



# Nuts and Dried Fruit with Impact: Central Asia and The Fergana Valley Central Asian Initiative for the Promotion of Commercial Quality Standards



Empowered lives.  
Resilient nations.

Geneva 2018

# **The goal of the Regional Initiative**

**Integration of the Central Asian countries into international trade and supply chains and diversifying export destinations**

**through:**

- Cross-boarder cooperation, production pooling and internal integration of the region (Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan);
- Applying internationally recognized commercial standards (such as UNECE standards) for fresh fruit and vegetables, nuts, and dried fruit

# The beginning: UNECE's standard for Dried Apricots



**2015**

Request from the industry in Fergana Valley

**2016**

Business participation in consultations resulted in the development of regional cooperation to promote the quality of (dried) apricots from Fergana Valley apricot

**2016**

UNECE included the amendments proposed by the Central Asian region into the revised standard for dried apricots

**2017**

UNECE's member states recommend developing a simple guidance poster illustrating quality defects of dried apricots

## **Results 2017 and 2018:**

- Explanatory poster developed at UNECE, and
- Central Asia prepared first brochure on dried apricots (assisted by UNECE's secretariat and Turkey)

# The regional public – private initiative in the Fergana Valley



The establishment of **Central Asia Working group** is in progress in the Central Asia.

A key role is played by the **Private Sector** and the **National Institutes for Standards and Metrology**

The initiative is supported by the government structures, donor agencies, an EU project, the UN country teams and the **UNECE secretariat**

# Regional initiative: key actors

Three Central Asia counties: **Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan**

With a total population of 49 million.

**Around 70 % of  
population involved in  
agro business sector**



# Regional initiative: key actors and beneficiaries

## Private sector:

- 54 export oriented food processing SMEs including women traders;
- 112 farmer groups, cooperatives/suppliers including many women farmers;
- 23 consulting agencies.

**2890 women are employed**



# Regional initiative: key actors

## **State Agencies:**

- National Institutions for Standardization and Metrologies;
- Ministries of Economy, Agriculture and their sub structures
- National and Local authorities at province level.

# Fergana Valley block and **UNECE**

The activities of the Central Asia Working Group have been conducted in constant consultation and cooperation with the UNECE secretariat and its Working Party groups and experts.

**UNECE together with the UN country offices (UNDP) and GIZ** organized:  
3 dedicated regional training workshops building on each other, in

- Izmir, Turkey - 2015,
- Tashkent, Uzbekistan - 2016
- Tashkent, Uzbekistan - 2017

**With a total of over 180 participants and majority of women**

UNECE provided distant coaching and advice from 2015 – up to now

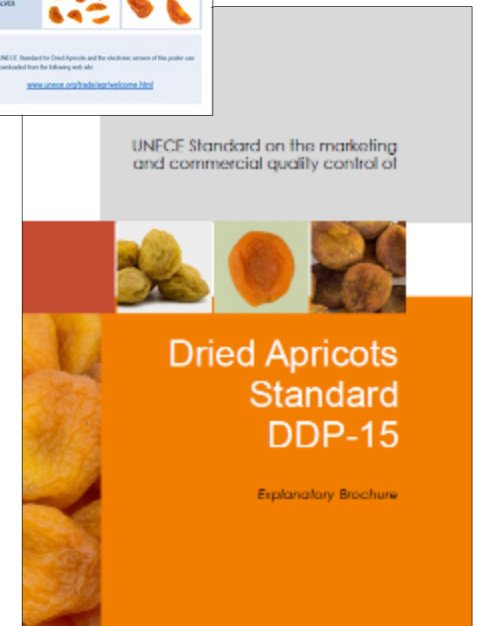
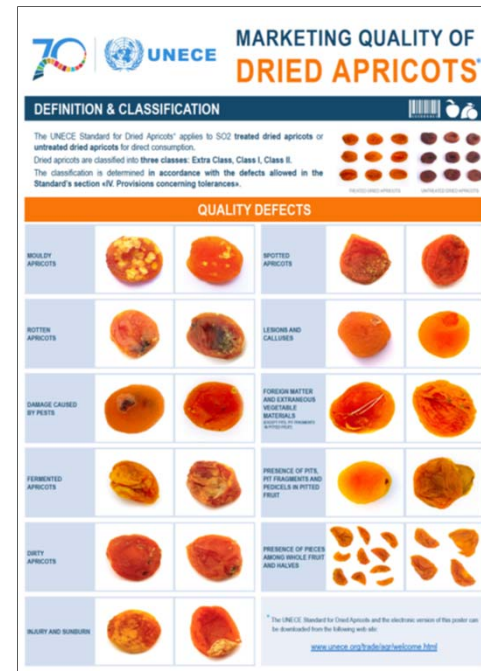


# UNECE DDP-15 Standard: development of the illustrated, explanatory poster and Brochure

The Working Group established in the Central Asian region actively assisted in the development of the UNECE poster on dried apricots. UNECE's experts considered and included the specifics of Fergana Valley region.

The Central Asian Working Group drafted an illustrated explanatory brochure on dried apricots (work is still on-going)

Development process has been facilitated by UNECE's secretariat



# Central Asia Working Group

## Two meetings: May, October 2017

The initiative for regional collaboration as part of the Central Asia Working Group was approved

To ensure transparency and comprehensive consideration of all parties' interests, it was recommended to include more stakeholders in the Central Asia Working Group

The meetings **showed the importance of public-private collaboration** particularly between the private sector and the standards bodies with the aim of promoting **UNECE standards**

The establishment of national technical groups is in process



# Central Asia Working Group, wrap-up meeting, October 2017



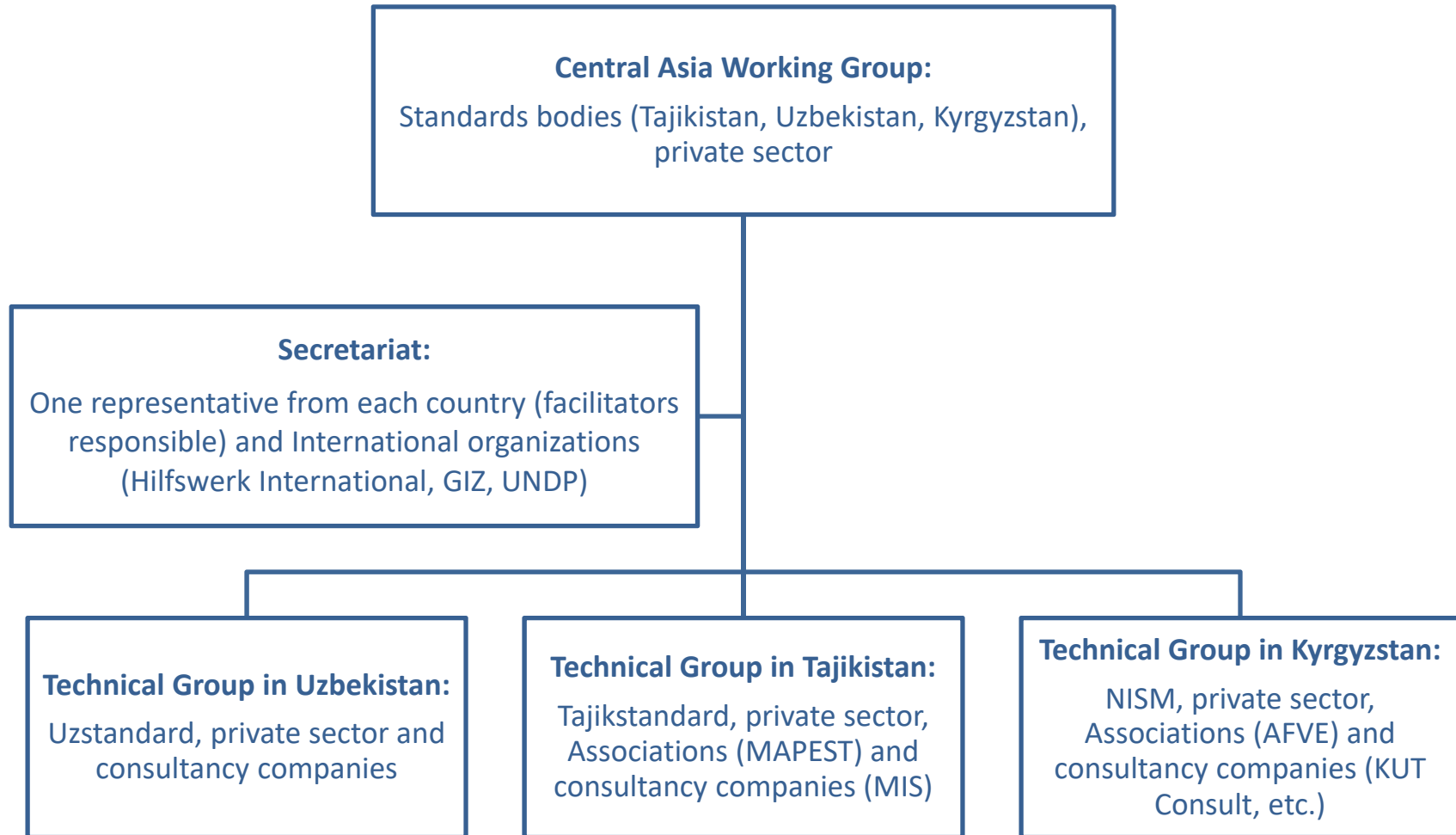
- Private sector/business, along with the government structures at the regional level have been involved, via the Central Asian Working Group and NTGs in the change process, developing and promoting quality standards in the Central Asian region
- As part of their operations, donor projects are considering the organization of a study tour in Turkey, to learn the country's experience in developing inspection services and their interaction with national quality institutes

## New products for national technical groups based on UNECE standards and available material

- Developing an Explanatory Poster on fresh onions
- Developing an Explanatory Poster on fresh persimmons
- Studying the standards for prunes, amending it to reflect regional specificities
- Developing explanatory materials for other quality standards



# Central Asian Workgroup structure



## Impact of improved quality via the use of standards and a public-private working group structure:

- Ensuring sustainable supply and reducing product recalls
- Increasing produce value and sustainable revenue for companies and farmers, including women farmers and traders in an entire region
- Improving the chances of signing long-term contracts with major retail chains and
- Sustainable job creation including for women and youth

## The way forward - cooperation between the Central Asia Working Group and **UNECE** secretariat

- Expert support of national technical groups for new products
- Training workshops and awareness-raising events for stakeholders in the Central Asian region
- Support in the implementation of the standards (incl. establishment independent internal inspection) to foster quality production and prevent food loss.



Thank you for attention!

