APD - SOUTHEAST EUROPE

EVALUATION (PPR) OF THE CURRENT PHASE

PRESENTATION OF THE PRELIMINARY RESULTS

OHRID – 03.06.2025

Gefördert durch:
Bundesministerium für Ernährung und Landwirtschaft
aufgrund eines Beschlusses des Deutschen Bundestages

South Eastern Europe
SWG RRD
Regional Rural Development Standing Working Group

GFA CONSULTING GROUP
Generalbeauftragter BMEL Büro Berlin

ITC International Training & Consulting

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2. Brief overview of the project
3. Analysis and assessment of project planning and implementation - based on OECD-DAC criteria -
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1. PPR MISSION AND METHODICAL APPROACH

- Six months before the end of current phase → PPR required (hybrid)
  Analysis and evaluation of project planning and project implementation
  - if positive: Recommendation for a possible continuation

- Evaluation of project documents, project homepages and other media, information on the Western Balkans + Moldova from internet sources

- Coordination meetings and semi-structured interviews (via MS teams, telephone) with:
  BMEL, GFA, project implementers SWG, IAK, REAWGs, IAMO, FAO, GIZ, …

- The hybrid methodology expands the range of people interviewed **(sample)**

2. BRIEF OVERVIEW OF THE PROJECT

- Project start July 2021

- APD currently still in the first phase
  - extension option applied (07 / 2021 - 12 / 2025)
  - since 07 / 2024 integration of **forest component**

→ Project type APD – Agricultural Policy Dialogue (within 3 project types)

Project objective (Outcome):
"The policy framework for agriculture, forestry and rural development in the SEE countries has been strengthened regarding implementation of the EU Green Agenda for the Western Balkans and alignment with the CAP 2023-2027"

2. FF. – BRIEF OVERVIEW OF THE PROJECT

✧ Project Results (Outputs)

① **Technical dialogue on wine**:
Regional cooperation on regulation and market development in line with the EU Green Agenda and the CAP 2023-2027.

② **Technical dialogue on organic agriculture:**
Regional cooperation in line with the EU Green Agenda and the CAP 2023-2027.

③ **Technical dialogue on Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation Systems (AKIS):**
Strengthen Knowledge and innovation transfer structures in the SEE countries to promote innovation in agriculture and other agri-food products and services.

④ **General Agricultural Policy Dialogue Facility:**
Regional cooperation is strengthened on selected further agricultural policy issues (e.g. agric. policy monitoring, soil, women and youth)

⑤ **Towards a climate partnership for agriculture:**
The strategies, plans and priority setting for climate adaptation measures in agriculture are aligned among SEE countries and with the EU Strategy on Adaptation to Climate Change and the European Green Deal.

⑥ **Technical dialogue on close-to-nature forest management:**
Policies and/or technical methods are improved in at least two forest development priorities contribution towards EU's target of a climate-neutral continent

3. ANALYSIS AND ASSESSMENT OF PROJECT PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION (OECD-DAC)

Relevance - Is the project doing the right things? (conception)

- Very much in line with the programme objectives of the **BMELH – BKP** and the **needs of the partners**
- Demand-oriented support towards **market-based framework** conditions and **resource-conserving agriculture** in the sector (results 1 to 5)
  + Promoting sustainable and multifunctional forest managemend and education and training in **applied methods** (result 6)
- Content fits in very well with the **overarching agricultural policy objectives** of the countries of the Western Balkans and Moldova
  (Ministries of Agriculture of the 6+1 countries, in some cases also the Ministry of the Environment)

3. ANALYSIS AND ASSESSMENT OF PROJECT PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION (OECD-DAC)

Relevance 2 - Is the project doing the right things? (conception)

- The direct target groups (ministries and universities) are **well addressed** by the content of the APD.
  The indirect target groups are involved on **a case-by-case** basis
  (e.g. private sector)
- **Indicators** at outcome and output level should be formulated more strongly according to **SMART criteria**
- Project concept is reasonable and systemic and takes into account the social (family farming), ecological and economic **dimensions of sustainability**
- Great Networking and exceptional adaptability in **a complex multilateral environment** with numerous stakeholders

3. ANALYSIS AND ASSESSMENT OF PROJECT PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION (OECD-DAC)

Coherence – How well does the project fit (context with other projects)

- Coherence (internal + external) is more pronounced than in **other APDs**
- Unique selling point (USP) in the Western Balkans in terms of **methodology** and its **combination** with specific content and cross-regional cooperation
- APD operates in a complementary manner with **regard to the German development cooperation** actors and is based on a division of labour
- Collaboration with FAO, UBA (Austria), EU
- Shares learning experiences via **numerous dialogue formats**, 2 well-structured homepages and social media as well as communication media (Instagram, X, Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube).

3. ANALYSIS AND ASSESSMENT OF PROJECT PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION (OECD-DAC)

Effectiveness - Is the project achieving its objective? (Outcome Level)

Project objective (Outcome): Policy framework for agric., forest. , rural devel. in SEE strengthened → EU Green Agenda + alignment with CAP 2023-2027

- Important contributions to **building trust**, establishing **contacts,** mutual **appreciation** and the open **exchange** of opinions and experiences on complex topics at a wide range of levels
- Extensive work on **policy-relevant technical topics** in 8 working groups (REAWGs)
- Numerous comprehensive **studies and publications** on the work of the REAWGs produced

3. ANALYSIS AND ASSESSMENT OF PROJECT PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION (OECD-DAC)

Effectiveness 2 - Is the project achieving its objective? (Outcome Level)

- Project **management** is situational and meaningful, **Monitoring** of the APD **is kept lean** (via logframe in progress reports, Gantt chart, no more in-depth monitoring as described in GFA handout)
- BMEL and GFA **heavily involved**, Ministries in the WB participate via REAWGs and several other dialogue formats
- Results **(Outputs)** and project objective **(Outcome)** already largely fulfilled or exceeded

3. ANALYSIS AND ASSESSMENT OF PROJECT PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION (OECD-DAC)

Efficiency – How well are resources used?

- Regional project with 6 countries + Moldova.
  Budget nevertheless only **moderately above bilateral APDs**.
- Services, products and effects quantitatively and qualitatively high,
  → **very cost-efficient project** (also in comparison to other bilateral APDs)
- **Budget increases** in line with the situation.
  Co-financing acquired through cooperation with other donors and projects (GIZ, FAO, EU, UBA Austria)

3. ANALYSIS AND ASSESSMENT OF PROJECT PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION (OECD-DAC)

Efficiency – How well are resources used

- Project measures **well chosen and demand-orientated.** Efficiency (doing things right) naturally shows fluctuations in the very different context of countries of the WB
- The outcomes / Impacts could not have been achieved more cost-effectively with a **different project format of the BKP**
- **Political partner** contributions to SWG

3. ANALYSIS AND ASSESSMENT OF PROJECT PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION (OECD-DAC)

Impacts – What difference does the project make?

Development objective: EU accession process of the WB countries and Moldova in the areas of agricult., forest. + rural developm. is proceeding in an effective and well- coordinated manner.

- Achieving the **project objective** is likely to contribute to the development objective
- The project has supported positive structural and institutional developments and changes
- **Very good coordination by SWG**, regional approach, building trust, exchange of experience, and benchmarking are very important for the success
- **Significant differences** between the participating countries represented challenges from time to time

3. ANALYSIS AND ASSESSMENT OF PROJECT PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION (OECD-DAC)

Sustainability – Will the benefits last?

Persistence of effects (outcome and impact level)

- Results, laws, regulations, action plans are **politically anchored** and will continue to exist, ownership in ministries is recognisable
- **SWG – Ownership + institutional and human resources** to maintain the positive effects of the project after its completion
  However, external contracts and budgets are required to follow Up
- **Accession topics** - EU Green Agenda, Sofia Declaration, CAP 2023-2027 all also and in particular aim at
  resilience, risk reduction and risk management
- EU alignment / accession should have a **very lasting, positive and sustainable** impact on the social, economic, political and ecological situation

3. ANALYSIS AND ASSESSMENT OF PROJECT PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION (OECD-DAC)

Sustainability 2 – Will the benefits last?

Persistence of effects (outcome and impact level)

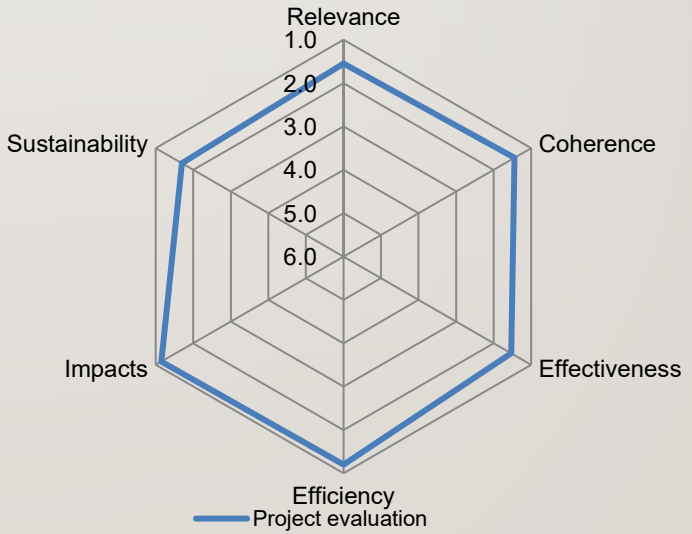
- **3 dimensions of sustainability:**
  a) Knowledge of the different perspectives will have a current and lasting influence on content, processes and decisions
     → **Sustainability in** framework conditions, macroeconomic, ecological and social aspects (family farming)

  b) Establishing contacts and building trust contribute to the lasting impact of APD
     → **Personnel and** know-how sustainability this component should ***never be underestimated***

  c) Strengthening and valorising participating institutions in APD
     → **Institutional sustainability**

3. EVALUATION RESULTS ACCORDING TO OECD - DAC

Criteria	Project Evaluation
Relevance	1,6
Coherence	1,4
Effectiveness	1,5
Efficiency	1,2
Impacts	1,2
Sustainability	1,7
Overall grade (total)	**1,4**



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4. EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

SUBJECT	
General Information	**Very positive assessment** of the project activities and the impact APD has already achieved. Existing and verifiable strengths in all result areas. Social capital and peer learning in REAWGs, high political interest.
	Excellent relationship, networking and appreciation with key people and institutions → **knowledge exchange, trust**
	Wide variety of topics implemented. **Project objective** and results almost completely achieved in terms of quantity and quality
	Very good, effective and economical project - also in comparison with **other APDs** of the BKP
	Great added value of APD confirmed by all dialogue partners
	Clear recommendation for continuation of the project in 2nd phase (3 + 2 years) – until 2030

4. EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

SUBJECT	
Topics & Contents	**EU platform:** Utilise skilled experts from other EU countries in dialogue and strengthen relationship with DGs in Brussels
	Reorganise and prioritise **working groups** and their topics
	More collaboration with **other donors and FAO** - capacity building in ministries
	Advisory services: how to develop and integrate them more into work? Methodology / soft skill training needed Good examples in North Macedonia and Serbia
	More **linkage to practice** needed – bottom up (associations, companies)
	Utilise and disseminate **flagship / lighthouse projects as benchmarks**, e.g. Future GIZ project climate smart advisory

4. EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

SUBJECT	
Topics & Contents	**Implementation of study results** and their **monitoring** – e.g. Women and Youth: Determine a fixed sample (panel), commissioned group (possibly within the policy monitoring working group) systematically collects data once a year, draws up recommendations for implementation, correction, etc. → **Pilot project** with potential to serve as a benchmark
Stakeholders and Partners	Involve the **private sector** more via associations and flagship companies – as well experts from private sector
	Include other EU countries (e.g. SWG experts outside the region – Greece, Slovenia …), stronger relationship with **DGs in Brussels** (regular meetings needed)
	More **collaboration with other donors**, e.g. EU, Worldbank, FAO, ...

4. EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

SUBJECT	
Methodology	Develop and apply **harmonisation monitoring** → more communication between REAWGs necessary
	Develop and apply agile counselling formats, **e.g. policy briefs**
	Valorisation / capitalisation of the many good studies and publications → further development into well communicable advisory tools and products
	Contribute **knowledge and experience** of APD to other projects and donors
	Check methodology of **Moldova project** and include if appropriate
	Development and implementation of more sophisticated **methods of distance learning** or better hybrid learning in trainings
	Logframe should be more precisely, indicators where possible according to **SMART criteria**

4. EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

SUBJECT	
Methodology	**Improve efficiency in REAWGs**, e.g. combine wine and organics to a greater extent
	Create **standards for everything** (Planning, trainings → modules, studies, communication, analysis, etc.)
	Reduce frequency in some **REAWGs**, sharpen priorities, adapted formats and methods
	Public relations work - develop it further (new, fresh) and include it as a **specific task** in project planning, appoint people responsible for it

4. EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

SUBJECT	
Methodology	Analysis and planning → **thinking out of the box:** Consider and test further methods that are designed for very complex conditions, e.g. methods of: Chaos Theory, Market Systems Development (MSD), Bottleneck Approach, Quick Wins (to keep motivation alive), etc. → **contract 2 very skilled** experts in methodology and communication to analyse and suggest (1 national / regional, 1 international)
	Monitoring and implementation: How are action plans organised? How are results and recommendations implemented? How can implementation be tracked and supported in the process? Review existing monitoring and design a lean standardised method → should also be part of the tasks for the 2 experts

4. NOTES ON PLANNING FOR THE 2ND PHASE

✧ Organisation of a **3 - 4 days planning workshop** at the end of first phase → To agree on priorities, methodologies etc. – Reducing complexity in a very complex environment Good planning: preparation, guidelines, templates, deadlines
✧ **EU Platform:** More Europe – France, Italy, Poland, …
✧ **Bilateral negotiation** of countries with EU on weak points → (based on data of REAWG)
✧ Maintain good atmosphere between people – **consistency**
✧ **Concrete products** for outside stakeholders (processors, retailers, associations)
✧ **REAWGs: National action plans** – describe now precisely what is needed (e.g. AG organics)
✧ **Create flagship / lighthouse projects** and utilise and disseminate as benchmarks
✧ How could **partner contributions** be increased to compensate for budget shortfalls? PPP, national funds, other donors and projects, …

PROJECT HOUSE I

Outcome:

The policy framework for agriculture, forestry and rural development in the SEE countries has been strengthened regarding climate change adaptation and EU integration of the South East Europe countries

Output I.

EU Enlargement: strengthening Political Dialogue on EU Integration.

Agric. P. Dev. in SEE + Harmonization Monitoring Chapters 11, 12, 13.

Output II.

Competitive and resilient agriculture and food sector:

-climate partnership,

-REAWGs stock, Crop production.

-Soil partnership, support to other sectors (i.e. veterinary, plant protection)

Output III.

Forestry: EU Enlargement (reporting, standards for monitoring+management)

Potentially: satellite-based forest inventory, combating forest fires

Networking with other initiatives (Forest Europe, Forest Risk Facility, FAO Global Forest Fire Hub)

Output IV.

Deeper integrat. in existing topics:

-Wine, Organics, AKIS, Women/youth.

-support WB Soil Partnership, Geodata Center, FAO Landnet

Inputs:

-participation in major international and regional political events.

-Track political commitments and follow up on agreed actions post-events

-Regular liaison with the European Commission (DG AGRI, DG NEAR, DG ENV, etc.

- (...)

Inputs:

-Knowledge sharing on climate adaptation strategies

-Coordinate technical collaboration across REAWGs

-Alignment with EU Green Agenda, Farm to Fork, Biodiversity Strategy, and CAP reform goals.

- (...)

Inputs:

-Assist in fulfilling EU forestry-related reporting obligations

-Nat. act. plans align. Forest monitoring a. management with EU acquis

-Organize training programs for forestry institutions

- (...)

Inputs:

-annual events for each REAWG

-Invite external experts and practitioners (EU, univers., PS-leaders)

-Organize structured consultation rounds (online or physical)

- (...)

PROJECT HOUSE 11

Outcome:

Agriculture, food and forestry are recognised as strategic sectors, competitiveness, resilience and attractiveness are strengthened and long-term growth, innovation, and social benefits are ensured on the path to EU integration

Output I.

EU Enlargement: strengthening Political Dialogue on EU Integration.

Agric. P. Dev. in SEE + Harmonization Monitoring Chapters 11, 12, 13.

Output II.

Competitive and resilient agriculture and food sector:

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THE PRINCIPLE OF SIMPLICITY

„Perfection is achieved, **not**
when there is **nothing more to add**,
but when there is **nothing left**
to take away"

Antoine de Saint-Exupéry

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CONTACT

Arno Boerger

Erfurtstraße 55

D-53125 Bonn / Germany

Cel +49 – 173 – 2112644

Email ITC-Boerger@Mail.de