisted in completing application documents and working through the registration process. When necessary, legal counsel will be provided to ensure that the application and registration documents are in keeping with the new law.

A key area of support will relate to the development of co-operative's business plans. The business plan will be the primary document in the co-operative's future application for business development support, both from available funds under the action, and from financial institutions such as banks and micro-credit agencies. Target groups will be supported to periodically update their business plans as new opportunities arise or the business context changes.

Finally the action envisages a small "resource fund" that target groups can apply for, to assist in initial development and help establish administrative set-up. Depending on the individual group / co-operative needs, this fund could pay for registration fees, IT equipment (necessary for accounting and business planning), internet modem, stationery start-up and office furniture. Some level of co-financing (a minimum of 20%) by the farmers groups / co-operatives for these items will be sought to ensure sustainability. Running costs will not however be supported, as it would be deemed as unsustainable.

Activity 1.8 Facilitate market promotion and linkages

Oxfam and partners recognise the need to ensure that the farmers groups / co-operatives are based on sound business principles and are focused on commercial viability and competitiveness. The action, therefore, aims to assist the new farmers groups /co-operatives to be able to interact and compete effectively within their specific value chains. The primary aim will be to identify gaps and opportunities in the market, so that Oxfam and partners can support target groups/co-operatives to prepare necessary interventions to facilitate positive change. Consequently, sector-specific experts will be hired to map and analyze target value chains (identified through the baseline survey) so as to develop a picture of the product development cycle from production through primary and secondary processing to market sale. This analysis will determine all existing market actors within the value chain and will identify the enabling and disabling factors (such as policies, legislation, public agencies/service providers, political environment and access to inputs/credit, insurance, leasing, as well as to other services and service providers etc.) affecting small holder farmers.

The market analysis will examine the existing markets for farmer's products and identify the demand for growth and potential new outlets, locally, regionally and internationally, for the target commodities. Support for the international market analysis will be provided by Oxfam HQ through the involvement of its business partnerships' team, including facilitating market linkages with international companies. All information will be compiled into a database that can be shared with other actors working on market development in target sectors.

Once the key market players have been identified, preliminary meetings will be arranged with the farmers groups / co-operatives to identify potential business partners. Initially the project team will support these meetings, however under the organisational development component (Activity 1.5), the group / co-operative management representatives will be trained in negotiation and bargaining skills.

To further strengthen linkages between farmers groups and the value chain/market actors, 30 regional round table discussions are planned (30 participants at each) that will facilitate networking between farmers and market actors, allowing them to discuss business needs, shortfalls, to exchange information and to establish relationships for further collaboration. The ultimate aim is that the specific requirements of businesses, regarding a products' modality, quantity, quality, price etc., can be determined and that contractual arrangements can be arranged, in line to the ethical business principles.

Another initiative that the project intends to incorporate under this activity is the introduction of certification schemes to meet product safety and quality requirements, for interested co-operatives. There are two major certification schemes which can be introduced in accordance with international standards: Organic and Fair Trade certification. Organic certification can be used as a marketing tool for both Georgian and international markets, whilst Fair Trade Certification is only important for export products. Co-applicant partner Elkana, has specific expertise and knowledge on this matter, and is currently implementing a project in Samegrelo/West Georgia for the introduction of organic and fair trade certification in the hazelnut sector.

The project will provide general trainings for the group members on organic and fair trade standards and on Internal Control Systems (ICS) including the necessary documentation and relationships with relevant certification bodies. There is a special set of guidelines for ICS that has been developed by Elkana based on international requirements for group certification. For those farmers groups / co-operatives that are interested in pursuing this there will be more intensive trainings for the group leaders on how to create management plans for all farmers involved in the process and yearly internal inspection of all group member farmers by the group leaders with support of Elkana staff which will be sent to the certification body. The project will support meetings and negotiations with certification bodies and co-financing of certification costs at the outset.

A final initiative that will provide the co-operatives with enhanced marketing opportunities, is the promotion of farmers produce at agricultural and food fairs. Elkana has significant experience of presenting its member-farmers products at fairs, both nationally and internationally to draw on under the proposed action. The action will also encourage target groups/ co-operatives to take part in the national food fair conducted annually at the Tbilisi Exhibition Centre. This is a cost effective way in which to promote their products and provide management representatives of the groups with a practical opportunity to improve their marketing and negotiation business skills as co-operative leaders. It may also be considered advantageous to organize regional food festivals with the support of the local government, again as a means to raise the profile of the co-operatives and their products. In addition one visit will be arranged to an international food fair, based on planned market analysis. This will also provide a good experience for selected co-operatives, in that they will have the opportunity to exchange their experience with producers from other countries, find business partners and gain a better understanding on the functioning of international markets.

Result 2: Competitiveness of farmers groups increased through improved productivity, quality of produce, technical knowledge and enhanced linkages with service providers

To increase the competitiveness of the new farmers groups / co-operatives and their resilience to shocks and stresses connected to climate change and natural disasters, the activities will focus on the development of target farmers technical skills and knowledge. They will also support them to develop their farming businesses through the introduction of productivity enhancing and resource-efficient methods and technologies and through the organization of primary and secondary processing and storage facilities (on a cost sharing basis). In addition the project will aim to develop co-operatives interaction with extension service providers and to increase the responsiveness of these providers to support this developing cooperation context.

Expected Achievements

- Farmers in target co-operatives acquire new knowledge and improved skills through 165 sector specific trainings and use of 17 demonstration plots in 5 regions
- All target farmers groups /co-operatives gain access to new technologies and facilities and trained in new production methods

- A comprehensive mapping report of all service providers and extension services in target regions and value chains produced and available to stakeholders
- Linkages between service providers and co-operatives established and strengthened through 96 round table meetings
- All target farmers groups/ co-operatives have increased awareness on food safety requirements for primary production and processing in their respective value chains
- Food safety awareness increased through the dissemination of the Food Safety brochure
- All target farmers groups/co-operatives' business plans include a risk assessment of the potential hazards and proposed mitigation measures to be implemented to avoid and reduce the risks

Result 2 publications: RCDA Handbook guide 'NTFP Resources – environmental, economic and social aspects; ACF brochures on green house irrigation and storage; Elkana food safety guide.

Activity 2.1 Design and deliver sector specific trainings

The activity aims to increase and develop the technical knowledge and understanding of farmers in their specific sector and on sustainable agriculture in general. A training curriculum for each value chain will be developed based upon information derived from initial meetings with the groups and identified gaps in target farmers' knowledge and learning.

Training will be provided to farmers either by experienced partner staff, or, when additional expertise is required, by specialised agencies or consultants. It's also planned that the co-applicant agencies will support one another in training delivery, if the partner has specific skills in an identified area. It is anticipated that trainings will follow all aspects of the production cycle including:

- Soil preparation, quality and fertility (green manure, crop rotation, mulching, bio-preparations, composting etc.)
- Sowing and planting techniques
- Orchard set-up, treatment, pruning, thinning etc.
- Greenhouse management
- Traditional versus modern irrigation techniques and technologies (drip, mist, sprinkler irrigation etc.) and water management
- Integrated pest and disease management
- Fertilization
- Harvesting (including sustainable harvesting and collection of NTFP)
- Solar drying
- Storage facilities
- Primary and secondary processing
- Farming under a situation of rapid climatic and environmental changes

An introductory training in organic farming will be also organized for all farmers groups / co-operatives. Elkana is a pioneer organization in organic production in the region and its experts have been training local farmers and producers who now produce organic certified products. The Elkana training centre has been operational since 2004 and it is operating according to the ISO 9001 standard. Additionally, in order to further support farmers in gaining knowledge regarding sector specific techniques and technologies, international exposure visits have been planned, for example to Armenia for Non-Timber Forest Products, and Turkey for irrigation technology and exposure to the Turkish the Hazelnut sector. Previous experiences have demonstrated that such visits can be extremely beneficial in establishing linkages with service providers, buyers, and demonstrating new agricultural techniques and technologies available.

Activity 2.2 Establish and manage "Demonstration Plots"

To complement the technical trainings provided under the previous activity, and to enhance the level of exposure that local farmers receive on new and innovative farming techniques and technologies, the action plans to establish demonstration plots in each of the target regions. This will draw on ACF's experience under the EU-financed and ACF implemented NSA project, "*Assisting Rural Communities through Effective Water Management & Irrigation*". The exact nature and composition of each plot will be determined following the baseline survey, but in general will demonstrate those techniques and technologies related to the pre-identified agricultural sectors for that region, including climate-resilient technologies. The plots will demonstrate new seed types, alternative cultivation techniques, organic farming, irrigation equipment, solar dryers, multi-functional greenhouse, drying and cooling facilities,

storage made from alternative materials (i.e. straw bale and other natural insulation materials) etc. The focus will be on cost effective techniques and technologies that can be easily replicated by local farmers. The plots may also demonstrate mitigation measures to protect the crops from hazards such as drought (irrigation), hail (hail netting), flood (drainage) etc. The plots would be established in early spring of the first and second years and would run for a complete cultivation cycle each year.

It is proposed that the demonstration units be located on land that is privately farmed, either by an individual farmer, co-operative, project partner or academic institution. The project component will be advertised in each municipality and the plot locations will be determined through a competitive process. Farmers will be requested to provide information on the plot they are proposing and each proposal will be assessed based upon pre-determined criteria. These criteria could include, but are not restricted to, the following: 1.Land location and access 2. Land quantity 3. Soil quality 4.Water source availability 5. Farming experience 6.Human resources 7.Security (in relation to equipment/resources) 8. Sufficient financial resources and assets.

The selected demo-farmers will be responsible for co-financing certain pre-determined materials and equipment that will be used for the demonstration and will also be responsible for cultivating the plot. In this way it can be guaranteed that the plot will be properly maintained during the demonstration period. During the demonstration period all assets procured solely by the action will remain the property of Oxfam and the partners. At the end of the demonstration period and following harvesting, the farmer will receive the financial benefits of the crop production and, provided that it has been used correctly, will gain full ownership of the equipment and materials purchased under the action.

The project will establish demonstration plots in collaboration with RICCs, who will also be involved in using them for demonstration purposes Throughout the cultivation period Oxfam and partners will organise farmer demonstration visits to the plots from within the local municipality as well as from neighbouring municipalities. The project staff, RICC representatives and Focal Points (see Activity 4.2) will also be responsible for facilitating these visits, and along with the participating demo-farmer would educate visitors on the materials and technology being used.

Activity 2.3 Support the introduction of new, cost effective technologies, techniques and equipment

To support the increased effectiveness and competitiveness of the co-operatives, as well as co-operative members (especially women) equal access to and control over co-operative resources, a capital investment fund will be set up under the action that can be applied to by each target group. This investment fund will take the form of grants for individual groups; however the co-operatives will be required to provide co-financing - at an average of 25% - for any equipment or materials that they wish to procure based on the business plans developed. Additionally target farmer groups are expected to contribute an average of 5 % of in-kind co-financing to the capital investment fund, through provision of input supplies and labour. In-kind contribution of farmers groups in addition to cash contribution is considered an important indicator of target groups commitment to the action.

The investment fund will have a strict application procedure for any grant request and will be based upon the business plans and investment strategy that are produced in the initial period of the action. Only those capital assets or equipment that will provide a long-term benefit will be considered for funding. Running costs and other unsustainable costs will not be considered. The application process will be as follows:-

- I. Application forms completed and submitted by the farmers groups / co-operatives for investment required, along with corresponding business plans. The application should explain how the new assets will be managed by the group and how future sustainability will be ensured. Also the level of cost share by the co-operative should be clearly stated;
- II. A selection committee (composed of all action partners and an external actor with appropriate gender balance) will assess and grade the business plans and application for each group;
- III. Clarification meetings on issues such as planned use and management of assets, cost/benefit, maintenance, sustainability etc., will be undertaken between selection committee and co-operative representatives;
- IV. Applications will be approved or rejected (with comments and rationale provided),
- V. Contract to be signed between consortium co-applicant partners and target farmers groups/co-operative, outlining the roles and responsibilities of each party and the financial commitment of each party;

- VI. Procurement of capital assets (via capital investment fund) to be undertaken by co-applicant agencies, with financial contributions from target farmers groups/ co-operatives.

Following procurement, technical assistance will be provided to elected women and men members of the farmers groups / co-operatives on the new technologies and their utilisation, to ensure that all target groups are able to use the assets effectively. ACF will be responsible for providing expertise in procurement procedures for the provision of specific agricultural technologies (namely irrigation, greenhouses and storage) on behalf of the other co-applicants and to provide any necessary technical expertise for both the partners and farmers. As for other primary and secondary processing equipment (drying facility, milling, de-seeding machines etc) each co-applicant agency will be responsible for provision in respective target regions. It will be the responsibility of Oxfam and the partners to monitor the use and the management of the new assets and provide support and advice where required.

Activity 2.4 Facilitate access to extension services

The action aims to support the farmers groups / co-operatives in their contact and relations with services that would be pertinent to their growth and development. Early in the project cycle Oxfam and partners will map out the service providers and suppliers (both private and state providers), that the farmers are presently engaging with, in their specific sectors, or where future engagement could be beneficial.

Following the identification phase, round-table meetings will be organised between suppliers and the target groups to foster greater interaction. These round tables will provide the opportunity for the co-operatives to discuss their supply needs, learn of new products on the market, strengthen linkages and negotiate favourable prices.

Whilst the action aims to provide some financial support to these developing groups, it is also seen as important that they are brought into contact with other financial service providers. Oxfam will take the lead role in assisting the co-operatives in brokering financial arrangements with banks, MFIs, insurance companies etc. The farmers will be supported in defining relevant contractual credit provisions and in clearing the necessary procedures to apply for credit or insurance.

The recent introduction of the Regional Information Consultation Centres (RICCs), present in each municipality in Georgia, provide an opportunity for co-operatives to develop stronger connections with government agencies, learn of future initiatives and lobby for changes and adaptations within their sector. The action aims to involve these RICCs in many aspects of action implementation and will cultivate relations between these units and the co-operatives. Also, where necessary, the project will provide technical assistance and capacity building to RICCs staff in the target municipalities. The three co-applicant agencies will train RICCs on the new law on co-operatives, including all relevant issues pertaining to its implementation. They would also be trained (where requested) on technical agricultural issues and new technologies - and would be engaged to provide trainings, be actively involved in the demonstration plots, and participate in regional stakeholder fora. In this way the RICCs will be in a position to support the farmers groups / co-operatives and their development over the longer term.

Other governmental service providers that the consortium will engage with under the action include the state irrigation provider, the United Georgian Irrigation Company, and the state regional Mechanization Centres ("Mekanizatori" LTD). In each case the action will aim to make them aware of the needs and constraints that the co-operatives face, lobby for enhanced terms and conditions, and act as conduit for future networking.

Activity 2.5 Raise Awareness on Food Safety standards

With the increase in attention to food safety regulation in Georgia, and with specific support being provided by the ENPARD initiative to the Food Safety Agency, it is deemed particularly important that all participating agricultural co-operatives are well briefed on food safety requirements and ensure that their operations meet these requirements.

The action will therefore prepare and conduct general trainings on food safety requirements (both in Georgian legislation and major international standards including Global GAP, HACCP) in primary production and processing for co-operative members according to the specific value chain that they are working in. The group / co-operative business plans will be reviewed and adjusted to make provisions to meet food safety requirements, with regards to premises, storage, processing units and

equipment. Finally a food safety brochure will be prepared and published for processing units (adapted to production chains) and provided to all relevant providers and companies.

Activity 2.6

Develop target communities understanding on disaster and climate change risks and vulnerabilities

The activity aims to strengthen the knowledge and capacity of farmers, to promote the integration of climate change and disaster risks mitigation and adaptation measures into their agricultural planning and practices. Oxfam, ACF and RCDA have all implemented projects in farming communities in Georgia to help them set up their own systems to identify, assess, monitor, mitigate, respond or adapt to environmental risks and natural disasters (in particular floods and drought) and, more recently, to longer-term gradual changes caused by climate change (i.e. temperature increase or decrease in rainfall).

The action will therefore support the co-operatives, local authorities and RICCs, to examine and address the potential hazards, risks and environmental changes that might affect their specific business development. Initially the farmers will be trained on a broad range of topics to provide them with a general understanding of issues related to DRR and CCA. Depending on the co-operatives specific sector of activity, these topics may include: a) Vulnerability risk assessment methodology b) Risk mitigation and adaptation measures in agricultural development c) Eco-sustainable livelihoods d) Natural resource management e) Mitigation of Adverse Impacts of Climate Change f) Alternative technologies to reduce deforestation g) Technologies and techniques to combat soil degradation and soil erosion. These trainings will be delivered by RCDA in each of the target municipalities and will combine theoretical information with practical examples. The trainings will also be adapted to the agriculture sectors that the farmers groups are working in. Following the trainings, the co-operatives will be expected to include within their business plans a risk assessment of the potential hazards they may expect to face and the mitigation measures that they may implement to avoid or reduce these risks. Oxfam will also provide follow up support via advocacy mechanisms under Result 4 activities.

Result 3: Capacity of women farmers strengthened to enable their active participation and leadership within farmers groups

The action recognises that women are under-represented in Georgian agriculture in business management and leadership roles. Traditionally women are primarily involved in production activities and processing, but have little, or no, involvement in farm management, financial oversight and marketing. The activities aim to promote the involvement of women within farmers groups / co-operatives (as well as the wider target communities) in non-traditional roles, particularly within management and leadership positions to ensure that they have equal access to and control over co-operative resources. The project will also provide them with additional technical skills that will enhance their opportunities within the sector. The educational campaign aims to reach a wider audience providing them with greater awareness about women's economic potential and challenging current stereotypes regarding women's roles in agriculture, towards a positive appreciation of women in leadership positions. This educational work will also feed into the policy and advocacy work proposed under result four. Within target co-operatives consortium partners will seek to increase women's representation in leadership positions through identification and cultivation of women leaders, including through WEL training, and co-operative charters which encourage equal participation of women members.

Expected Achievements

- Methodology for Women's Economic Leadership (WEL) training and campaign developed and actively used by local stakeholders
- People in target regions, notably women, have increased awareness and understanding of women's active participation in the economy through four WEL campaigns and "Women in Agriculture" events
- Members of target farmers groups/co-operatives have increased understanding of the concept of gender and demonstrate gender-sensitive governance
- At least two women's co-operatives are established and supported

Activity 3.1 Design and implement Women's Economic Leadership (WEL) campaign and educational programme To encourage active membership, participation and leadership of women within the selected co-operatives, and in the agricultural sector as a whole, the project will develop a Women's Economic Leadership training programme and campaign to be implemented in all the target

municipalities. This campaign will be made up of a variety of components including: a) Economic leadership training designed specifically for women co-operative members b) Technical training for women co-operative members c) Women's mentorship programme d) 'Women in Agriculture' educational programme at the community level and in schools targeting men and women in addressing prevailing social norms, attitudes and beliefs about women and men's roles.

Oxfam and partners will provide economic leadership training for women farmers group / co-operative members with an aim to increase the number of women representatives in decision making roles. These trainings will take the form of group educational sessions, where women from different co-operatives and groups will come together to attend training on the following issues and subjects: (i) enterprise development; (ii) business models and planning; (iii) financial management; (iv) innovative service delivery; (v) public private partnerships and (vi) increasing investment in agriculture. (vii) Leadership, influencing and negotiating skills. The training will help women gain and develop the skills and confidence necessary to engage in managerial and leadership positions. The programme will incorporate the basic principles of entrepreneurship, business start-up, management and leadership. Additionally, gender training will be provided to the co-operatives as part of continuous WEL campaign strategies, in order to raise the awareness of the whole co-operative regarding the concept of gender, and the different issues and difficulties faced by men and women within society in Georgia, including the specific barriers faced by women. Training methodology will include the use of games, debates and videos etc in addition to formal training. Furthermore all co-operative women members will be actively encouraged to participate in the technical training (under Activity 2.1) as well as attend demonstration days (both mixed and women only) to learn about new technologies and techniques in order to also promote their active participation in working with new resources and facilities that the farmers groups / co-operatives may invest in. The project will also identify women business leaders (not only in the agricultural sector) to act as role models and request their support in guiding and mentoring women leaders within the target groups. They will also be requested to take part in the school educational programme (see below).

At the same time the project will run an informal education programme that will advocate for women's empowerment as an essential means for sustainable agricultural development and economic growth and will challenge stereotypes about traditional roles of women in agriculture. This programme, entitled "Women in Agriculture", will be composed of a series of events and informal educational sessions for both women and men at the community level, providing gender training, documenting and disseminating case studies and best practice and engaging with media to promote women's economic leadership. Additionally, visibility materials such as brochures and posters will be developed and distributed amongst the communities. This informal educational programme will also be implemented in the schools in the target municipalities, specifically aimed at the promotion of women in agriculture amongst teenage youth. This programme will utilise the tools and methodology designed for the community campaign that will be adapted to the specific target schools. To implement this campaign the project will subcontract two national women's NGOs (one in East Georgia, and one in West Georgia) who will first be familiarized with the campaign aims and trained on the methodology that will have been developed by Oxfam and the consortium partners. These two NGOs will then implement the above components throughout the project timeframe. Additionally, these NGOs will be provided with needs-specific capacity building by Oxfam in order to support them and ensure sustainability of the action.

Activity 3.2 Support establishment of women farmers groups In addition to increasing the number of women in management and leadership roles within the majority of existing mixed farmers groups, the action will also support the development of at least two pre-identified women's groups in hazelnuts and fruits and vegetable sectors. These two potential women's groups have been pre-identified during project planning. Based on the Oxfam and the partner organisations experience of supporting collective economic actions of women, the project will support these women groups in building their co-operative structures. The action will support these groups, through the activities described under Results One and Two, but will also provide additional assistance in those areas where women have traditionally been under-represented and have had little opportunity to develop their knowledge and skills: namely increasing their managerial and technical skills and negotiating collectively within their specific agricultural market. With the support and facilitation of the WEL campaigns it is anticipated that these women's groups will act as positive models for other women within rural communities, demonstrating that agricultural businesses can be run solely by women, and that in time this model will be replicated by other women's groups.

Result 4: Enabling legal and policy environment developed and improved public and private services accessed by farmers groups

Whereas activities under Results One, Two and Three, are concerned with building the target groups organisational, managerial and technical capacities, the activities under Result Four aim to focus on the wider macro-environment that directly affect and impact upon the development of farmers groups / co-operatives and their businesses in Georgia. The activities will support farmers and other stakeholders to advocate collectively on co-operative and sector-related issues and aim to increase responsiveness of service providers to farmer's identified needs.

Expected Achievements

- 5 permanent Regional Stakeholder Fora (RSF) established and supported to facilitate joint identification of opportunities and constraints in respective value chains
- Policy and advocacy documents on key identified issues produced and presented to the national level stakeholders
- 13 municipalities strengthened with trained focal points ensuring liaison with agricultural stakeholders
- Project partners, focal points and local authorities maintain effective collaboration and formulate joint approaches through 139 round-table coordination meetings

Proposed publications under result 4: brochures on policy framework for co-operatives.

Activity 4.1 Establish and/or strengthen regional co-operative stakeholder fora

A strong focus of the project will be to support farmer's involvement in taking a more proactive role in informing and participating in policy development. To assist this process the project aims to support the establishment of regional fora (or support existing fora), to provide farmers and other stakeholders, such as Local Authorities, RICCS, agricultural service providers and processors, the opportunity to meet and discuss co-operative or specific value chain issues and constraints that they feel need to be addressed to improve the development environment. Through the baseline survey, and through contact with Regional and Local Government and RICCs, all key stakeholders will be identified and will be invited to participate in regional meetings that will be organised within the framework of the project. It is envisaged that the composition of the fora will include, in addition to the partner agencies and co-operatives, local government members, public and private service providers (i.e. representatives of the RICCs, the state Mechanization Service Centres, UGIC, banks, MFIs, insurance companies - that have branches in the target areas - and extension service and supply companies). The intention is that **five** Regional Stakeholder Fora (RSF) will be established in the target regions of Mtskheta-Mtianeti, **Kakheti**, Shida Kartli, Kvemo Kartli and Samegrelo. Oxfam and partners will plan to liaise closely with other ENPARD partners also working in these regions (many of whom will also be GUARD members), and ensure that the establishment of RSFs in target regions is a joint and closely coordinated activity.

Initially the meetings will focus upon general issues related to the co-operative development process, allowing space for the co-operative members and stakeholders to discuss the main constraints and opportunities that exist within this new context. The fora will offer a formal platform for stakeholders to make their voices heard on key issues and mutual concerns. Also, as the co-operative development process unfolds, the fora will be able to debate relevant policy and regulatory framework changes that may be required to facilitate this process. Later, as the fora become more formalized, it is anticipated that sub-fora can be created that would work on specific policy areas. A key policy area for focus will be influencing laws, policies and other aspects of the external 'enabling' environment in ways which support women's leadership in the agricultural economy, and supporting Governments' efforts in developing plans, policies and strategies that recognize women's contribution to growth and social well being. This could also include facilitating coordination and partnership on gender equality data, including women's economic empowerment indicators, and enhancing their use in policy making, programming and monitoring. Fora meetings will also be used as a platform for advocacy at both the regional or national level. In time the regional fora will be connected into a national GAARD advocacy network that has been established under Oxfam's recently EU-funded programme, *"Improving Regional Food Security through National Strategies and Small Holder Production in the South Caucasus"*.

Activity 4.2 Support strong engagement of local authorities in co-operative and agricultural development processes The project will work in close cooperation and coordination with local authorities to increase their greater understanding on farmers' cooperation and promote their active involvement in the action. With the upcoming Law on Self Government it is anticipated that Local Authorities (LAs) will have greater level powers as decision makers within the country, that will extend into the agricultural sector. In addition there is a particular concern that under the new law on agricultural co-operatives, the role of local government has not been defined and this could form one of the main topics on the policy agenda that could be advocated through RSFs and GAARD.

The project will draw upon the positive experience of co-applicant ACF's recently completed EU-financed "*Non-State Actors and Local Authorities*" action in Georgia (Grant Ref. EU NSA 2011/270-610) where agricultural "Focal Points" (FPs), nominated by the LAs², worked together with ACF to design, manage and implement the project activities. The FPs, women and men who have a strong agricultural background, competency and skills, will essentially become a conduit between consortium partners and the LAs. As local representatives from targets municipalities they will also have good community knowledge and a strong stake in helping deliver high quality programming in each respective municipality. They also will perform multiple roles within the project, including developing strong relations with the farmers groups, providing trainings, liaising with the RICCs and, most importantly, providing feedback to senior municipal representatives of LAs on all issues of co-operative development. The FPs will initially receive training on all aspects of farmer's cooperation and the new law from the co-applicants and their experts. They will also be involved in the trainings on advanced agricultural techniques and technologies, organic farming, environmental issues, water management and irrigation and new legislation and policy decisions that affect the agricultural sector, as well as gender trainings under the WEL campaign. It is also expected that once they have received these trainings that the focal points will also work as trainers themselves and will help facilitate the demonstration days organised under Activity 2.2. Through this contact the focal points will gather information on co-operative needs and priorities, so that they can more effectively represent the LAs in regional fora. At the same time they will be expected to disseminate information to senior municipal officials through regular meetings, so that they will better informed and will be in a stronger position to effectively advocate on behalf of their constituents, both women and men, on agricultural matters.

Eventual changes of the information provided in the concept note

Change in location: As noted above Oxfam requests the inclusion of a third municipality in the Kvemo Kartli region, Bolnisi Municipality, that was not previously included within the Concept Note submitted. Project partners have coordinated the selection of municipalities with other ENPARD applicants to ensure that there is no overlap or duplication of activities and identified that one other ENPARD applicant proposes implementation in the other three municipalities of Kvemo Kartli. The inclusion of Bolnisi would ensure complete coverage of the region with the implementation of both proposed actions. In addition following the request of the EU, the municipalities of Telavi and Akhmeta of Kakheti region have been included instead of Kareli/Shida Kartli and Senaki/Samegrelo. It is agreed that OXFAM consortium partner ELKANA and Mercy Corps' consortium partner GIPA will both be present in Gori and Kaspi municipalities of Shida Kartli region although there will be close coordination among both consortia in terms of selecting beneficiary communities.

Change in requested contribution: The initial requested EU contribution of 4.5 million Euro is increased with submission of the full application to 4,663,649, within the 20% variation limit confirmed as acceptable in the Call for Proposals Guidelines.

2.1.2 Methodology

a) Methods of implementation and rationale for the proposed methodology

The proposed project aims to support the development of business-orientated small-holder farmers groups in Georgia and build upon the government's efforts to create a more conducive environment for agricultural cooperation. The project design proposes an integrated programmatic approach to achieve these aims that combines research and analysis, awareness raising, organisational development and capacity building, networking, negotiation and advocacy. Central to this approach will be the key principles of: (i) participatory project cycle management; (ii) collective action approach; (iii) working at different points in the supply chain; (iv) building and expanding alliances with a wide range of stakeholders; (v) empowerment of producers; (vi) GEM approach. (vii) gender mainstreaming.

² The FPs will not be employees of the LAs, but will be nominated based upon their appropriate knowledge and experience

The initial **research and assessments** will lay the foundation for the project interventions and will gather information from a combination of sources including community surveys, reports from previous interventions (including lessons learned, best practices and recommendations) and contracted expert analysis. The research will also be used as a baseline for the project intervention, that can be measured against any future assessments at a later stage in the project. Base-line research will underpin the development of **participatory project cycle management** by target farmers groups who will be trained by consortium partners in monitoring, learning and accountability techniques and methodologies. At the outset the project proposes a regional **awareness-raising campaign** to inform farmers on the models and benefits of cooperation and to differentiate it from previous forms of collective action. The project would use a multi-media approach to such a dissemination programme, employing public meetings, information brochures and television and radio campaigns to challenge and change present entrenched negative views and attitudes towards a co-operative model. Once the groups are selected, the project aims to provide them with the strongest platform for their future growth and success. This is the rationale behind providing them with long term support for **organisational development** and **capacity building**, based upon an initial participatory needs assessment that will give them a tailored programme of training and along with continuous coaching. A key aspect of the implementation methodology is to assist the co-operatives in developing their relations with market actors and improving their **business practices** and **negotiation skills** towards building their **power in markets**. The consortium will first analyse the market environment and the actors present and will then provide support to farmers groups in developing, promoting and strengthening linkages with market actors at different points of the supply chain, through regular one-to-one and roundtable meetings. One of the key benefits of cooperation is the increased **collective bargaining power and market knowledge** that the co-operative possess as a group of farmers. To facilitate this bargaining process the farmers will be educated in negotiating techniques and they will be supported in brokering contractual and financial arrangements with suppliers, processors and buyers. Drawing on extensive global experience of the Oxfam designed **GEM approach** the action will prioritise building linkages between the private sector and value chain actors to support small-scale farmers, especially women, increase their share of power in and access to high-value markets.

Through the WEL campaign the project moreover puts **women's rights and empowerment** at the heart of the action. The campaign will actively address the issue of equality of opportunity for women in business management and the agricultural sector, through an education programme within the communities and in schools. It will also support women to play a greater role in management and decision making within co-operatives through training initiatives to increase their participation, confidence and leadership. The project also incorporates DRR and climate change adaptation as core areas to be addressed by the farmers and provides them with appropriate training and practical examples, to be able to make risk assessments and include mitigation measures within their business planning. A key aspect of the implementation methodology is uniting stakeholders to work together on **advocacy** as a coalition. Through the regional fora the proposed project aims to bring together all the key actors who have a vested interest in improving agricultural production and policy formulation in the target regions. In this way the project takes a bottom up approach whereby communities, service providers, businesses and local authorities **build alliances** to play a more proactive role in agricultural and rural development processes in their regions. Throughout the duration of project the partners will liaise with other donors and agencies that are working in the agricultural sector to avoid overlap and duplication and to add value and maximise the impact of the proposed project.

b) How the action is intended to build on previous actions Oxfam and co-applicant partners all have significant experience of working in the Georgian agricultural sector and of providing development assistance and market-based support to agricultural farmers groups and co-operatives. The proposed action builds upon previously implemented projects undertaken by Oxfam and the partners, drawing on the methodologies and tools developed, as well as the learning gained during implementation.

Oxfam most recently implemented a rural livelihoods programme in Western Georgia including the target Samegrelo region, between 2007 and 2012 (funded with Oxfam's own resources) which achieved an average of 25% increase in small-holder farmers' incomes in the vegetable sector through employing the methodological principles outlined above.

Between 2012 and 2013 Oxfam also advocated for and supported the development process for the new Law on Co-operatives, in close collaboration with the EU delegation in Georgia. Close working relationships with key decision makers and stakeholders have been established in the process of consultation meetings in nine regions, including the Ministry of Agriculture and the Agrarian Committee of the Parliament. These relationships will play a key role in strengthening the advocacy component of

the proposed action. Furthermore OXFAM's experience in the South Caucasus and more broadly in its MECIS operational region (includes South Caucasus, Middle East, Central Asia and Russia) include numerous livelihood projects focused on supporting and strengthening small-holder farmers co-operatives and facilitating their linkages to markets, as outlined in section 2.8. The experience and learning from these previously implemented projects have all contributed to the design of the proposed action, including training and capacity building methodologies, and best practice from the GEM (Gendered Enterprise in Markets) approach.

ACF has been present in Georgia working on Food Security and Agricultural development for 19 years, and has significant experience of supporting the establishment of co-operatives (notably in targeted Kvemo Kartli and Samegrelo regions, under the EU TACIS initiative, 2005-2009). Although the environment was not then conducive for co-operative development, many of these groups remain active and would be keen to continue their growth under the proposed action. ACF's experience of creating a successful business development model that has supported IDPs, ethnic minorities and vulnerable rural communities in establishing business enterprises will also be extensively drawn on. Under projects funded by EU, BPRM, Sida and UNHCR, ACF has supported a variety of small businesses; these business planning tools, organisation development methodologies and marketing strategies can be adapted and utilised to support the establishment of the farmers groups. ACF has extensive experience working in the agricultural sector, in areas including irrigation, modern agricultural techniques and sustainable technologies. In March 2013 ACF completed the EU-financed NSA project, "*Assisting Rural Communities through Effective Water Management & Irrigation*", working in partnership with three municipalities in Kvemo Kartli. This project demonstrated the importance of supporting the active involvement of communities and local authorities in engaging with state authorities in their decision-making processes.

Elkana, itself a farmers union, has more than 600 members, and has long-term development experience of working with farmers groups in target regions, providing support with extension services and marketing assistance. It provides information and consultancy via its training centre on marketing, processing technologies and available sales facilities, that have allowed farmers to establish direct links to consumers, distributors wholesalers and traders. These training programmes and curricula will be utilized by Oxfam and co-applicants to support the development of target farmers groups. Elkana is also one of the principal national actors in organic agriculture and certification and the action will draw on the experience gained from its two most recent organic farming projects in Georgia and the South Caucasus region (financed by the Avalon Foundation, and SDC/HEKS-EPER respectively).

Finally, the action also builds on **RCDA**'s ten years experience of project implementation in the target Mtskheta–Mtianeti region. In particular it builds on the experience gained through implementation of two rural community development projects: a CWS (Church World Service) funded food security programme in Galavani Community, and a SIDA funded NTFP value chain project in Mtskheta Municipality (2010-2013). Both projects have supported the advancement of sustainable livelihoods for IDP and rural communities, including a focus on increasing women's involvement in agricultural activities. Methodologies have also been developed to promote greater understanding on DRR and CCA, which will be utilised in the new action. Several community groups in these locations have moreover been identified as potential target farmers groups under the proposed action.

c) How the action is coordinated within a larger programme or any other planned project

The aims and objectives of the proposed action are in line with the State Strategy of Agriculture Development of Georgia (2012-2020) that was agreed by the Government of Georgia in February 2012. The five main results/outputs outlined in the Government's Sector Strategy are: (1) Improving competitiveness through private sector development, including strengthening farmers' groups by promoting farmers' associations and the establishment of a network of farmers' service centres; (2) Capacity building of the institutions and stakeholders involved in agriculture; (3) Development of food production chains, including food quality and animal health related issues; (4) Improved rural infrastructure and; (5) Food security. The proposal addresses several of these issues within its design and the partners will work closely with Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) to further support its initiatives to support agricultural and rural development. As the project will form part of the larger ENPARD initiative, many of the activities will be coordinated with the work of other ENPARD implementing partners. As stated earlier, where possible, the action will aim to create standardized and mutually agreed tools and resources that will be shared with the MoA and the State Agency for Support of Agricultural Co-operatives for approval. The project will also collaborate with the FAO in its technical assistance to the Ministry of Agriculture and will bring forward policy ideas and suggestions raised at the Regional Stakeholder Fora (RSF) for further discussion and future action. Synergies will

be formed with the recently approved Oxfam project *"Improving Food Security through National Strategies and Small Holder Production in the South Caucasus"* (financed by the European Commission) that aims to provide comprehensive and effective approaches to food security and nutrition in the South Caucasus over the next five to ten years. One such synergy will be the work of the GAARD (Georgian Alliance for Agriculture and Rural Development) advocacy network, formed already under this project, that brings together many of the civil society organisations working in agricultural development in Georgia. Finally the action will develop linkages and continue existing Oxfam collaboration with the USAID-funded Economic Prosperity Initiative (EPI) implemented jointly by CNFA and Deloitte Consulting (2010-2014). The proposed ENPARD action is building on the results of three of nine value chains assessed by EPI (hazelnuts, fruits and vegetables and NTFPs) and proposes working with the respective target groups identified during their assessment processes.

d) Procedures for follow up, monitoring and internal/external evaluation

The programme monitoring will be conducted with five objectives in mind: to ensure the programme is being developed according to the action plan; to confirm that the stated outputs are being delivered; to measure the impact of the activities conducted; to allow for the refinement and improvement of the activities and methods used; and to provide insightful and reliable data and information for policy recommendations and future support.

To oversee the monitoring and evaluation process Oxfam will dedicate a full-time MEAL officer (Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning) who will coordinate project monitoring and evaluation, as well as help build the capacity of co-operatives in self-monitoring techniques so they can analyze their progress and ensure their institutional sustainability. An M&E team composed of experts from the consortium partners who will work together with the MEAL officer in designing monitoring tools, overseeing the monitoring process and analysing results. The partner project teams will be responsible for regularly collecting data, which will be used to guide the effective implementation of project activities. This progress data will be summarised during quarterly monitoring visits in Oxfam's monitoring report format. Through these monitoring visits the project team will collect qualitative and quantitative gender disaggregated data against outcome level indicators. The project team will also organise a full-day monitoring review event where project stakeholders, primarily beneficiaries, will participate and actively discuss findings from the monitoring visit: specifically, adherence to standards set (accountability, gender equality and participation), identification and solving of problems, and risks and their mitigation. Identified gaps and means for improving the project will be incorporated back into the monitoring report, translated into Georgian and shared with stakeholders.

Monitoring of the project will be participatory in approach and to ensure accountability will involve feedback from beneficiaries on the support provided and outputs delivered. Through this methodology the project will identify gaps in the level of accountability and this will be documented in an Accountability Improvement Plan and addressed accordingly. A final evaluation will be conducted after completion of project activities using an external consultant. Selection of an evaluator will be in line with Oxfam's Evaluation Policy which provides details for communicating the evaluation TOR with the donor and stakeholders. The evaluation will look at project achievements at impact-level and the final evaluation report (approved and accepted by the Project Steering Committee) will be translated and shared widely with stakeholders. During the project lifespan, the project team will organise two major Learning Events aimed at capturing key information on the project development and progress and documenting both positive and negative feedback. All information and data from these monitoring reviews and learning events, will be analyzed by the Project Steering Committee (see below under 'section f') and decisions will be taken on how to adapt and fine tune programme implementation to best meet the targets set. Furthermore annual partnership meetings will be organised with other ENPARD and EU project implementing partners for mutual learning, coordination, peer review and support. All project reporting requirements will be met in accordance with EU guidelines and Oxfam welcomes any additional external monitoring that the EC may organise that will help inform the project implementation and development.

e) Role, participation and attitudes of various actors and stakeholders in the action

Oxfam and co-applicant agencies have jointly designed the action, and the planned activities reflect the partner's complementary knowledge and experience in different aspects of project implementation. As described above **Oxfam** will lead on implementation of the action, and will be responsible for overseeing the design, planning and monitoring of the various tools and systems that are to be used to conduct the activities, whilst the three **co-applicant partners** will be responsible for the delivery of activities in their respective target regions. The partners will employ the services of **SEDEV and other specialist service providers, such as agricultural NGOs, universities, research institutes**

and training academies, and their participation will bring additional perspectives, knowledge and information, that will benefit the beneficiaries of the action, as well as the partners. At the community level the partners have already developed strong relations and a high level of community trust within the target regions. Input from the **farming communities** will be sought during the participatory assessments at the outset of the project, that will aid the design and fine tuning of activities. These communities will be recipients of the awareness raising campaign and later, potentially, as co-operative beneficiaries. Within the co-operatives, members will be taught on how to self monitor the progress of their work and business activities, so that they are able to play a proactive role in the overall project assessment and evaluation. During the proposal development process input and ideas were actively sought from a wide range of stakeholders who will later be involved in action implementation. The partners have met with representatives of the **Ministry of Agriculture**, to discuss the role and involvement of the recently formed **RICCs** in the initiative. The MoA welcomes RICCs' collaboration in the action project, and it has been suggested that they can be involved in technical trainings, demonstration units, as well as playing an active role in regional agricultural fora. They would also be recipients of trainings on issues such as co-operative development, new innovative agricultural techniques/technologies and gender issues. The project will also maintain strong ties with the **Department of Melioration Policy** and the state service provider, **United Georgian Irrigation Company (UGIC)**, as well as the **State Mechanization Services** ("Mekanizatori" LTD). Finally the project will work very closely with **agricultural companies and extension service providers**. In preparation for the proposal the partners have already met with several companies working on the target sectors and value chains, including Bioproduct Ltd, KULA Ltd and Ferrero, who explained their principle needs at this time and the gaps existing with supply of quality products. Through the market assessments at the start of the project other key businesses will be identified and contacted.

f) Organisational structure and team proposed for implementation of the action (by functions)

To ensure effective programme planning, coordination and implementation of project a **Project Steering Committee (PSC)** will be formed, which will include representatives of Oxfam and co-applicant partner agencies. The PSC will be responsible for assessing the progress of the project and guiding its future direction. The key staff members for the four organisations will be as follows, with percentages reflecting the amount of time staff will dedicate to the project as per budget:

Oxfam ENPARD Team

Program Manager (BL 1.1.1.1) - 50%: Overall lead/management responsibility for the project; Primary responsibility for policy advocacy component of the project. Project Officer (BL 1.1.1.2) - 100%: Daily management of the project activities, monitoring and reporting; Project Assistant (BL 1.1.1.6) - 100%: Secretarial support and communications; Monitoring and Evaluation officer (MEAL) (BL 1.1.1.3) - 100%: Coordinate monitoring and evaluation as well as builds the capacity of co-operatives in self-monitoring techniques to ensure institutional sustainability. Gender Programme Manager (BL 1.1.1.4) - 30%: Gender analysis, WEL campaign, coordination of gender mainstreaming activities. Finance Manager (BL 1.1.2.2) - 20% and Finance Officer (BL 1.1.2.1) - 100%: Financial management and accounting. HR Admin Officer (1.1.2.4) - 20%: Recruitment and support on HR issues. Driver (BL 1.1.2.3) - 100%: Driving project staff and provision of logistical support. All the activities related to contract management will be supported by the Oxfam project team. Oxfam GB has an existing Agricultural Livelihoods Team of five staff with several years' experience, which will build capacity of the partners and provide technical advice and project management support. In addition technical staff on MEL, gender and DRR will be available for consultation throughout the project life. Oxfam will coordinate with SEDEV to coordinate their technical support to the project.

ACF ENPARD Team

M&E Officer (BL 1.1.1.17) - 25%: Responsible for the technical quality assurance of monitoring, in charge of preparation, support to the creation of and the analysis of baseline and on-line surveys and developing monitoring and data collection tools. Program Officer - Food Security & Livelihoods (BL 1.1.1.18) - 75%: Plans, manages, oversees and coordinates the implementation of ACF FSL projects to ensure a complementary and comprehensive approach plus ensure stated results are achieved. Deputy Program Officer x 2: (BL 1.1.1.19) - 80%: Ensures efficient day-to-day implementation and coordination of FSL projects. Assists PO in reporting, project management and staff supervision. Facilitator x 2: (BL 1.1.1.20) - 100%: Daily field implementation, maintains regular relations with local stakeholders, establishes relationships with communities and supports and monitors field activities. Community Mobilizer/East Georgia (BL 1.1.1.21) - 100% Support the entry into Telavi which is a new location for consortium partners. He/she will work directly with the farmers, implement activities at community level, capacity building of target beneficiaries, monitoring & reporting, support activities of Facilitator at the initial stage of implementation. Head of Base East Georgia (BL 1.1.2.11) - 25% and

Head of Base West Georgia/Abkhazia: (BL 1.2.2) - 20%: Run and manage the respective office (oversight of logistics, administration and security). Provides programmatic support and strategic coherence. Program Finance Officer: (BL 1.1.2.15) - 40%: Oversees project-related financial issues at base level EG and WG/ABK. Admin Assistant WG: (BL 1.1.2.17) - 25%: In charge for administrative activities in WG office and facilitating communication between WG office and Coordination Office. Logistics Coordinator EG /WG: (BL 1.1.2.14) - 60%: Logisticians EG /WG (1.1.2.17) - ACF (70%). Performs all logistic issues at base level (procurement, management/maintenance of equipment/vehicles fleet and security. Drivers x 3: (BL 1.1.2.19) - 100%: Drive project teams to the areas of implementation and logistic staff for procurement purposes. Cleaners x 2: (BL 1.1.2.20) - 75%: Clean/maintain the office on part-time basis. In addition the project will be supported by ACF staff in Tbilisi Regional Coordination Office. These HQ staff will provide the following support: (i) Institutional and legal relations in the region and global coordination; (ii) Technical support and coordination; (iii) Information exchange between field teams and ACF technical departments in Madrid HQ; (iv) Human resource management; (v) Additional administrative, logistical and financial managerial support.

RCDA ENPARD Team

Project Manager (BL 1.1.1.11) - 50%: Overall management and coordination of the project. Facilitating the daily operations of the project staff; managing human and financial resources coordinating project activities and organising the monitoring of project. Project Officer (BL 1.1.1.12) - 100%: Monitoring project activities and preparing monthly and quarterly progress reports. Performs capacity building and leadership in gender mainstreaming. NTFP Value Chain Facilitator (BL 1.1.1.13) - 50%: Provides technical guidance on developing NTFP co-operatives of local farmers and developing NTFP specific training modules. Conducts quality assurance and technical review of project outputs (Accountant: managing day-to-day financial transactions and accounting; preparation of financial reports; developing financial mechanism. Accountant (BL 1.1.2.7) - 40%: Book-keeping and financial accounting; Admin Assistant (BL 1.1.2.10) - 100%: Office based secretarial work and administrative support of the project. Community Facilitators x 3 (BL 1.1.1.15) - 50%: Liaises with target communities, supervises activities at the community level, capacity building of target beneficiaries, monitoring & reporting. Driver/logistician: (BL 1.1.2.8) - 80%: Driving, assistance in procurement and deliveries. Facility Officer: (BL 1.1.1.14) - 20%: Provide technical support for joint facilities/storage.

Elkana ENPARD Team

Project Supervisor (BL 1.1.1.7) - 25%: Overall coordination of the project, internal monitoring and evaluation and overall quality control of the project implementation. Project Coordinator (BL 1.1.1.8) - 100%: Overall management of the project, and project staff/expert, coordinating with partners and preparing reports Project Assistant (BL 1.1.1.9) - 50%: Assists the PC in project organizational issues, preparing training & meeting reports & arranging other day to day activities. Local Coordinators in Gori&Akhmeta (BL 1.1.1.10) - 90%: Regional coordination of the project work, mobilization of communities, arrangement of trainings and meeting & identification of local stakeholders. Administrator/Logistician (BL 1.1.2.5) - 50%: Logistical support to the project, arrangement of contracts, purchase of equipment and supplies etc. Financial Officer (BL 1.1.2.7) - 40%: Performs financial reporting.

g) Main means proposed for the implementation of the action

The following equipment is requested by the partner agencies to enable them to implement the project effectively: vehicles (5); computers (18 pcs, 3 laptops); printers (2); scanner (1); overhead projectors (2); digital cameras (1). During project implementation, following the approval of the co-operatives business and procurement plans, the project partners will procure all necessary agricultural equipment, materials and facilities requested by the co-operatives via the capital investment fund using cost-share methodology.

h) Activities in order to ensure the visibility of the action and the EU funding

Oxfam and co-applicant partners will ensure that the action is widely publicised and that EU visibility is prominent at all events and on all action documents. A specific visibility and communication plan will be developed and visibility activities will commence with the introductory meetings with beneficiaries and stakeholders, where an informational brochure will be distributed outlining the projects principal aims, objectives and activities and detailing the source of funding and EU's support. Electronic publications - including research papers and assessment reports - produced by the partners, will carry the logo of the EU and a description of the project activities supported by this funding. Moreover, visibility banners will be made to be displayed at all training, workshop and public events and all communication materials (brochures, guides, handbooks and leaflets) printed will recognize the support from EU. Equipment and materials purchased through the project budget will be marked with stickers bearing the EU and Oxfam/co-applicant partner logos. For demonstration plots and for larger

resources supported (i.e. irrigation equipment, storage, processing units) signboards, clearly displaying the EU contribution, along with contributions from other parties, will be placed in all project areas. Outputs from the action will be photographed and videos also recorded for selected actions. These photos and videos, along with all reports and documents, will be placed on Oxfam's and co-applicant partners' web-sites, to provide a permanent record of the action that can be viewed both locally and internationally.

2.1.3 Duration and indicative action plan for implementing the action (max 4 pages)

The duration of the action will be **48 months**.

Year 1													
	Half-year 1						Half-year 2						
Activity	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Implementing body
Preparation Activity 1.1 Conduct a Baseline/End line Survey													Oxfam with support to design from Co-Applicants (CAs)
Execution Activity 1.1 Conduct a Baseline/ End line Survey													Oxfam with support to design from Co-Applicants (CAs)
Preparation Activity 1.2 Create awareness raising programme and guide on co-operatives													Oxfam with support to design from Co-Applicants (CAs)
Execution Activity 1.2 Create awareness raising programme and guide on co-operatives													Oxfam with support to design from Co-Applicants (CAs)
Preparation 1.3 Awareness raising and sensitisation on cooperation													Co-Applicants in their respective regions
Execution 1.3 Awareness raising and sensitisation cooperation													Co-Applicants in their respective regions
Preparation 1.4 Identify and select groups to be supported													Co-Applicants in their respective regions with OXFAM's coaching
Execution 1.4 Identify and select groups to be supported													Co-Applicants in their respective regions with OXFAM's coaching
Preparation Activity 1.5 Develop Toolkit for Capacity Building and Organisational Development for farmers groups /coops													Oxfam with support to design from Co-Applicants (CAs)
Execution Activity 1.5 Develop Toolkit for Capacity Building and Organisational Development for farmers groups/coops													Oxfam with support to design from Co-Applicants (CAs)
Preparation Activity 1.6 Deliver Capacity Building and Organisational Development for farmers groups/coops													Co-Applicants in their respective regions
Execution Activity 1.6 Deliver Capacity Building and Organisational Development for farmers groups/coops													Co-Applicants in their respective regions
Preparation Activity 1.7 Support with the founding and registration of co-operatives													Co-Applicants in their respective regions

Preparation Activity 1.7 Support with the founding and registration of co-operatives						Co-Applicants in their respective regions
Execution Activity 1.7 Support with the founding and registration of co-operatives						Co-Applicants in their respective regions
Preparation Activity 1.8 Facilitate Market Promotion and Linkages						OGB with expert support
Execution Activity 1.8 Facilitate Market Promotion and Linkages						OGB with expert support
Preparation Activity 2.1 Design and deliver sector specific trainings						Co-Applicants in respective regions
Execution Activity 2.1 Design and deliver sector specific trainings						Co-Applicants in respective regions
Preparation Activity 2.2 Establish and manage Demonstration Plots						Co-Applicants in their respective regions
Execution Activity 2.2 Establishment and manage Demonstration Plots						Co-Applicants in respective regions
Preparation Activity 2.3 Support the introduction of new, cost effective technologies, techniques and equipment						Co-Applicants in respective regions
Execution Activity 2.3 Support the introduction of new, cost effective technologies, techniques and equipment						Co-Applicants in respective regions
Preparation Activity 2.4 Facilitate access to extension services						Co-Applicants in respective regions
Execution Activity 2.4 Facilitate access to extension services						Co-Applicants in respective regions
Preparation Activity 2.5 Raise Awareness on Food Safety standards						OGB with support to design from Co-Applicants (CAs)
Execution Activity 2.5 Raise Awareness on Food Safety standards						Oxfam with support to design from Co-Applicants (CAs)
Preparation Activity 2.6 Develop understanding on disaster and climate change risks and vulnerabilities						RCDA
Execution Activity 2.6 Develop understanding on disaster and climate change risks and vulnerabilities						RCDA
Preparation Activity 3.1 Design and implement WEL campaign and educational programme						Oxfam with support to design from Co
Execution Activity 3.1 Design and implement WEL campaign and educational programme						Oxfam with support to design from Co
Preparation Activity 3.2 Support establishment of women farmer's groups						Co-Applicants in respective regions (coaching of OGB)
Execution Activity 3.2 Support establishment of women farmer's groups						Co-Applicants in respective regions (coaching of OGB)
Preparation Activity 4.1 Establish and/or strengthen regional co-operative stakeholder fora						Oxfam with support to design from Co-Applicants (CAs)

Execution Activity 4.1 Establish and/or strengthen regional co-operative stakeholder fora							Oxfam with support to design from Co-Applicants (CAs)
Preparation Activity 4.2 Support strong engagement of local authorities in co-operative and agricultural development processes							Co-Applicants in respective regions (coaching of OGB)
Execution Activity 4.2 Support strong engagement of local authorities in co-operative and agricultural development processes							Co-Applicants in respective regions (coaching of OGB)

2.1.4 Sustainability of the action

Project impact, potential multiplier effects and dissemination

The project aims to make a positive impact on the effectiveness of agricultural production in Georgia, supporting small-holder farmers at the local level, whilst also working to improve the overall policy environment. At the community and local level, the project will support the development of business-orientated farmers groups and co-operatives that will have been strengthened both organisationally and technically.

At the technical level: The aim is that by the end of the project timeframe the farmers will be in a strong position to successfully manage their groups and co-operatives and that they will also have been able to increase their productivity through improved technical skills and knowledge, the adoption of new technologies and the use of sustainable farming practices. Through the technical trainings and demonstration units the benefits of new cultivation techniques and technologies, will reach a wider audience than merely the co-operative members, disseminating information on new technologies and the use of sustainable farming practices throughout the regions, with a strong potential for replication from other farmers.

At the economic level: The project also anticipates a positive impact that will be created through improved linkages between farmers' co-operatives and suppliers, processors and buyers: co-operatives will be in a better position to collectively negotiate and bargain with these market actors. This will benefit farmers by allowing them to have easier access to services and to be able to sell their products with better terms, thus increasing incomes in rural communities and reducing poverty levels. At the same time there will also be strong benefits for the market actors in that it will allow input suppliers to explore new markets for their products and it will allow processors and businesses to have increased supply of high-quality products. As the co-operative movement begins to develop in Georgia, it is anticipated that other farmers (and indeed other non-agricultural businesses) will see the positive benefits of cooperation and collective bargaining and will be encouraged to also adopt the co-operative model.

At the policy level: The project aims to have a strong, long lasting impact at the regional and national level, through the advocacy work of the regional fora. These fora are a platform for co-operative members, service providers, processors, NGOs and other stakeholders to meet and discuss issues and constraints, affecting the co-operatives and their respective agricultural sectors. The issues will then be brought forward through the GAARD advocacy network to government actors, donor agencies and other relevant decision making bodies for discussion and potential policy and legislative changes that will help make for a more conducive environment for co-operative and agricultural development. The project aims to increase the role of Local Authorities within the agricultural sector and through the training and involvement of Focal Points within the action, it is anticipated that LAs will play a more proactive role in agriculture, both within the project, and also when determining their own municipal development strategies.

At the social level: The other focal area where the project plans to make a decisive impact is the empowerment of women farmers and increasing their involvement in the agricultural and business environment. The WEL campaign aims to improve women farmer's technical and organisational capacities with the result that more women take on more managerial roles within the co-operatives. At the same time the campaign will work towards changing attitudes of both men and women of different ages throughout the regions towards women's roles in agriculture and business. This campaign, along with the positive model that 'women-led' co-operatives will provide, aims to encourage other women to play a more active role in agricultural and business management.

Dissemination channels: The following channels will be used to promote best practices and encourage multiplier effects of the action:

Co-ordination meetings and roundtables with LAs, RICCs, state and private-sector service providers and extension services etc. to exchange information and share learning among action stake holders; Demonstration field days, on-site visits and exchange visits – target communities broadly will benefit from these activities as well as target farmers groups specifically; Media : Print, electronic and social media will provide outlets for raising public awareness of farmers’ challenges, and sharing evidence of successful businesses with the government and private sector. Action learning will also be shared within the sector through Oxfam’s GEM “Grow Sell Thrive” and “Policy and Practice” web-sites, consortium partner web-sites, and global web-based partnership networks (International Co-operative Alliance, Global Mountain Forum etc.) Publications: Best practices will be shared through publications of brochures and co-operative guidebooks.

Campaigns: Co-operative awareness-raising and WEL campaigns co-operatives will impact on target communities broadly to achieve maximum impact; Advocacy platforms such as RSF and GUARD will target both national and local government authorities as well as private sector companies to adopt relevant support schemes and promote increased investment in small-holder agriculture;

Risk analysis and contingency plan.

Risks	Mitigation
Political Factors	
Change of agricultural policy that would decrease the motivation of farmers to join co-operatives (low)	Engage with government and advocate to keep a positive environment for co-operative development. Ensure that all stakeholders are aware of new policies and understand how they affect them.
Gaps/constraining factors in legislative framework that could impact on market supply and demand (medium)	Advocacy platforms developed to raise issues on gaps / constraints within framework and promote positive change.
Social Factors:	
Lack of understanding of the co-operative model (high)	Strong awareness raising campaign explaining potential advantages of cooperation
Conflict among co-operative members impacting on organisational development (high)	Co-operative charters will be well elaborated to address resolution of potential conflicts and agree solutions. All equipment and supplies provided will be collectively owned by co-operatives as an entity, and not by individual farmers to prevent conflict over material assets.
Men and women in target communities are not willing to change perceptions and attitudes on gender roles leading to low participation of women farmers (medium)	The gender mainstreaming and culturally sensitive approach, as well as pre-existing trust with local communities and success of previous actions in target regions will ensure that beneficiaries will be co-operative and receptive to the women’s economic leadership activities
Climatic/Environmental Factors:	
Harsh climatic conditions (drought, frost, hail etc.) impact on crop yields (medium)	Project will encourage agricultural technologies / methods (irrigation, mulching, soil hoeing, cultivation techniques etc.) to mitigate against these potential problematic climatic issues
Natural disasters hindering implementation of project activities (low)	Disaster risk mitigation strategies will be developed with target beneficiaries. Project will facilitate improved access to agricultural insurance.
Economic Factors	
Price fluctuation on markets impacts on farmer’s incomes (medium)	Improved storage / cooling facilities will provide advantages to co-operatives when there are changing market conditions.
Farmers are not able to provide cost-sharing for their contribution within business plan (medium)	Co-operatives will be assisted to get additional finances from state / bank credit programmes

Preconditions and Principle Assumptions

As previously described the **preconditions** which the proposal responds to are 1 The government's demonstrated commitment to re-vitalizing the agricultural economy and the passing of the new "Law on Co-operatives", along with 2. A broader legislative package, that creates a more conducive environment for the development of co-operative structures for small-holder farmers.

The **principle assumptions** at this time are: 1. the overall political situation remains stable 2. Macro-economic and fiscal policies are stable and support local actions for economic development. 3. There is a conducive regulatory and legislation base 4, the government will continue to provide support to the agricultural sector and will respond in a positive proactive manner to policy recommendations and ideas 5. The Government will continue to provide support to the agricultural sector and develop further supportive policies and incentives to aid co-operative development 6. Effective coordination between value-chain actors 7. All stakeholders within the agricultural sectors are committed to improve and strengthen the value chains 8. Local government reform progressing and local authorities are committed to including agricultural development strategies within their municipal development plans. 9. Implemented DRR activities reduce the negative consequences of damage/loss due to natural hazards

Sustainability following action completion

The action aims to lay strong foundations for agricultural cooperation in Georgia, and has been designed to support the long-term sustainability of the co-operatives and the environment in which they operate.

Institutional sustainability The action places significant emphasis on creating the tools and mechanisms that will support the institutional development of the new farmers groups / co-operatives to ensure that they are able to effectively operate beyond the project's timeframe. At the same time the project looks to develop their technical knowledge and skills and to strengthen their farming resources, so that they can be more competitive and, ultimately, more viable as successful businesses. The activities focused on market promotion and supporting access to services, are specifically designed to strengthen the economic sustainability of the co-operative businesses: through brokering business relations with market actors (buyers, input suppliers, service providers), by facilitating long term contractual relationships, in supporting the development of new products and branding and by promoting their products on a wider scale. All of these different levels of support will help the co-operatives in gaining greater potential and power within markets. It is anticipated that the benefits and advantages of working in cooperation will become apparent to the participating farmers during the project lifetime. The ability to be able to share costs on materials and equipment, to receive favourable deals from service providers and to negotiate collectively with processors and buyers, should be seen as a positive reason to continue the co-operative approach in the future.

Financial sustainability Oxfam's market based approach will be applied in designing the action intervention to ensure the financial viability of target farmers groups in the long term. Particular emphasis will be given to facilitation of market linkages with private sector companies from the outset of the action to ensure that fair contractual arrangements are in place. The increased quality of farmer produce will further support long term profitability of newly established co-operatives, whilst the co-operative organisation itself represents the key cost-saving mechanism for farmers through collective procurement of inputs and joint sales and marketing systems. Increased production and purchasing power, as well as legal requirements of the new law on co-operatives, will moreover ensure re-investment of profits by smallholder farmers into further development of their joint businesses. In addition the emphasis placed on developing sound business plans and the obligation on providing co-financing for the procurement of capital assets, will ensure that the farmers have carefully considered their investment requirements and are committed to their long-term use and maintenance. All assets procured by the project will be placed on the balance of the co-operative, rather than on individuals, and farmers will sign a MoU that they take joint responsibility for assets which cannot be sold for the benefit of any private individual. Professional training will also be provided on the operation and use of equipment and facilities procured, to further guarantee that they will be properly managed and utilised.

Policy level sustainability, The action has a strong focus on supporting policy level sustainability, through the Regional Stakeholder fora and the GAARD advocacy network. These mechanisms strongly contribute to action sustainability in the following ways: (i) they provide a platform from which the voices of the target beneficiaries - small holder farmers, rural poor and other rural vulnerable group – can be heard (ii) they ensure constant policy dialogue among the concerned stakeholders, including farmers groups and organizations, private sector entities, local and national authorities, specialized

academic institutions, CBOs and NGOs; (ii) they provide policy and decision-makers with tangible, evidence-based information on areas for future support and for potential changes to policies and the regulatory frameworks. Also, it is hoped that the principal methodologies that are developed within the framework of the project, will be adopted and used as standard practice by both state and non-state actors. It is envisaged that the guide for raising awareness on co-operatives and the tool kit for Capacity Building and Organisational Development for Co-operatives will not only serve the project purposes, but in the long term will come to be seen as nationally agreed methodologies for supporting the development of co-operative organizations in Georgia. To facilitate this the active engagement of all the ENPARD implementing organizations, as well as the relevant state agencies that have a direct connection with agricultural cooperation, such as Ministry of Agriculture, Parliament Committee on the Agrarian affairs, State Agency for Agricultural Co-operatives, RICCs etc., will be involved in developing these tools and methodologies.

Environmental sustainability The organic farming techniques and technologies that will be promoted and supported aim to have a positive impact on the land and its future use in target communities. All these techniques and technologies reduce the need for the use of chemical products and save on natural resources. The DRR component aims to support farmers in preparing risk assessments of the potential hazards that they may face and mitigation activities that they can implement to avoid or reduce these risks, which will strengthen the environmental resilience of their businesses.