

ANNEX IX

to Commission Implementing Decision on the financing of the annual action plan in favour of Bosnia and Herzegovina for 2021

Action Document for “EU4 Safe food, animal and plant health controls in Bosnia and Herzegovina”

1. SYNOPSIS

1.1. Action Summary Table

| | | | | |
|--|--|-------------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Title | Action 09 - EU4 Safe food, animal and plant health controls Annual Action Plan in favour of Bosnia and Herzegovina for 2021 | | | |
| CRIS number | 043-667/9 | | | |
| Basic Act | Financed under the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA III) | | | |
| Team Europe Initiative | No | | | |
| Zone benefiting from the action | Bosnia and Herzegovina | | | |
| Programming document | IPA III Programming Framework | | | |
| PRIORITY AREAS AND SECTOR INFORMATION | | | | |
| Window and thematic priority | Window 4: Competitiveness and Inclusive Growth Thematic priority 3: Agriculture and Rural Development | | | |
| Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) | Action contributes to achievement of following SDGs: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• SDG 2: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture | | | |
| DAC code(s) | 43073 - Food safety and quality 31195 - Livestock /veterinary services 31192 - Plant and post-harvest protection and pest control | | | |
| Main Delivery Channel¹ | Bilateral | | | |
| Markers (from CRIS DAC form) | General policy objective | Not targeted | Significant objective | Principal objective |
| | Participation development/good governance | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| | Aid to environment | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Gender equality and Women's and Girl's Empowerment | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Trade Development | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

¹ <http://www.oecd.org/dac/stats/annex2.htm>.

| | | | | |
|--|--|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| | Reproductive, Maternal, New born and child health | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Disaster Risk Reduction | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Inclusion of persons with disabilities | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Nutrition | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | RIO Convention markers | Not targeted | Significant objective | Principal objective |
| | Biological diversity | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Combat desertification | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Climate change mitigation | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Climate change adaptation | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Internal markers | Policy objectives | Not targeted | Significant objective | Principal objective |
| | Digitalisation | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Migration | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | COVID-19 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Social inclusion and human development | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| BUDGET INFORMATION | | | | |
| Amounts concerned | Budget Line: 15.020201.02 Total estimated cost: EUR 4 000 000 Total amount of EU budget contribution: EUR 4 000 000 | | | |
| MANAGEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION | | | | |
| Type of financing and method(s) of implementation | Project Modality Direct management through Procurement | | | |
| Relevant priorities and flagships from Economic and Investment Plan for the Western Balkans | N/A | | | |
| Final date for conclusion of Financing Agreement | At the latest by 31 December 2022 | | | |
| Final date for concluding contribution / delegation agreements, procurement and grant contracts | 3 years following the date of conclusion of the Financing Agreement, with the exception of cases listed under Article 114(2) of the Financial Regulation | | | |

| | |
|--|--|
| | |
| Indicative operational implementation period | 7 years following the conclusion of the Financing Agreement |
| Final date for implementing the Financing Agreement (date by which this programme should be de-committed and closed) | 13 years following the conclusion of the Financing Agreement |

1.2. Summary of the Action

The Action supports the implementation of control measures in food safety, veterinary and phytosanitary sectors, as an important part of preservation of human, animal and plants health. As such, the Action aims to improve the one health status through supporting specific services across the above sectors, inspections and public laboratories (only reference and official, where exist, such as in phytosanitary and veterinary; in food safety, there are still no such designated laboratories) that perform official controls and other relevant inspection checks and laboratory diagnostics. With regard to this, the Action will support implementation of annual controls programmes related to public, animal and plant health. The procurement of necessary equipment for the above services will be at side of EU Delegation in Bosnia and Hercegovina (BiH) while the competent authorities at relevant levels² will have important technical roles and be responsible for carrying out all the tasks relating to the implementation of controls, which will strengthen their institutional capacity and boost coordination among institutions involved in the control chain. The Action will influence the animal welfare, plants protection, promotion of responsible production and consumer protection. Therefore, the Action will impact the overall health protection.

2. RATIONALE

2.1. Context Analysis

Given the impact on the overall health and economy, implementation of **control measures in the food and feed chain**, in particular **official controls**³, remain a high priority for the sectors to prepare well and gradually align (in view of the new Regulation (EU) 2017/625). Further efforts are needed concerning the country's alignment with relevant EU legislation in this field, equipping the services and their further knowledge empowerment and skills improvements. As for acquis alignment and capacity building, it was supported by ongoing IPA 2018 twinning projects in Chapter 12 policy area.

The Action will support implementation of the country's annual control programmes in the areas of food safety, public, animal and plants health.

2.2. Problem analysis by areas of support

Short problem analysis: Bosnia and Herzegovina has some level of preparations in the field of food safety, veterinary and phytosanitary policy. The progress achieved over the past years, have been of benefits to the overall implementation of the Stabilization and Association Agreement (SAA). European Commission's satisfactory assessments of the country's controls systems and establishments for granting the authorisation of export of the country's most important agri-food commodities (fish, honey, potato, milk and dairy, poultry, eggs for industrial use) to the EU, in synergy with liberalized trade concessions established within the SAA and CEFTA, led to the expansion of production and processing capacities, raising hygiene and quality standards and

² State, two entities, Federation of BiH (FBiH) and Republika Srpska (RS), Brčko District of BiH (BD BiH), cantons in FBiH

³ Based on the assessment of risks posed to the safety of the agri-food chain and carried out from farm to fork (such as from plants and animal production to food manufacturing and supply) by the competent authorities to verify business compliance with the requirements set out in agri-food chain legislation. It covers the safety and quality of food and feed, plant health, animal health and welfare as well as import controls on animals and goods.

contributing to the private sector development. Given the strong reliance of domestic producers on the EU market, gradual country's alignment with EU sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) requirements is considered to be one of the key to the country's agri-food sector competitiveness and growth. Its importance is also recognised by **IPA III Programming Framework (PF)** for the Western Balkan, where representing one thematic priorities (Window 4 Agriculture and Rural Development). In line with expected IPA III support results for this priority, the Action is to respond to growing demands for a safe food, animal and plant protection, as well as to support specific services, inspections and laboratories, as crucial for the food and feed chain controls. Moreover, as the latest acquis in Chapter 12 (Animal Health Law, Plant Health Law, Official Controls Regulation etc.) has enhanced the animal and plant health regime, controls are reinforced and requirements are more demanding, both on the side of the country's controls systems as well as on food business operators, animal holders and plant operators. Bosnia and Herzegovina must undertake gradual alignment with these latest acquis development. Fully functional chain of command is yet to be ensured. Coordination and exchange of information in official controls, risk assessment and crisis management, although improved through years, requires further strengthening. This is also true for the laboratory capacities engaged in sanitary, veterinary, and phytosanitary controls. The Action, will, therefore in overall, contribute to the country's better preparedness for accession in Chapter 12.

Description of main stakeholders: Main stakeholders affected by the Action are State, Entity and BD BiH inspections and public (reference and official, where exist, such as in phytosanitary and veterinary) laboratories, involved in the food safety, animal and plant health policy development and implementation, all having interest in ensuring safe food and protecting animal and plant stocks. Other important stakeholders are ministries, veterinary organisations, which are responsible for policy and implementation, while food business operators, animal holders and plant operators are the final beneficiaries of the Action.

Complementarity with national strategies: The Action contributes to particular support measures under the new countrywide strategy (Strategic Plan of Rural Development of BiH 2023-2027 – framework document) adopted by the Council of Ministers of BiH on 9 February 2024, which are important for a wider context of the intervention: a) support to public service development in agricultural and food sector, where key sub-measures relate to strengthening inspections and laboratories' capacities for official controls and b) enhancing the capacity of competent bodies, inspections and laboratories in managing crisis situations in case of food borne, animal or plant diseases (emergencies), preparation of contingency plans etc.

2.3. Relevance and complementarity with strategies supported by key national stakeholders

The Action will ensure continuity in implementation of food safety, animal and plant health protection measures, intended to reduce number of disease outbreaks and increase performance measurement of relevant controls services, such as inspections and public (reference and official) laboratories.

Strategic Plan for Rural Development of Bosnia and Herzegovina (2018-2021) (Framework document) notes that food safety, veterinary and phytosanitary policies play a significant role in each country, and that inadequate implementation of controls measures may result in an increased incidence of infectious plants and animals. In terms of zoonoses and humans, food of animal origin is often a source of infection, thus losing the opportunity to participate in international trade in animals and products of animal origin. Due to the constant danger to human and animal and plant health, the organisation and implementation of control measures must be a priority in every country. A strategic approach to the control of the overall health, and capacity building for performance based policy implementation is necessary, in order to promote responsible agri-food production, reduce the need for medications, ensure consumer protection and create conditions for the export of other commodities, such as bovine, caprine and ovine meat, table eggs and live animals and other products of animal origin from BiH to the EU. Given the significant socio-economic impact of communicable diseases that are controlled in accordance with current legislation, ensuring the implementation of programs to control these diseases is necessary to strengthen the agricultural sector and maintain competitiveness of producers in BiH. In addition, the emergence of exotic diseases with cross-border effects in the region over the past few years needs to be taken into account, which has further complicated the efforts of the services to maintain favourable health status and ensure conditions for unhindered international trade of animal and plants origin commodities.

2.4. Relevance and complementarity with EU policy and EU and other donors' assistance

The Action follows in full priorities in Chapter 12 according to which significant work is still necessary for BiH to align with the EU *acquis*, particularly as regards official checks, animal health and plant health. In addition, the administrative capacity of laboratories has yet to be strengthened and official checks need to be bolstered.

The 2019 Analytical Report⁴ asks the country to further harmonise its official veterinary and phytosanitary control systems with EU rules, improve its institutional arrangements in order to avoid overlapping competences and strengthen its control and coordination chain. As a short-term priority, Analytical report obliged BiH to introduce inter-laboratory comparative tests, to increase their administrative capacity, in particular inspection services and laboratories.

The article 95 of the **Stabilisation and Association Agreement** stipulates that cooperation between the EU and Bosnia and Herzegovina in field of agriculture and agro-industrial sector shall focus on priority areas related to the EU *acquis* in the field of agriculture and veterinary and phytosanitary domains. Cooperation shall notably aim at modernising and restructuring the agriculture and agro-industrial sector in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in particular to reach veterinary and phytosanitary Community requirements and at supporting the progressive approximation of the legislation and practices of Bosnia and Herzegovina to the Community rules and standards.

The Commission 2023 BiH Report⁵ points out that Bosnia and Herzegovina's food and feed control system is not yet aligned with the EU *acquis* and further structural and administrative work is still necessary at all levels of the government, particularly concerning inspection services and laboratories, for which inter-laboratory comparative tests have still not been introduced. Hygiene, veterinary and phytosanitary checks need to be improved; and the accreditation of laboratory methods used for these checks needs to be accelerated. The Commission urges the country to strengthen capacity of laboratories and official checks.

The **Economic Reform Programme (2023-2025)** recognises importance of the harmonization of the system of the official veterinary and phytosanitary controls with the European standards; the strengthening of administrative capacities, especially with regard to inspection services and laboratories; the transposition and implementation of the EU regulations and the establishment of structures that will ensure the achievement of the required level of quality and food safety standards for the unhindered trade in agricultural goods and the export of all goods of animal origin to the European Union market.

European Green Deal⁶ and Farm to Fork Strategy⁷ proves that animal and plant health among others, ensures secure food and reduces the need for medication and can help preserve biodiversity.

In this aim, Action will support implementation of food and feed safety requirements as well as animal and plant health controls. In this sense, it will provide necessary supplies to the competent services (inspections and official public laboratories) at same time improving capacities for monitoring of the effectiveness of controls plans.

2.5. Lessons learned and links with previous financial assistance

Regarding implementation of food safety and animal health controls, during previous projects financed by the EU and bilateral donors as well as EC follow up audits of the country's controls systems to evaluate its public and animal health controls in view of the granted export from BiH to the EU of a number of commodities, it is noticed that the services targeted under this assistance require improvements of their performance, database reliability and capacity building, where the technical resource base represent one of key elements in their system infrastructure. In addition, their reach out to plant operators, animal holders and food business operators needs to be improved as well as ensuring sustainable financing of food and health controls measures in the long-run. Thus, this Action is designed to indirectly address aforementioned challenges.

The Action is complementary to the projects under IPA 2018 Action Document "EU Support to Agriculture and Rural Development and, food safety, veterinary and phytosanitary standards in Bosnia and Herzegovina", and as such, it contributes to enhancing the sector approach. Action improves coordination among institutions involved

⁴ SWD(2019) 222

⁵ SWD(20213) 691

⁶ COM(2019) 640

⁷ COM(2020) 381

in safety and health related controls and it is continuation of the European Commission strategic support to food safety, veterinary and phytosanitary sectors since IPA I.

3. DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION

3.1. Planned results and intervention logic (describing causal links between impact, outcome(s) and output(s) and including assumptions)

If diagnostic and specialised equipment for hygiene, veterinary and phytosanitary controls is timely procured, delivered and in use (**Output**) and the assumption regarding the stakeholders' commitment to implement controls programmes benefiting from provided supplies in that process holds true, then hygiene, veterinary and phytosanitary controls in BiH will be enhanced (**Outcome**). If controls are enhanced and assumptions regarding sustainable stakeholders' financing of implementation of control measures across the country hold true, then it will protect public, animal and plant health in BiH (**Impact**).

3.2. Indicative type of activities

OUTPUT :
DIAGNOSTIC AND SPECIALISED EQUIPMENT FOR HYGIENE, VETERINARY AND PHYTOSANITARY CONTROLS IS TIMELY PROCURED, DELIVERED AND IN USE
 Intervention aims at improvement of food safety, animal and plant health status through supporting efficiency and effectiveness of control measures. It will build up capacities of sanitary, veterinary, and phytosanitary inspections performing checks, including official controls, and official public laboratories, where exist, like in phytosanitary as well as two designated reference veterinary laboratories (Sarajevo and Banja Luka), engaged in analysis carried out within the scope of official controls. In that manner, those services will improve their performance, data management and reporting (inspections) as well as increase the number of accredited methods, thereby broadening their accreditation scope (laboratories).
 Activities under this Output include: Procurement and distribution of diagnostics and a variety of control and monitoring related equipment and kits needed for relevant food and feed, animal and plant health control measures. Implementation of control measures and diagnostics will be funded through national budgets.

3.3. Risks and assumptions

| Risks | Risk level (H/M/L) | Mitigating measures |
|--|--------------------|---|
| Sector complexity and a wide number of stakeholders at various administrative levels | M | Facilitation of cooperation between all stakeholders via sector coordination mechanisms; all measures agreed and deemed relevant by all stakeholders involved; regular communication and information exchange between all stakeholders. |
| Delays in procurement and distribution | M | Beneficiary institutions to ensure well in advance all parameters (technical, administrative etc.) relevant for procurement and implementation (distribution lists etc.). |

Assumptions (to be reflected in the Logical Framework Matrix above) – grouped by outputs and outcomes

Output: Diagnostic and specialised equipment for hygiene, veterinary and phytosanitary controls is timely procured, delivered and in use

All stakeholders committed to implement control programs benefiting from provided supplies in that process.

Outcome: Hygiene, veterinary and phytosanitary controls in BiH are enhanced

Sustainable stakeholders' financing of implementation of control measures across the country

3.4. Mainstreaming

How does this Action contribute to Gender Equality and Women's and Girls' Empowerment (in line with the EU gender equality strategy 2020-2025)?

The Action's visibility will in overall contribute to the awareness about importance of sanitary and phytosanitary standards in the agri-food chain where women represent considerable labour force and being particularly engaged in food production and marketing. Also, participation of women from the beneficiaries' structures in implementation of the Action will be particularly encouraged.

How does this Action address Environment and Climate change?

This action does not address environment and climate change

How does this Action address the Rights Based Approach?

N/A

How does this Action promote the systematic engagement with Civil Society?

N/A

Others (such as Resilience and Conflict Sensitivity, Roma, people with disabilities and other vulnerable groups)

Since the intervention is very specific and straightforward, i.e. procurement of specialised supplies (diagnostics etc.), the Action as such does not particularly address the Rights Based Approach as neither engagement with Civil Society nor Resilience and Conflict Sensitivity, Roma, people with disabilities and other vulnerable groups.

3.5. Conditions for implementation

Country's financial coverage of the activities out of the scope of this Action but related to, should be timely ensured. Namely, an adequate number of staff (inspectors and laboratories staff) engaged in implementation of monitoring and controls of food safety, animal and plant health, which is to follow after deliveries of supplies to be procured under this Action. All competent authorities regularly perform the above controls within their annual budgets at appropriate levels. Accreditation of both National Reference Laboratories (NRLs), where exist, such as in veterinary, for certain notifiable diseases, and official laboratories (phytosanitary) are to be in place, like the accreditation of methods for which their NRL and official statuses are designated as well as the validity of their designation by competent authorities.

However, failure to comply with the requirements set out above may lead to a recovery of funds under this programme and/or the re-allocation of future funding.

3.6. Logical Framework

| Results | Results chain: Main expected results (maximum 10) | Indicators (at least one indicator per expected result) | Baselines (2020) | Targets (2024) | Sources of data (1 per indicator) | Assumptions |
|----------------|--|--|---------------------|-------------------|---|---|
| Impact | To protect public, animal and plant health in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) | Level of progress as per acquis Chapter 12 | Limited | Some | EC Country Progress Reports for BiH DG SANTE Country profiles EFSA Reports EPPO Reports OIE reports Statistics and sectoral reports in BiH | <i>Not applicable</i> |
| Outcome | Hygiene, veterinary and phytosanitary controls in BiH are enhanced | The level of implementation of annual control plans | Moderate | Good | EC reports Statistics and sectoral reports in BiH | Sustainable stakeholders' financing of implementation of controls measures across the country |
| | | Status of laboratory accreditation | Moderate | Good | | |
| Output | Diagnostic and specialised equipment for hygiene, veterinary and phytosanitary controls timely is procured, delivered and in use | Number of equipment supplied, tested and distributed | None | In full | project reports | All stakeholders committed to implement controls programmes benefiting from provided supplies in that process |

4. IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

4.1. Financing agreement

In order to implement this Action, a financing agreement with the Bosnia and Herzegovina is concluded.

4.2. Implementation modalities

The Commission will ensure that the EU appropriate rules and procedures for providing financing to third parties are respected, including review procedures, where appropriate, and compliance of the action with EU restrictive measures⁸.

4.2.1. Direct management (Procurement)

Procurement such as procurement of supplies (output) will directly influence the effectiveness of food safety, animal and plant health controls in BiH (outcome). The output will be delivered by means of a number of supply contracts (under a few lots due to different nature of supplies) under direct management of the Delegation of EU in BiH.

| Subject | Indicative type (works, supplies, services) | Indicative trimester of launch of the procedure |
|--|--|--|
| Output: Diagnostic and specialised equipment for hygiene, veterinary and phytosanitary controls timely is procured, delivered and in use | Supply Contract | Q2 2025 |

4.3 Changes from indirect to direct management mode (and vice-versa) due to exceptional circumstances (one alternative second option)

If the procurement under section 4.2.1 fails this action may be implemented in indirect management for the activities envisaged under output 1 with an entrusted entity that will be selected by the Commission's services, using the following selection criteria:

- a) financial and operational capacity of the applicant for managing large-scale procurement interventions;
- b) Technical competence in the preparation and implementation of large scale actions

4.4 Scope of geographical eligibility for procurement and grants

The geographical eligibility in terms of place of establishment for participating in procurement procedures and in terms of origin of supplies purchased as established in the basic act and set out in the relevant contractual documents shall apply, subject to the following provisions.

The Commission's authorising officer responsible may extend the geographical eligibility on the basis of urgency or of unavailability of services in the markets of the countries or territories concerned, or in other duly substantiated cases where application of the eligibility rules would make the realisation of this action impossible or exceedingly difficult (Article 28(10) of the NDICI-Global Europe Regulation).

4.5 Indicative budget

| OUTCOME/OUTPUT | EU contribution (amount in EUR) | Indicative third party contribution, in EUR |
|--|------------------------------------|--|
| Output : Diagnostic and specialised equipment for hygiene, veterinary and phytosanitary controls is timely procured, delivered and in use | 4 000 000 | N.A. |

⁸ See www.sanctionsmap.eu. Please note that the sanctions map is an IT tool for identifying the sanctions regimes. The source of the sanctions stems from legal acts published in the Official Journal (OJ). In case of discrepancy between the published legal acts and the updates on the website, it is the OJ version that prevails.

| | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|-------------|
| Direct management (procurement), cf. section 4.2.1. | N.A. | N.A. |
| Procurement – total envelope under section 4.2.1 | 4 000 000 | N.A. |
| Evaluation (cf. section 5.3) | will be covered by another decision | N.A. |
| Audit/Expenditure verification(cf. section 6) | will be covered by another decision | N.A. |
| Communication and visibility (cf. section 7) | N.A. | N.A. |
| Contingencies | N.A. | N.A. |
| Total | 4 000 000 | N.A. |

4.6 Organisational set-up and responsibilities

The Action will be implemented under the direct management, chosen to maximise the Action's impact to the highest possible extent. The national stakeholders will closely cooperate with the Contracting Authority in relation to an efficient coordination of the Action implementation. EU Delegation in Bosnia and Herzegovina is responsible for the procurement while the stakeholders, beneficiary institutions i.e. state border veterinary inspection, food, veterinary and phytosanitary inspections of two entities and BD BiH as well as four official phytosanitary laboratories and two reference veterinary laboratories, will have important technical roles and be responsible for carrying out their related tasks within the implementation of the Action.

5. PERFORMANCE/RESULTS MONITORING AND REPORTING

5.1. Internal monitoring

Close cooperation of the Contracting Authority and the key beneficiaries' institutions competent for food safety, animal and plant health is envisaged.

5.2. Roles & responsibilities for data collection, analysis & reporting

The action will ensure reporting and coordination chain across the Action component. Internal monitoring will be implemented through EU Delegation implementation reviews, on-the-spot checks, meetings with beneficiaries and consultant companies/contractors. Management structures will monitor the progress of the Action implementation referring to logframe matrix, facilitate access to information, ensure timely and sufficient inputs from relevant institutions when required, provide advice etc. Progress will be measured and monitored through indicators identified in the logframe and confirmed by the key beneficiaries, aiming to assess the success of measures undertaken and resources invested. Further, management structures will monitor the extent to which the expected results have been achieved. There will be also proper reporting and evaluation mechanisms applied. The Action might be subject to external monitoring in line with the European Commission rules and procedures set in the Financing Agreement.

5.3. Evaluation

Having regard to the nature of the action, a mid-term and/or final evaluation will not be carried out for this action or its components.

In case an evaluation is not foreseen for some action's components, the Commission may, during implementation, decide to undertake such an evaluation for duly justified reasons either on its own decision or on the initiative of the partner.

Evaluation services may be contracted under a framework contract.

The financing of the evaluation shall be covered by another measure constituting a financing Decision

6. AUDIT

Without prejudice to the obligations applicable to contracts concluded for the implementation of this action, the Commission may, on the basis of a risk assessment, contract independent audits or expenditure verification assignments for one or several contracts or agreements.

It is foreseen that audit services may be contracted under a framework contract.

7. COMMUNICATION AND VISIBILITY

Visibility of EU funding and communication about objectives and impact of Actions are a legal obligation for all Actions funded by the EU, as set out in the EU communication and visibility requirements in force.

In particular, the recipients of EU funding shall acknowledge the origin of the EU funding and ensure its proper visibility by:

- providing a statement highlighting the support received from the EU in a visible manner on all documents and communication material relating to the implementation of the funds, including on an official website and social media accounts, where these exist; and
- promoting the actions and their results by providing coherent, effective and proportionate targeted information to multiple audiences, including the media.

Visibility and communication measures shall be implemented, as relevant, by the national administrations (for instance, concerning the reforms linked to EU budget support), entrusted entities, contractors and grant beneficiaries. Appropriate contractual obligations shall be included, respectively, in financing agreements, delegation agreements, and procurement contracts.

The measures shall be based on a specific Communication and Visibility Plan, established and implemented in line with the EU communication and visibility requirements in force. The plan shall include, inter alia, a communication narrative and master messages for the Action, customised for the various target audiences (stakeholders, civil society, general public, etc.)

Visibility and communication measures specific to this Action shall be complementary to the broader communication activities implemented directly by the European Commission services and/or the EU Delegation. The European Commission and the EU Delegation should be fully informed of the planning and implementation of the specific visibility and communication activities, notably with respect to the communication narrative and master messages.

Raising awareness of food business operators, animal holders and plant operators, civil society and citizens in general on the importance of protection of public, animal and plant health will complement this Action (supplies), through ongoing IPA 2018 assistance. All implementing partners and stakeholders of this Action shall ensure the visibility of EU financial assistance provided through IPA III.

8. SUSTAINABILITY

The aim of the Action is to support implementation of food safety, animal and plant health control measures. During preparation of this action, the involvement of the main actors was ensured with purpose to enhance the ownership and boost partnership among those who will be involved in the implementation of the Action and take over the results of the Action to be used and further developed and maintained after the Action ends.