

Final internal evaluation report

On

STRENGTHENING VIETNAMESE SPS CAPACITIES FOR TRADE

“Improving safety and quality of fresh vegetables through the value chain approach” MTF/VIE/046/STF (STDF/PG/259)



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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ASEAN	Association of South East Asian Nations
AVA	Agro-Veterinary Authority of Singapore
DARD	Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
EC	European Community
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FAVRI	Fruits and Vegetables Research Institute, Hanoi
FBS	Farm Business School
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
FFS	Farmers' Field School
GAP	Good Agricultural Practices
GlobalGAP	Global Partnership for Good Agricultural Practice
GMP	Good Manufacturing Practices
HAVECO	Hai Hung High Quality Vegetable and Food Processing Joint Stock Company
HCM City	Ho Chi Minh City
IFFRI	International Fruit Research Institute
IPM	Integrated Pest Management
IQF	Individually Quick Frozen
ISO	International Organization for Standardization
MALICA	Markets and Agriculture Linkages for Cities Asia
MARD	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development
MDG	The Millennium Development Goals
NYM	NGOC YEN MINH (NYM) Fresh Vegetables Company Ltd
ODA	Official Development Assistance
SEDP	Social Economic Development Plan
SPS	Sanitary and Phytosanitary Standards
STDF	Standards and Trade Development Facility
TBT	Agreement on Barriers to Trade
TOT	Training of Trainers
USD	United State Dollars
VAAS	Vietnamese Academy of Agricultural Sciences
Vie	Vietnam
VietGAP	Vietnam Good Agricultural Practice for fresh vegetable, fruit and tea crops
WTO	World Trade Organization

1. Foreword

The final evaluation for the Project “**Strengthening Vietnamese SPS capacities for trade- Improving safety and quality of fresh vegetable through the value chain approach**” in Son La, Lam Dong and Hung Yen provinces- Vietnam was implemented by independent M&E consultant from the 20th Oct to the 17th Nov, 2012. This report describes the evaluation results, specifically the achievements of the program against its objectives. In which the report considers to the program's primary criteria such as appropriateness, effectiveness, sustainability, gender, Responsible Wellbeing, integration of Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR)/ Climate Change Adaptation (CCA)/ Livelihood (LLH) into SEDP, program management and partnership. The report also includes recommendations and lesson learnt.

The Consultant expresses a sincere gratitude to people had supported the the team during the evaluation. Those are:

- Staff of FAO in Vietnam;
- Officer of the FAVRI (National Project Coordinator- NPC);
- Consultant of the Plant Protection Department;
- Officer of Department of Science and Technology (MARD);
- Son La provincial Department of Agricultural and Rural Development
- Vice- President of Moc Chau District- Son La Province
- Local authorities and beneficiaries of Dong Sang Commune- Moc Chau District- Son La Province
- Management board of Cooperative 19/5- Moc Chau District- Son La Province
- Local authorities and beneficiaries of Van Ho Commune- Moc Chau District- Son La Province
- Management Board of Thanh Nghia Cooperative- Don Duong District- Lam Dong Province
- Beneficiaries of Thanh Nghia Cooperative- Don Duong District- Lam Dong Province
- Representatives of Department of Agriculture and Rural Development- Lam Dong Province
- Ngoc Yen Minh Ltd, Company- Don Duong District- Lam Dong Province
- Department of Agriculture and Rural Development- Hung Yen Province
- Hai Hung High quality food processing Join Stock Company (HAVECO)- Hung Yen Province
- President of Hiep Cuong Commune- Kim Dong District- Hung Yen Province
- Beneficiaries of Hiep Cuong Commune- Kim Dong District- Hung Yen Province

The valuable information and data provided by them have supported the consultant to complete and to make the report more comprehensive and in accordance with the requirements of the program sponsors as well as other stakeholders.

We hope that the report will provide useful feedback on the outcomes of the program, bring helpful lesson learns to all involved parties for the following- up of the project.

Nguyen Thi Thu Que
Independent M&E Consultant

2. Executive summary

General Context

Vegetable production in Vietnam has been growing rapidly in recent years both in terms of volume and yield and provides a significant source of income for the Vietnamese rural population. Farmers have been attracted to vegetable production by the significantly higher returns in comparison with other commodities such as rice, tea and maize. The vegetable sector is also an important source of employment not merely at the farm level but also in collection, distribution, processing and retail levels.

Successful implementation of the project will contribute significantly to achieving the goals of poverty reduction, improved capacity to access overseas markets and improved safety and quality of vegetables grown in Vietnam and prevent environmental degradation arising from excessive use of pesticides and poor farm management practices.

Sectoral Context

The Government of Vietnam, which became a member of the WTO in 2007 has set a national target for vegetable exports at USD 690 million per annum by 2010, but given current trends, this remains a distant goal. Exports during the period 2000-2004 remained virtually stagnant and averaged less than USD 140 million per annum.

One of the critical constraints to achieving this target is the clear lack of capacity of the Vietnamese vegetable sector to assure the safety and quality of its produce across the value chain. Major problems facing the sector include the abuse and excessive use of pesticides and agricultural chemicals and the lack of awareness and application of good agricultural practices at the farm level. Pesticide use is often well above recommended levels and farmers ignore or are ignorant about safe harvesting practices. The sector has also been constrained by poor post harvest handling practices resulting in product deterioration and loss of quality. Weak links between producers, collectors, distributors and retailers accentuate the problems of poor quality management across the value chain. The sector's progress has also been hampered by serious lack of communication, information flow and coordination among the public and private sector

Project site

Three provinces of Son La, Hung Yen and Lam Dong were selected for implementing project's activities under an agreement between FAVRI and the provinces. According to the project activities, provincial staffs (from agencies under Department of Agriculture and Rural Development/DARD) had been mobilized to take parts in the implementation process.

Cooperative members/farmers and other stakeholders such as processors and traders also participated in the project implementation.

The total budget for the project was estimated at USD 533,770 representing WTO donor contributions under the STDF. In addition, FAO made an in-kind contribution of USD 48,900 through the provision of technical support. FAVRI provided an in-kind

contribution of USD 58,800 to cover costs related to use of local staff and non-staff resources. With an addition of these contributions the total project cost was at USD 641,470.

Project objectives

The overall objective of the project is to enhance the SPS capacity of the vegetable sector in Vietnam and help the country capture market opportunities for fresh vegetables both on the domestic and international markets.

The project seeks to achieve the overall objective of enhancing the country's SPS capacity through specific strategies and actions covering the following:

- development of knowledge base through market surveys on international market opportunities for specific vegetables grown in Vietnam and the determination of the SPS requirements for the target commodities in specific market;
- capacity building program aimed at improving the safety and quality of vegetables using a value chain approach; and
- improving market linkages between producer organizations and domestic and international markets.

Study approach, methodology and criteria

Participatory approach has been used during the evaluation. Consultant worked closely with Project officials from FARI; FAO officials; local authorities at province, district, commune and village levels. Individual interviews with beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries were conducted in a comfortable and open discussion atmosphere.

In order to fulfill required tasks, the consultant has prepared an evaluation document that during the evaluation, the Consultant used a range of evaluation tools such as desk review, meetings and discussions with relevant stakeholders at different level, direct observations, focused group discussions and individual interviews

The consultant has visited project areas in Son La, Lam Dong and Hung Yen provinces to observe activities implemented and worked with relevant agencies as well as cooperatives and companies.

The Evaluation study based on the main evaluation criteria mentioned in the Term of Reference (ToR) such as: Relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainable to conduct the final evaluation;

The list of visits and key informants were recorded in the Annex 7.1 and the time table was follows:

- The field trip to Son La province took place from the 31th Oct to the 03rd Nov 2012
- The field trip to Lam Dong province was from the 05th to the 08th Nov 2012
- The field trip to Hung Yen province as 09th Nov 2012
- The consultant worked with Mr Hung- National Project Coordinator (NPC) of FAVRI, Mr. Tru (National Consultant), Mrs. Dinh- Senior of Department of Science and Technology (MARD) and Mrs. Huong- FAO project Manager to get more information related to the project

Detail of the missions is broken down in Annex 7.2.

Achievements (Results) upto date

Up to date, the results of the project listed down with the table:

No.	Activities by component	Planned	Actual/ Results
I	Component 1: Assessment		
1	Market Survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hung Yen: Baby Cucumbers, wax gourd - Son La: Chayote and vegetable beans - Lam Dong: cabbages and tomatoes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hung Yen: Baby cucumbers and cherry tomatoes; - Son La: chayote and off-season tomatoes; - Lam Dong: cabbages and tomatoes.
2	Selection of project partners		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hung Yen: Hai Hung High Quality Food Processing Joint Stock Company (HAVECO), working with Hiep Cuong commune in Kim Dong district. - Son La: 19-5 Cooperative in Moc Chau district. - Lam Dong: NGOC YEN MINH Fresh Vegetables Ltd., working with Thanh Nghia cooperative in Don Duong district.
2.1	Training on VietnGAP application, quality and safety management and business/marketing for extension workers/traders (TOT)		
2.2	Training for farmers (FFS/ GAP and Farm Business)		
2.3	Establishment of safety and quality control system		
2.4	Development of demonstration on VietGAP and business models		
2.5	Link between producers, processing, distribution and traders under the value chain approach		
3	Assessment of current practices		

II	Component 2: Capacity Building		
1	Development of intervention plans		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Published four documents (total of 4,000 copies were printed) for the use of TOT/FFS training <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + “Guidelines on VietGAP Vegetable Production” + “Quality and safety management in Fruit and Vegetables” + Manual on “Farm Business School” + Handbook on “Farm Business School” - 6,000 copies of leaflets introducing VietGAP application on cucumber, tomato, baby tomato, chayote, off-season tomato and cabbage
1.1	GAP development and training		
1.2	Food quality and safety inspection/management system		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 6 VietGAP certificates
1.3	Setting up demonstrations		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Six field demonstrations have been set up at 3 selected cooperatives for 6 crops (tomato, cabbage, baby cucumber, cherry tomato, off-season tomato and chayote). The pilot field demonstration size varies from 0, 5 to 1 ha.
1.4	Link between producers, processing, distributors and traders under the value chain approach		
2	GAP training		<p>Two levels of GAP training:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Training of Trainers (TOT) in May-June 2011 with the participation of 18 technical staffs from local partners and 7 training courses (20 participants/course making a total of 140 trainees) of the producers and extension staffs in each province - Farmers’ Field School (FFS)/on-site training was conducted every week (throughout the crop season of two selected crops in each province) - 20 Farmer Field School (FFS) courses on VietGAP application and 20 Farm Business School courses for total of 840

			farmers/producers in 5 cooperatives and communes (Dong Sang, 19/5 and Van Ho in Son La; Hiep Cuong in Hung Yen; and Thanh Nghia in Lam Dong)
3	Establishment of safety and quality control system		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Designating responsibilities to staff of the producer groups and establishing an internal quality management system - Compiling the quality management system document and training on harvesting and post-harvest handling procedures - Establishing a pilot demonstration for production monitoring, recordkeeping, quality checks, safety monitoring and traceability through FFS training
4	Business management training		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - conducted 7 courses on Farm Business School (FBS) in each of the three selected provinces, making a total of 21 courses for 420 participants starting from September 2011 - 7 FBS courses in Hiep Cuong cooperative, Kim Dong district (Hung Yen province), from September 2011 with twenty farmers each (total 140 farmers) - 7 courses from Feb 2012 in Dong Sang and Van Ho Cooperative in Moc Chau district (Son La province) - 7 courses with another 140 participants in Thanh Nghia cooperative, Don Duong district (Lam Dong province) during May-July 2012 - 100% of the participants/farmers fully understood the topics presented
5	Mid-term evaluation and fine-tuning		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conducted and reported
6	Up-scaling		- How many people are up-scaled?
7	Workshops		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 14-15.10.2010: Inception Workshop in Hanoi - 24.02.2012: the project mid-term progress workshop and report - 21.08.2012: Final Workshop in Hanoi
III	Component 3: Marketing		
1	Domestic marketing		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Main vegetables are cucumber, cauliflower, cabbage and tomato - Evaluation of vegetable production in Hung Yen, Son La, Lam Dong, Ha Noi, Ho Chi Minh - Development of brand name and market

			for vegetable products - Organization of workshop on linkages among value chain actors in Hanoi on 22nd Feb 2012 (S. 140 – 164)
2	International marketing		- study visit to Chinese markets in December 2011 - analyze potential market demand, prices, and market margins, costs of marketing, packaging, handling, and transportation and market specifications in the major export markets: Russia (Baby cucumber, Baby tomato), Western European Union (Baby cucumber), Singapore (Fresh tomato), Taiwan Cambodia, Korea (Cabbage)
IV	Component 4: Project management		
1	Reports/Documents preparation		41 main documents in English or/and in Vietnamese (six months progress reports, technical reports, inception Workshop, Mid-term Progress Workshop and Final Workshop...)
2	Project website		- www.sps-gap.org.vn (in Vietnamese) - www.en.sps-gap.org.vn (in English)
3	Independent STDF ex-post evaluation		- conducted right after the Final Workshop on August 21st 2012 by a team consisting of FAO and FAVRI staff

3. Evaluation findings

3.1 Relevance of the project

- *Project design was relevant with the government policy and Ministry*

- The government is very interested in food safety and sanitation problems, the system of legal documents on hygiene, food safety issue a lot. In the five years from 2004 to 2008 more than 1,267 legal documents issued to management. quality, hygiene and food safety (in which central authorities issued 337 documents, local authorities issued 930 documents)
- The Project meets FAO's Strategic Objective D-Improved safety and quality of food at all stages of the food chain. The project also supports the World Food Summit 2008 declaration calling for support for initiatives aimed at helping farmers; particularly small scale producers increase production and integrate with local, regional and international markets (see Para 6(a) of the World Food Summit 2008 Declaration). Successful implementation of the project will contribute significantly to meeting MDG goals 1, 7 and 8 by lifting rural incomes, promoting environmentally sustainable farming practices and building partnership to achieve development goals. The project is gender neutral but given the participation of women in the farming sector, the project can be expected to have positive empowerment and impact on women through growth in rural household incomes and prosperity.

- Ordinance on Food Hygiene and Safety, passed by Standing Committee, the XI National Assembly on 26 July 2003. Order signed by the President on 7 August 2003.
 - Decision No. 107/2008/QD-TTg dated 30 July 2008 on a number of policies supporting production, processing and distribution development of safe vegetable, fruit, tea crops up to 2015.
 - Decision No. 04/QD-BNN dated 19 January 2007 by the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development on Regulating production management and certification of safe vegetable production.
 - Decision No. 149/2007/QD-TTg dated 10 September 2007 of the Prime Minister on approving the national target program on food hygiene and safety in the period of 2006 - 2010 with the objective of socialization of food quality, hygiene and safety.
 - Decision No. 106/2007/QD-BNN dated 28 December 2007 by the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development on regulations on management, production and trade of safe vegetables;
 - Regulations on certification of good agricultural practices (VietGAP) for fresh vegetables, fruits and tea production were promulgated attaching Decision No. 84/2008/QD-BNN dated 28 July 2008 by the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development.
 - Decision No. 147/2008/QD-TTg dated 17 November 2008 of the Prime Minister on approving the national action plan to accelerate implementation of commitments to SPS to meet obligations of a WTO member.
 - Decision No. 99/2008/QD-BNN dated 15 October 2008 by the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development on promulgating regulations on management of production and trading of safe vegetable, fruit and tea crops;
 - Relevant with the Decision of Prime-Minister QD01TTg 1/2012 on “Some policies of Good Agriculture Practice- GAP development) from Government
 - Decision No. 59/2006/QD-BNN dated 02 August 2006 by the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development on adding some pesticides to list of allowable/permitted pesticides in Vietnam
 - Regulations on certification of good agricultural practices (VietGAP) for fresh vegetables, fruits and tea production were promulgated attaching Decision No. 84/2008/QD-BNN dated 28 July 2008 by the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development. These regulations are considered the most complete ones which were born based on a combination ASEANGAP and GlobalGAP to ensure harmonization, equivalence, transparency. However, so far the number of organizations and individuals received certificates of safe vegetable production zones as well as VIETGAP certificates have been still limited.
 - Appropriate with the orientation of provinces includes Son La, Lam Dong and Hung Yen;
 - Market Survey report July 2010
 - Technical report before implementation of the project (May 2011)
- ***The selected partners and target groups were relevant***
 - FAO choose FAVRI to become the implementation agency (IA) with the qualified technical staffs and experience coordinator with number of consultants and researchers, this agency is suitable with the TA project and they have experience to work with relevant stakeholders such as extension, plant protection...;
 - Producer partners: cultivating crops selected at the project sites, farmers/producers basing on production experiences and physical facilities available, production areas is large enough (i.e., 1-3ha) for demonstration established, working under cooperative and/or

group of farmers within their farm to produce vegetables for domestic markets and/or export;

- Market partners: Company/farm doing business on production, collecting, processing and selling selected products to both domestic and international markets with value chain food safety approach.
- In each province, Crop Production Division under provincial Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD) will play a role to coordinate all local supports at provincial, district and commune levels for the project implementation. After discussions with DARD and district authorities, both project team and local partners have agreed on the selection as the following:
 - + Hung Yen: Hai Hung High Quality Vegetable and Food Process Joint Stock Company (HAVECO), working with Hiep Cuong commune in Kim Dong district.
 - + Son La: 19-5 Cooperative in Moc Chau district.
 - + Lam Dong: NGOC YEN MINH Fresh Vegetables Ltd., working with Thanh Nghia cooperative in Don Duong district.
- ***Project activities were relevant with the context of local authorities and communities***
 - With the requirement of the project design that based on the existing products, the project support the producers to understand and follow the safe production process, improvement the quality of processing and market survey to find out the different saling chanel
 - There was no participation of local people in to the project design, project work planing or project action planing, but all the project activities have been done were relevant with the context of local authorities and communities;

3.2 Efficiency

- The pilot project size for 3 provinces were quite small, each model was from 0,5 ha to 1 ha only, then the effection was not to much;
- The investment cost for each model was reasonable.

3.3 Effectiveness

3.3.1. Quantitative

- Number of training courses for different target groups have been conducted to improve the knowledge and methodology of production process to the technical staffs, facilitators and farmers (21 Trainers from 3 provinces joined the TOT training courses, 420 facilitators and farmers were trained on business production process of VietGAP);
- 3 main documents (Handbook, manual with 1.000 copies of each document, 2.400 leaflets) were provided for using and applying;
- 6 products (chayote and off-season tomato in Son La province, cherry tomato and baby cucumber in Hung Yen, long season tomato and cabbage in Lam Dong) have been selected for pilot demonstration.
- Reports of survey and researching have been completed with value of information

3.3.2. Qualitative

- ***Raising awareness and knowledge on new production process of the local people and producers***

- All documents have been provided to the farmers, farm businesses, processors and farm managers with up to date information and technology in production, harvest, post-harvest, processing and trade following the value chain approach and the users shared that they are very clear, concrete, easy to understand and apply, they still use it every time when they need to check it and apply it in the practice. The project documents such as handbook, manual, leaflets are like the guidance for them and the beneficiaries high appreciated.
- The network (set up from the Centre to the local) plays an important facilitation role by providing information and advice to farmers over the whole period of crop production.
- The objective of the training was to provide and improve farmers knowledge and understanding of the application of VietGAP technology in their own farm and then to compare this with conventional farming.
- The result of survey from the beneficiaries has shown that farmers are very much interested and willing to adopt the VietGAP approach and apply this in their field. In addition the surveys have shown that growers developed a good understanding of the training and the VietGAP approach.

Details of the trainings are as given in the Table below

Location	Time of training	Number of FFS	No of farmers per 1 FFS	Total
Hiep Cuong cooperative	August 2011-Feb. 2012	7	20	140
19/5 cooperative.	Oct. 2011- March 2012	7	20	140
Thanh nghĩa cooperative	Nov. 2011- April 2012	7	20	140
Total		21		420

- Currently, farmers practice production and trading in their own way, based on long standing experience. Other two FFS on business schools were held at Cooperative Dong sang and Van Ho at Moc chau district, Sonla province in February 2012.

Place	Time of training	Number of FFS	Number of farmers/FFS
Coop. Hiệp Cường, Hung yên	9/2011 2/ 2012	7	20
Coop. Đông sang, Mộc châu	2/2012	4	20
Coop. Vân hồ, Mộc châu	2/2012	3	20

- The Householders are arranged into groups based on business interests and then the farmers are instructed to carry out activities such as to calculate productions costs and

profits as well as assess the overall businesses and to make plans for the next seasons. At the Co. Dong Sang, the beneficiaries group up the Common Interest Group (CIG) with from 7-10 members that they share the information to each other and schedule the time for the off-season tomato crop that they plant at the different date instead of the same time. So that they will supply the tomato to the market with the long duration and under the control of the yield;

- Six field demonstrations have been set up at 3 selected cooperatives for 6 crops (tomato, cabbage, baby cucumber, cherry tomato, off-season tomato and chayote). The pilot field demonstration size varies from 0, 5 to 1 ha and this demonstrations are very good example for the farmers to compare in between the traditional methodology of production with the new process and they all said that now their productivities of 6 products are higher and the quality of them are also higher;
- Each province, the implementation agency (FAVRI) support to improve the capacity of 1 business type, for example:
 - + In Moc Chau- Son La province: The project support to the Co. 19/5 to invest of the store to preserve the product before bring it to the market and supermarket system. The VietGAP certificate from the FAVRI is also provided to the 2 products in term of project (off-season tomato and chayote);
 - + In Da Lat- Lam Dong province: The TOT training course encouraged the director of NGOC YEN MINH Fresh Vegetables Ltd. Invest to build the new fresh vegetable processing with installed machine to process the tomato and potato for farmers around of Da Lat area. VietGAP certificate has provided for 2 products supported project (tomato and cabbage);
 - + In Hiep Cuong- Hung Yen province: The new products of cherry tomato and baby cucumber were supported to farmers and supply to the HAVECO to process for exportation;

- ***Change the behaviors of farmers***

- After joining the training course about the new production process (VietGAP), joining the demonstration (field day) to see the progress of new methodology, the farmers compare with their traditional method and applied the new method;
- All of the bag content the fertilizer, pesticide or plant protection have been through everywhere after using caused of pollution of environment and now the farmers collect it and put together in one place;
- With the new production method, the farmer weed an alley in between the row of plants;
- In Son La province, the producers use the wooden pillar for their chayote and they exploit the forest. The project support to guide them to use the betone pillar instead. All of producers understand that if they continue to use the wooden pillar, they will deforest and causes of landslide, flooding, drough and other negative effecton;
- To write down all production activities, especially the cash flow, expenditure, income...become the daily work of the farmer to keep track their money and manage the production progress.

- ***Linkage between the inputs and outputs***

- The network between the Government- Scientist- Business man- Farmers has been built though it is only at the starting and focus on the domestic market. It is very important to the farmers as they wonder their products can not sale in the market;
- The study tour to other countries to study about the market, marketing and create new potential markets for the farmers;

- Link between producers, processing, distributors and traders under the value chain approach.
- ***Improve the quality of the products***
 - With the new method of production process, the quality of products is higher and the farmers spend less working days than before, use less inputs (seeds, fertilizer, pesticide);
 - The farmers produce the safe products for the consumers and for themselves when they follow and apply the new method of production process.

3.4 Impact

- ***Increased in knowledge on safe vegetable for the local people at 3 provinces:***
 - 100% of interviews said that now they know very clear about the new method of safe vegetable production process, they follow it very seriously and it is better results in compare with previous method;
 - One of the interviewees said that now she feels confident to write the proposal letter and knows to whom she will submit it, that before project she did not know anything about the justice or legal.
- ***Improved Attitudes and Practices after joining project activities***
 - The farmer changed the attitude and behaviour that they did not do it before, for example: all the covers and package of fertilizer, pesticides or protection chemical after using will be collected and put together in one place
 - The farmer spend time to weed and make the field clean
 - In Son La province, the farmers understood that if they continue to use the wooden pillar for their chayote, they are caused of deforest and effected to the disaster

3.5 Project sustainability

- Local people will follow- up and maintain the project activities: it is their work though there is no supports from the project, they still continue to work and it is their responsibility on this field;
- The certain documents provided by the project will become a very good and value document for farmers to follow and apply
- The interviewees ensured that now they can organize, carry out, implement the similar activities at the commune and communities, but that it will be difficult if there is no market, especially in Hung Yen where the cherry tomato and baby cucumber are the new products and the producers depend 100% on the market and the buyer
- The interviewees all willing to join the follow up or next phase of project.
- The trained participants and facilitators are confident to apply this production process and facilitate for the other farmers
- There are the qualified technical staffs from the FAVRI to work closely with local agencies to share information and experiences

4. Project successes and constraints

4.1 Project successes

- All selected partners are running agribusiness on fruits and vegetables. They are doing both production and collecting products from surrounding producers to sell to the market, which will create good opportunities for expansion of the project results;

- The collaboration between company/cooperative with vegetable farmers in their area will increase production capacity and potential for VietGAP application and expansion in the future;
- The project improved knowledge and experiences of the farmers with new method of production process, the farmers produced the product with higher quality and yield;
- Through the project, the Common Interest Group (CIG) has been built to share information and learn from each other
- The trained people are willing to continue to produce with new method and introduce to the neighbors to apply
- Changed the attitude and behaviour of the people: Apply the new method, minimize the pollution after using fertilizer, pesticide and other protection chemical
- Involved the relevant agencies to join to work for the project: Government agencies (plantation, plant protection...), cooperatives, companies, supermarket...

4.2 Constraints

- The project implementation was delayed to short cut the duration of the project:
 - + The project agreement started from 1-1-2010 and end at 31-12-2011 (2 years)
 - + The actual: until 6-4-2010 the LOA- MOU has been signed
- Application of VietGAP into fruits and vegetables production is still a concern. All partners do not be equipped with internal inspection system and never been monitored by any external agency on food safety/quality production;
- The size of pilot demonstration is small (from 0,5 ha to 1,0 ha for each sample);
- The link between producers- Contributors- Markets....still limited;
- At the same time, there are hug of suppliers in the market, it caused the price was reduced and effected to the income of the producers;
- Cherry tomato and baby cucumber are new products and the producers depend on the processing company (HAVECO), they have no other market chanel to sale their product and the risk is high;
- The consumer can not identify in between the normal vegetable and the safe vegetable, the price of both are not much different;
- The project staffs from Government agencies contribute only part time to work on this project, the time is limited and there is no allowance for these staffs, it creates also the difficult for them to work on this project in compare with other ODA project;
- Not every farmer keep track on book-keeping system to manage the production process and they are still not confident to share the knowledge and experience to others;
- It lacks of the processing system from harvesting, pre-processing, transporting and selling;
- There is no evaluation of scalling-up from this project;
- Budget provided to the beneficiaries was not on time and delayed;
- Capacity and experiences of local staffs are still limited
- The issue is related not to technical but management aspects. There are too many government agencies (such as MARD, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Trade, etc) involved in the process of food safety management, but it is not very clear who will have the final responsibility of food safety assurance;

5. Lessons learned from the project

The evaluator noted the lessons learnt from the project implementation as below:

- Participatory approach is a good methodology that ensure the sustainability of the project;

- The leadership and guidance provided by the provincial, district, and other official agencies, including mass organization, is a fundamental element that enables the commune to implement project activities successfully (leadership role);
- The project helped improve the capacity of the technical staffs that they can conduct the training course for farmers and work closely with the farmers during the production process. This capacity became a driving force for successful implementation of the project (capabilities of the officials);
- The active involvement of the farmers from grass root level (internal factors) was a determining factor in the success of the project. Without the participation and involvement of these farmers, all activities carried out in the field could not be done;
- The support of FAO and FAVRI staff (external factor) is an important catalyst to ensure successful project implementation.
- The close coordination between central and local authorities, project site and all partners under and outside of the project beneficiaries is lead to the success of the project (networking and coordination);
- Selection of good project management team and establishment of a good extension network at the province/district level for effective coordination and implementation of FFS training for farmers, and setting-up of field demonstrations would strengthen effectiveness and impact of the capacity building efforts;

6. Recommendations and suggestions

There were many recommendations discussed during the final workshop. Some main recommendations are as follows:

6.1 Commune and village level

- Awareness and advocacy should be frequently and continuously carried out in order to sustain project impacts; need to increase publicity through mass media and develop a brand image;
- More training on other products for farmers;
- Keep continuous to apply the new method of production process;
- Disseminate the knowledge and experiences to the other farmers;
- Continue to set up the CIG to share information and experience to each other;
- Communication and dissemination of information needs to continue in order to exchange experiences between different production areas in the country and with other countries in the region, especially through the project website;
- Because of diversified vegetable products, it is recommended that this kind of project should start with an enterprise/producers' group producing various types of vegetables and linking with a safe vegetable buyer/trader in order to establish model of closed linkage mechanism for safe vegetable value chain from production to consumption;
- Active to prepare the season crop, workplan and budget plan after training;
- Combine the project workplan and action plan (if there is the next phase) into the SEDP at commune level;

6.2 District and provincial levels

- The project management board should establish from province to district and commune level with clear the role, responsibility of each position
- Extension network should be established at the province/district level in order to improve new technical knowledge and perception of farmers;

- Linkage between research institutes, farmers, extension agencies and buyers/traders should be strengthened through the project activities, in which transparent information exchanges on availability of production volume and type of safe products, and market information (i.e., market requirements on type of products, quality, and selling prices, etc.) play a very important role;
- Document the project activities from the demonstration to expand the models to more districts and communes in the province in the future;
- The groups trained by the project should become the core actors in the commune in relation to the implementation of the follow up project;
- All project activities and process should be documented for further usage and applying as it were appreciated by local authorities and beneficiaries;
- The Province (DARD) should involve in to this project and collaborate with district to issue the guideline for implementation.
- In Son La province, the PPC should support the farmer to change from using the wooden pillar for chayote to using the beton pillar

6.3FAVRI- MARD (Implementation Agency)

- Project should act as a linkage mechanism of all partners (producers, processors, traders, and consumers) to form as a complete value chain from the production, distribution and consumption of safe and higher quality vegetable products.
- The project on SPS should contribute to developing simplified VietGAP guidelines by MARD: for ease of understanding by farmers.
- Needs very clear policy from the government in the whole process from production, distribution to consumption in order to encourage farmers to produce safer and higher quality vegetables. This process requires coordination roles and efforts from the line ministry;
- Aim should be increasing VietGAP certification – there is a need to develop clear and uniform, and simple guidelines on certification procedures;
- Study on cost benefit analysis namely: cost of implementation vs financial benefit (individual and country level) should be carried out;
- This type of project should pay attentions to the improvement of product quality in order to meet market demands of commodity type (such as big, medium, small size, etc.), how to recognize a safe product (branding and/or labeling of safe products with clearly indicated original address/traceability, etc.);
- More attention should give to post-harvesting issues of how to reduce storing/handling and/or transportation damages of safe products;
- Support to expand the size of demonstration to increase the number of beneficiaries.

6.4Donor (FAO- WTO)

- Need to continue supporting technical and financial supports from WTO and FAO, Government and other donor agencies for extension of this program/project which resulted from very clear outcomes and impacts at the first phase of the project implementation;
- Initial achievements has been evaluated and recorded, however the SPS capacity building for fresh vegetables production following value chain approach needs more technical and financial support from STDF/WTO, WTO, government of Vietnam and other donor agencies, therefore project wishes to develop a concept note for seeking WTO to support
- Work plan/implementation plan and budget allocation needs to be well planned and approved early right from the beginning of the project cycle;

- Support the study tour to study about the market for also the local staff, not only the government staffs.
- Support the equipment to improve the working condition from centre to the local levels

7. Annexes

7.1 List of participants

Nr.	Name	Organisation
Hà Nội Province		
1	Đàm Quốc Trụ	National Technical Advisor
2	Nguyễn Đình Hùng	National Project Coordinator, FAVRI
Sơn La Province		
1	Trần Văn Quân	Crop Production Division, Sơn La Provincial Agriculture & Rural Development Department (DARD)
Mộc Châu District, Sơn La Province		
1	Ngô Văn Phan	Vice President of Châu Peoples Committee
Đông Sang Commune		
1	Nguyễn Thị Luyến	Tự Nhiên Village
2	Nguyễn Thị Nông	Tự Nhiên Village
3	Nguyễn Thị Tuyền	Tự Nhiên Village
4	Nguyễn Thị Uyên	Tự Nhiên Village
5	Nguyễn Thị Xuyên	Tự Nhiên Village
6	Nguyễn Thị May	Tự Nhiên Village
7	Nguyễn Thị Nga	Tự Nhiên Village
8	Nguyễn Thị Hoa	Tự Nhiên Village
9	Nguyễn Thị Miên	Tự Nhiên Village
10	Nguyễn Thị Hợi	Tự Nhiên Village
11	Nguyễn Thị Mai	Tự Nhiên Village
12	Nguyễn Thị Huệ	Tự Nhiên Village
13	Nguyễn Thị Miên	Tự Nhiên Village
14	Nguyễn Thị Thắm	Tự Nhiên Village
15	Nguyễn Thị Ngọc	Tự Nhiên Village
16	Nguyễn Thị Duyên	Tự Nhiên Village
17	Nguyễn Thị Tú	Tự Nhiên Village
18	Nguyễn Thị Lan May	Tự Nhiên Village
19	Nguyễn Thông Phương	Tự Nhiên Village
20	Nguyễn Thông Bội	Tự Nhiên Village
21	Đỗ Thị Oanh	Tự Nhiên Village
22	Trương Văn Dư	Tự Nhiên Village
23	Mai Đức Thịnh	Chairman of 19/5 Cooperative, Mộc Châu District

24	Vi Thị Thu Hà	Chief of Account Division, 19/5 Cooperative
Vân Hồ Commune		
1	Đinh Thị Xoa	Head of Vân Hồ Farmerunion
2	Múa A Chur	Hang Trùng 1 Village - Vân Hồ Commune
3	Vàng A Trừ	Pa Cốp Village - Vân Hồ Commune
4	Tráng A Giăng	Vân Hồ Farmerunion
5	Mùi Thị Ngân	Hang Trùng 1 Village - Vân Hồ Commune
6	Mùi Thị Huệ	Hang Trùng 1 Village
7	Hà Văn Diên	Hang Trùng 1 Village
8	Mùi Văn In	Hang Trùng 1 Village
9	Lương Văn Khoa	Hang Trùng 1 Village
10	Đinh Thị Hoa	Hang Trùng 1 Village
11	Đinh Thị Sinh	Hang Trùng 1 Village
12	Mùi Văn Ngọc	Hang Trùng 1 Village
13	Hà Văn Thành	Hang Trùng 1 Village
Lâm Đồng Province		
1	Nguyễn Thị Phương Loan	Chief of Crop Production Division, Lam Dong Provincial Agriculture & Rural Development Department (DARD)
2	Nguyễn Tuyết Hậu	Officer of Lam Dong Provincial Agriculture & Rural Development Department (DARD)
Huyện Đơn Dương District, Lâm Đồng Province		
Thanh Nghĩa Commune		
1	Nguyễn Văn Lượm	Chairman of Thanh Nghĩa Cooperative
2	Đỗ Văn Huỳnh	Vice-Chairman, Thanh Nghĩa Cooperative, Don Duong District
3	Nguyễn Châu	Vice-Chairman, Thanh Nghĩa Cooperative, Don Duong District
4	Tân Hào Hào	Farmer of Thanh Nghĩa Cooperative
5	Nguyễn Quốc	Farmer of Thanh Nghĩa Cooperative
6	Trần Thị Thanh	Thanh Nghĩa Cooperative
7	Nguyễn Thị Phương	Thanh Nghĩa Cooperative
8	Trương Văn Hùng	Farmer of Thanh Nghĩa Commune
9	Phạm Thành Đượ	Farmer of Thanh Nghĩa Commune
10	Đỗ Văn Vinh	Farmer of Thanh Nghĩa Commune
11	Phạm Phù Hoàng	Farmer of Thanh Nghĩa Commune

12	Trần Xuân Hóa	Farmer of Thạnh Nghĩa Commune
13	Nguyễn Đa	Farmer of Nghĩa Đức Commune
14	Thềm Văn Mạng	Farmer of Thạnh Nghĩa Commune
Hung Yên Province		
1	Nguyễn Văn Tráng	Chief of Crop Production Division, Hung Yen Provincial Agriculture & Rural Development Department (DARD)
2	Nguyễn Tuấn Phong	Expert of Hung Yen Provincial Agriculture & Rural Development Department (DARD)
Kim Động District, Hung Yên Province		
1	Vũ Đình Duần	Director of Hai Hung High Quality Food Processing Joint Stock Company (HAVECO)
2	Hà Long Thành	Chief of Business Division, HAVECO
Hiệp Cường Commune		
1	Phạm Đức Lạng	Head of Hiep Cuong Peoples Committee
2	Vũ Văn Phong	Head of Hiep Cuong Cooperative
3	Vũ Đình Cảnh	Officer of Hiep Cuong Peoples Committee
4	Vũ Văn Lệ	Hiệp Cường Commune
5	Trịnh Tất Thùy	Hiệp Cường Commune
6	Trịnh Văn Giàu	Hiệp Cường Commune
7	Trịnh Thị Liên	Hiệp Cường Commune
8	Phạm Thị Ngoài	Hiệp Cường Commune
9	Phạm Thị Yến	Hiệp Cường Commune
10	Trịnh Thị Quạt	Hiệp Cường Commune
11	Dương Thị Hiền	Hiệp Cường Commune
12	Nguyễn Thị Phương	Hiệp Cường Commune
13	Nguyễn Thị Liệu	Hiệp Cường Commune
14	Trịnh Hữu Đạt	Hiệp Cường Commune
15	Phạm Thị Ngạn	Hiệp Cường Commune
16	Vũ Thị Quyết	Hiệp Cường Commune

7.2 The time schedule of the field trip

TT	Date	Activities	Location
1	31/10/2012	Worked with the representative of DARD- Son La province	Mộc Châu
2	01/11/2012	Met and worked with vice- president of Moc Chau district	Mộc Châu
3	01/11/2012	Worked with beneficiaries of Dong Sang Commune- Moc Chau- Son La	Đông Sang, Mộc Châu
4	01/11/2012	Visited and worked with representatives of Co. 19/5	Mộc Châu
5	02/11/2012	Worked with beneficiaries at Van Ho commune- Moc Chau- Son La	Vân Hồ, Mộc Châu
6	06/11/2012	Met and worked with management board of Thanh Nghia Co.- Don Duong District- Lam Dong Province Met and worked with beneficiaries of Co. Thanh Nghia	Đơn Dương, Lâm Đồng
7	07/11/2012	Met and worked with officials of DARD- Lam Dong province	Lâm Đồng
8	09/11/2012	Met and worked with management board of HAVECO- Hung Yen province Met and worked with representative of Hiep Cuong CPC Met and worked with beneficiaries at Hiep Cuong Commune	Hung Yên
9	13/11/2012	Worked with Project National Coordinator Worked with National Consultant	Hà Nội