Promotion of geographical indication products: Learning from international experiences
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**Abbreviations**

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<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>AO</td>
<td>appellation of origin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EC</td>
<td>European Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CoP</td>
<td>codes of practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSO</td>
<td>civil society organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EAEU</td>
<td>Eurasian Economic Union</td>
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<td>FAO</td>
<td>Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations</td>
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<tr>
<td>GI</td>
<td>geographical indication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GIMO(s)</td>
<td>geographical indication managing organizations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IP</td>
<td>intellectual property</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kyrgyzpatent</td>
<td>State Service for Intellectual Property and Innovation under the Ministry of Economy and Commerce of the Kyrgyz Republic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n.d.</td>
<td>No date</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>non-governmental organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OLP</td>
<td>origin-linked product</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAMPIG</td>
<td>Projet d’appui à la mise en place des indications géographiques dans des Etats africains</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PDO</td>
<td>protected designation of origin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PGI</td>
<td>protected geographical indication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TRIPS</td>
<td>WTO Agreement on Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TSG</td>
<td>traditional speciality guaranteed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USD</td>
<td>United States dollar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WIPO</td>
<td>World Intellectual Property Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WTO</td>
<td>World Trade Organization</td>
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</tbody>
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Executive summary

This document is part of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) project, promoting accelerated green investment in agriculture through capacity building of national financial institutions, implemented in Kyrgyzstan. This wider movement, supported by the project, can be observed in other Central Asian countries and has been boosted by the Central Asia Conference on Geographical Indications, which took place on 10–11 April 2019 in Dushanbe, that brought together Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan. Since this conference, all four countries have taken a number of initiatives in the field of geographical indications (GIs). Intellectual property (IP) offices have started legal and institutional reforms; new laws have been adopted in Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, and these will be followed by the adoption of regulations to complete the regulatory framework.

The document aims to illustrate a number of good practices in the promotion of GIs and appellation of origin (AO) products by showing the quality and other positive impacts of geographical indication (GI) value chains.

The paper has four sections. The first of those introduces a number of concepts and definitions related to GI system implementation. It also discusses the ways in which the state can assist with the promotion of GIs. The second section addresses different aspects of GI product promotion, the roles of different players, in particular producer organizations – or geographical indication managing organizations (GIMOs). Part 3 presents good international practices in the field of communication and promotion of GIs, in the hope that the actions, ideas and events might inspire GI producers in Central Asia. The last section offers a number of recommendations to public authorities, value-chain operators, and development agencies.

Geographical indications, being public standards, require the state to define a legal and institutional framework that secures the IP rights of legitimate users and gives sufficient guarantees to consumers in terms of the quality of the products they purchase. The state can also adopt measures to support GI value chain development that can positively impact smallholders, the capacity of farmer organizations, less favoured areas, women, and exports. To support GIs, state institutions should adopt support measures, including the promotion and regulation of official logos, collective marketing initiatives, and export promotion.

Marketing communication is one of the four elements of the marketing mix and includes the following activities of promotion, advertising and merchandising, all aiming at influencing consumers. The document focuses mostly on promotion and communication as GIMOs play a main role in those aspects, while other marketing functions are mainly executed by single farms and firms.

The second section focuses on some principles that can guide producers when elaborating a communication and promotion strategy for GIs. Market analysis and targeting are crucial steps of the strategy elaboration process. Cases presented in this paper show the importance of the analysis phase for a sound definition of the promotion strategy, which is often neglected because of limited financial resources.

Geographical indications promotion often involves codes of practice (CoP), or a specification to define the main messages communicated to consumers. Product uniqueness, specific and traditional methods of production, well identified areas of production, are all elements of the CoP that can become powerful promotional arguments, and often become the value proposition of the GI. What differentiates and makes a product desirable and competitive is the unique selling proposition, also called a unique selling point.

The communication content and the media used must be adapted to the target markets and consumers identified during the analysis phase. A number of promotional mechanisms such as joint promotion, twinning, synergies of GI marketing with territorial brand management, and regional or national contests, are among the many ways to promote GIs and their territories.

To a certain extent, the production of GI products is often in line with consumers and citizens expectations in terms of environmental and social impacts, as well as certain nutritional trends. These positive tangible assets can be studied, evidenced and made known to consumers, to further promote the GI image.

A GI reputation is a valuable, collective and intangible asset. It is therefore the responsibility of all players involved in the production process to maintain and enhance this reputation. In countries with a long lasting tradition of GIs, producer GIMOs can protect the GI against usurpation, counterfeits, and promote the GI on the market. This document details the role of GIMOs in that respect, such as GI branding, targeting and accessing markets, as well as the different ways specific GIMOs collaborate to promote the GI concept at national or international level.

Labelling and packaging are a critical aspect of communication and promotion, as they contribute to
build the GI product identity. Therefore, the labelling of single GI products must have common visual identity features. In some cases, producers opt for the same label for all the producers, with just a discrete mention of the names of producers.

However, use of a logo is the most common way to identify specific GIs on the market and differentiate them from imitations. This is the best way to signal the GI to consumers.

The central section of this paper describes seven cases that illustrate how marketing good practices have contributed to better GI sales, increased prices, access to new markets, and the building of long term relationships with consumers.

The case of the protected designation of origin (PDO) and protected geographical indication (PGI) cheeses from Savoy, France, is a perfect example of pooling resources to promote several PDO cheeses and complementary products from the Savoy region.

The recognition of Lofoten stockfish has increased consumer awareness of the origin and the tradition linked to the production and consumption of this typical fish product from Norway.

Some research indicates that the enhanced profile of honey from Oku, one of the first GIs registered on the African continent, has contributed to a livelihood’s improvement and sustainability in the Kilum-Ijim rainforest in Cameroon.

Pepper, like many colonial products, has been traded as a commodity for centuries. The recognition and promotion of pepper from Kampot, Cambodia, has resulted in its successful “de-commoditization” within the context of the country’s tourism sector development, and local economic development.

Given the historical role played by people in Georgia over centuries in the development of winemaking, the Government of Georgia has founded a Wine Agency to promote and protect Georgian wines. The spectacular achievements of this agency over the years advocate for a strong commitment of the state to promote GIs.

These last two cases illustrate how GIs and territories can be interlinked. The positive reputations of Tuscany, and the Aubrac region, can also be explained by the success of the GIs produced there.

To keep pace with developments since 2019, state authorities should maintain efforts to enforce the system while continuing to improve the regulatory framework. It is also essential to inform producers and consumers about the advantages and constraints. In addition to information dissemination through campaigns, the compulsory use of an official logo makes GI products more visible on market shelves. While the central government can do much, local government can take advantage of their proximity to value-chain stakeholders by providing office spaces for meetings, direct sales facilities, access to the local market, through financial support to GIMOs, and through mediation services when problems arise.

Value chain operators have the major role in the promotion of their GI products, but can achieve significant results by conducting collective actions through GIMOs. These organizations, representing the whole value chain, can build strong links with the retail sector, consolidate quantities and standards to access large retailers, help producers to take advantage of the growth of tourism in Central Asia by for instance developing GI product routes, and contribute to the improvement of packaging and labelling.

As for international and bilateral development agencies, a coordination effort can be facilitated in Central Asian countries through national working groups. Such a forum not only coordinates efforts and makes approaches compatible, it contributes to building long-term local knowledge and expertise. It is therefore highly recommended to keep this forum alive in future.

Development agencies can also assist local networks, involving public and private sector stakeholders, to implement local development plans in which GI products can play an important role.

The shift from a pure producer IP rights protection system to a GI system with guarantees of quality to consumers – and contributing to rural and territorial development – requires institutional and operational mechanisms, implemented with trained and competent human resources. Support organizations should provide all the necessary capacity development means to establish an efficient control system and train public authorities, certifications bodies performing external control, and GIMOs performing internal control.
Promotion of geographical indication products: Learning from international experiences

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Introduction

Objective of this document. The document aims to illustrate a number of good practices in terms of the promotion of GI and AO products, namely by communicating on the quality and other positive impacts of GI value chains.

The experiences presented below can inspire groups of producers, processors and other possible stakeholders who want to know how to promote a GI product, and communicate about products that are not fully standardized. The document will also show the importance of promoting GI and AO signs, especially in countries where consumers are not familiar with the GI quality signs introduced recently.

It is crucial to show producers and consumers the benefit of GIs and AO that are recognized and protected against infringements. It is important to make efforts in terms of information, communication, promotion of single GIs, and the guarantee scheme. The seven case studies illustrate the tools, processes and actions GI producers across the world have deployed to come up with sound and successful promotion strategies.

Context. This work is being conducted in the framework of the project Promoting accelerated green investment in agriculture through capacity building of national public and financial institutions, which has three main axes of intervention:

- Enhance the capacity of the working group established under the Kyrgyzstan Ministry of Agriculture and Kyrgyzpatent.
- Advise the Kyrgyzstan authorities in reforming legal and institutional frameworks.
- Assist three pilot GI product value chains in formulating and adopting a CoP in order to have the GI recognized by national authorities, and in preparing a marketing strategy and plan to benefit from the three GIs.

The process is still at an early stage, but it is encouraging to see that new laws and regulations are being adopted, and the private sector showing interest, albeit at a modest level for the time being. The need for more information and enhancing expertise in this new field is crucial, as is coordination by the state.

Target audience. This document targets value chain stakeholders, GI producers, development practitioners, business services or civil society organizations (CSO) assisting core value chain actors, policymakers and other state representatives who should promote GIs.

Structure. The paper has four sections. The first of those introduces a number of concepts and definitions related to GI system implementation. It also discusses the ways in which the state can assist with the promotion of GIs. The second section addresses different aspects of GI product promotion, the roles of different players, in particular GIMOs. Part 3 presents good international practices in the field of communication and promotion of GIs, in the hope that the actions, ideas and events might inspire GI producers in Central Asia. The last section offers a number of recommendations to public authorities, value-chain operators, and development agencies.
PART I.
Geographical indications framework and its application to Central Asian countries

Defining concepts

This part introduces the concepts of GIs and AO, and explains their potential impact for the improved performance of agrifood systems – why they can improve agro-industry performance, and reduce food insecurity and poverty. For readers unfamiliar with GIs, please refer to FAO -SINERGI guide, Linking People, Places and Products (Vandecandelaere et al., 2009) for definitions and main principles.

Origins and development of geographical indications

Geographical indications have existed since the antiquity. The origins of products such as wine, olive oil, metals or textiles were mentioned during the Greek and Roman empires, as a guarantee of quality.

The French cheese Roquefort was first mentioned in 1070. In the fourteenth century, the ripening of the cheese became the monopoly of the people of Roquefort, and in 1666, the Parliament of Toulouse passed a decree prescribing sanctions for the producers of fake Roquefort cheese. The first international treaty to refer to appellations of origin and indications of source was the Paris Convention on the Protection of Industrial Property.

Historically, GIs and AO were officially recognized primarily to fight against the usurpation of the name. In France, the concept of AO was defined in 1905. Since the 1930s, laws and regulations have been adopted in Spain (1933), France (1935), Italy (1962) and Greece (1972), in defence of the wine market. The scope of the protection was subsequently extended to other agrifood products in France (1990), Italy (1992), and other European Union countries when the European Parliament adopted a legal framework for GIs.

According to the Paris Convention, each signatory state must take action to fight against the direct or indirect use of a false indication of the source of goods or the identity of the producers and market operators.

Figure 1. Geographical indications concept

In 1958, several countries signed the Lisbon Agreement for Protection of Appellations of Origin, in order to grant protection to AOs. The Geneva Act part of the Lisbon system extended the protection to GIs in 2015.

In 1994, in Marrakech, World Trade Organization (WTO) members signed the TRIPS agreement that gives a definition of the geographical indications shared by all member of the WTO.

The PDO–PGI scheme introduced in 1992 by (EEC) Council Regulation No. 2081/92 was decisive for the wider use of GIs and AO first in Europe and then worldwide, as well as the emphasis on giving a guarantee of quality to consumers. In particular, the imperative of thorough CoP and control of the compliance has changed perceptions in many countries, where GI and AO were previously considered IP instruments. Over the last 30 years, GIs and AO became instrumental for rural development and marketing. The website of the European Union introducing quality schemes and GIs reads:

EU quality policy aims to protect the names of specific products to promote their unique characteristics, linked to their geographical origin as well as traditional know-how.

Product names can be granted a ‘Geographical Indication’ (GI) if they have a specific link to the place where they are made. The GI recognition enables consumers to trust and distinguish quality products while also helping producers to market their products better (European Commission, 2023).

The spreading of GIs in many African, American and Asian countries that have adopted in many cases a sui generis system means that GIs are no longer considered only IP instruments, but also a tool for quality, rural development and a way to promote and brand products that despite their specific quality are not always recognized by the market.

Over the past three decades, the number of GIs registered under various legal protection regimes has increased significantly, in particular in developing countries and emerging economies. The Organization for an International Geographical Indications Network (OriGlIn) has compiled an inventory of GIs worldwide – there are 3,924 GIs in Asia, 202 in Africa, 467 in South America, and 138 in Oceania (OriGlIn, 2024).

Role of the state

The state has a responsibility to define a legal and institutional framework that secures the IP rights of legitimate users, and gives sufficient guarantees to consumers on the quality of the products they purchase. The competent authority is in charge of registering GIs and in principle ensuring their protection and conformity...
with their specifications (CoP). Depending on the country, these functions can be ensured by different state organizations, IP organizations, and ministries in charge of agriculture, handicrafts, industry and justice.

The state can also adopt measures in support of GI value chain development that can positively impact smallholders, the capacity of farmer organizations, less favoured areas, women, and exports. To support GIs, government and state institutions should adopt measures in the following areas:

- **Policy support and regulatory function.** The main role of the state is to assure consumers in terms of the guarantees on the origin, quality and method of production; and that the protection of the legitimate users of GIs – producers who comply with the CoP – is also guaranteed.

- **Promotion and regulation of official logos use.** In the field of communication and promotion, many countries have adopted official national logos that are applied on GI product labels. This simple measure is very efficient to raise awareness among producers and consumers, and increase GI visibility on market shelves.

- **Support collective marketing initiatives.** Governments have many ways to promote marketing initiatives, which is often crucial for GI value chain development. Initiatives under this category can be, for instance, funding of promotional campaigns for specific GIs or a family of GIs.

- **Support to export.** Many governments see GIs mainly as a tool for boosting exports. This is often the case in countries where agriculture can contribute to the balance of payments, more than any other economic sector. Public support can include financing promotional campaigns targeting specific markets, or participation in international fairs, or subsidies of certification or expenses linked to exports.

- **Provision of information, training and technical assistance to GI value chain stakeholders.** Guarantees on origin, quality and method of production are key ingredients of successful GIs. For this reason, the capacity development of producers and entities involved in the mechanisms giving these guarantees to the market are part of GI development strategies.

- **Improve access to finance.** Geographical indication systems do not impose significant extra costs or investments on producers, as CoP codify the existing processes and the GI product’s typical properties. However, as soon certification by private bodies is required by law, the certification cost can be deterring in many cases. In the longer term, successful GIs might demand the upscaling of production, requiring investments that exceed financial means.

- **Research and development.** Geographical indications with other quality signs participate in the “de-commoditization” of products. When a product or a service undergoes a commoditization process, producers can add tangible attributes by strengthening the product reputation and differentiate it in the eyes of consumers, or in other words to de-commoditize their product. Increasing the added value of a GI product is the result of value chain governance, the relationships between the chain stakeholders, marketing and pricing strategies, and so on. It is therefore common that scientists and academics investigate this field and develop new tools and approaches to research.

In many countries, GIs are often entrusted to a couple of department staff of ministries in charge of agriculture and rural development, who are tasked with making the GI system work, but without paying much attention to the interconnections with food safety, rural infrastructure, rural finance, tourism, investment measures, and so on. Policy must be therefore more embedded in other intersectoral policies.

**Geographical indications in Central Asian countries**

The potential for the development of GIs has been recognized by high-level representatives of Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan during the international conference of GI in Dushanbe in April 2019. The statement of intent – “creation and promotion of geographical indications common to Central Asian countries” – signed by the state secretary at the Ministry of Agriculture and Melioration of the Kyrgyz Republic, the minister of agriculture of the Republic of Tajikistan, and the ambassador of the Republic of Uzbekistan to the Republic of Tajikistan, is a strong regional official commitment that should favour a harmonized approach and mutual recognition of the GIs of Central Asian countries.

Since this conference, all four countries have taken a number of initiatives in the field of GIs. The IP offices have started legal and institutional reforms. New laws have been adopted in Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan and will be followed by the adoption of regulations to complete the regulatory framework.
Promotion of geographical indication products: Learning from international experiences
PART II.
International experiences in promoting geographical indication products

Developing the promotion strategy

Promotion optimizes the sales of products. It belongs to the selling function, one of the nine marketing functions that Kohls and Uhl have classified as follows (Kohls and Uhl, 1990):

Marketing communication is one of the four elements of the marketing mix and includes the following activities of promotion, advertising and merchandizing, all aiming at influencing consumers.

While production and most of the above-mentioned marketing functions remain the competence of the single producers or processors of the value chain, GIMOs have the responsibility to promote the GI, and in some cases to facilitate the development of new marketing channels.

The process of defining, adopting and implementing a marketing strategy goes through different steps. Before elaborating a GI promotion strategy, an analytical phase is needed to understand the market, identify the target consumers and markets, the competition, and one’s own GI product strengths and weaknesses.

Once these elements are known, messages and media can be defined in order to address the identified market and consumers.

Table 1. Marketing functions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of function:</th>
<th>Functions:</th>
<th>Single operators’ competence:</th>
<th>GIMOs competence:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Exchange functions</td>
<td>1. Buying</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>GIMOs can facilitate joint procurement, but avoiding to be financially engaged</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Selling (incl. promotion)</td>
<td>Sales: ✔</td>
<td>GIMOs have a great role to promote the GI. This document focuses mostly on this function.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Storage</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>GIMOs can facilitate joint storage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Transportation</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>GIMOs can facilitate joint transportation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5. Processing</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>GIMOs can facilitate joint storage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6. Standardization</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>GIMOs through the GI specifications define standards and ensure compliance by the single operators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Facilitating functions</td>
<td>7. Financing</td>
<td></td>
<td>Single operators finance their own operation and part of the GIMO activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8. Risk bearing</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>In order to protect the sustainability of the GI, GIMOs should avoid any type of risk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9. Market intelligence</td>
<td></td>
<td>GIMOs collect, centralize, analyse and disseminate market information</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Market analysis and targeting are particularly important for small GI value chains. The size of production plays an important role when deciding on target markets. Intuitively, one might assume that small value chains will commercialize locally, and large ones might export and sell the entire production, getting higher prices on the market with higher purchase power. However, the Savoy cheese strategy relies mostly on the domestic market, despite the magnitude of the production and the international reputation of French cheese. At the same time, very limited production can find better markets far from the area of production, for instance in the case of expensive wines – such as a few thousand bottles of Chateau Yquem – exported around the world. These examples show that market analysis is the first step in marketing, but it is often neglected or abandoned because of limited financial resources – despite the fact that such analysis is decisive in defining the marketing strategy.

A marketing strategy must have objectives that should be realistic and clearly defined. Enhancing the marketing and economic benefits of a value chain can be achieved via different means, such as:

- increasing sales volumes or prices on the markets already supplied by the GI product;
- positioning the GI product in premium market segments;
- accessing new domestic or export markets with consumers with higher purchasing power;
- capturing a higher portion of the gross margin by eliminating certain intermediaries; and
- enhancing the product image by sophisticated packaging and labelling.

What matters is meeting consumer expectation, and achieving retail selling points and product quality, including intangible properties of the product.

The message and values must be shaped on the basis of the defined targets and the purchase drivers of the various consumers. The tone, content and values communicated to the target consumer will vary according to whether they are young or old, trendy or conservative, nouveaux riche or middle class, and so on.

The targets will also determine the marketing media used. The geographical locations and profiles of the targeted consumers must be taken into account carefully. A significant geographical distance between producers and target market might require e-marketing. A very large audience might require the use of television channels. The younger generation might use Instagram.

Marketing skills are not always the stronger points of farmers and food processors. It might be wise to hire

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**Figure 2. Development of the promotion strategy**

Source: Author’s own elaboration.
specialized agencies that can help understand the market and consumers, define the right message, and identify the most appropriate media to reach target consumers.

Values and information carried by the promotion of GI products

Codes of practice and value proposition

While branding a new trademark – de facto unknown by consumers – requires an important effort in promotion and advertising to launch the product, GIs have the advantage of already being known on the local, domestic or international markets, even before their registration. They are associated with a specific place with genuine methods of production, often with a positive image of tradition and taste providing the consumer with a unique experience. All these assets are the result of a long tradition and described in the CoP of each GI. That is why the communication strategies of many GIs are based on CoP elements.

A value proposition is a statement that clearly identifies the benefits a product or service will deliver to its customers. Much promotion material, or the GI website, highlights the most significant and emblematic methods of production, or product specific properties, to define the value proposition. A well-crafted value proposition will differentiate and position the GI product to match specific market segments.

Pecorino Romano is an Italian sheep cheese registered in 1996 as PDO produced in Lazio (the region around Rome), Sardinia and Grosseto province. Aged five months, it can be combined with fresh fruit and vegetables. After eight months of aging, it is used as a grater cheese to flavour characteristic Roman dishes, from bucatini all’amatriciana to spaghetti cacio e pepe, to the famous trippa alla romana. The statement that appears on the website of the consortium promoting the PDO cheese underlines some of the main features of the product and its ancient origins.

Gruyère cheese, produced in western Switzerland from cow milk, is one of the most exported Swiss cheeses. On the Gruyère PDO website, the main elements of the CoP are presented in a simple but detailed manner. On its website welcome page, the emphasis is put on the key requirements of the specification (CoP):

It is above all the 100% traditional craft and expertise, passed down from generation to generation, that gives Gruyère PDO its inimitable flavour and impeccable quality. The procedure for production of Gruyère PDO is strictly specified. Milk producers, cheese-makers and affineurs (ripeners) respect each of its steps to the letter. This expertise has been guaranteed since 2001 through specifications approved by the Federal Office for Agriculture (https://www.gruyere.com/en/fabrication/the-production-of-gruyere-aop).
The “3Ts” – Territory, Tradition, Typicity – approach, that makes the link between quality and territory, are three important dimensions of GIs. Unlike newly created products that need intensive promotion campaigns to get visibility, GIs can build their communication on existing visibility and recognition, that can be conveyed to the consumers at reasonable cost. Doing this is made easier by the fact that the 3Ts correspond to the area of production, the method of production, and the product-specific property, all aspects endorsed by the competent authority. The campaign of the Swiss PGI and PDO association Roots (Territory), Know-how (Tradition) and Character (Typicity) is another clear instance of this approach. What differentiates and makes a product desirable and competitive is the unique selling proposition, also called a unique selling point.

**Unique selling point (USP)**

In the case of a GI product, the typicality of the product, is its unique selling point. Of course, this is especially true for products with strong typicity or with specific methods of production, for example processed GI products such as cheeses, processed meat, or processed fruit and vegetables.

In western Europe, at the beginning of twenty-first century, the Etivaz is one of the last cheeses to be heated with firewood. This happens in mountain huts, on summer pastures (alpage). These aspects regulated by the CoP are at the centre of the promotion strategy of the Etivaz cheese PDO.

Tête-de-Moine (the monkhead) is a cheese produced in the Jura Mountain range. One of the peculiarities of Tête de-Moine is the way it is served and consumed. Indeed, the production of cheese “flowers” requires the use of the girolle, a device developed especially for this purpose.

**Storytelling**

Over the past 30 years, storytelling has become one of the favourite marketing techniques in many sectors. Differentiation at the marketing stage includes product characteristics such as product design, package size, labels and legal protection (such as PDO and PGI). Storytelling contributes to support the authenticity of the production process, or simply to make the product more interesting to consumers. Because of the number of growers, the produced and exported volumes, the Café de Colombia is one of the most important GI value chains globally. Colombia is the second biggest producer of arabica coffee after Brazil, and next biggest exporter of coffee after Brazil and Vietnam. Café de Colombia is produced in different regions: Antioquia, Caldas, Cauca, Cundinamarca, Huila, El Nariño, e Valle dell Norte de Santander, El Quindio, El Risaralda, Tolima, and the Cauca Valley.

The Colombian Coffee Hub motto – “Origin is just around the corner. The Colombian Coffee Hub gets you closer to origin giving you information directly from the source” – is an example how to develop a relationship with the consumer, who becomes a member of the product consumer community (Café de Colombia, 2011).

Juan Valdez is a fictional character who has appeared in advertisements of the Federación Nacional de Cafeteros de Colombia since 1958, in which he plays a Colombian coffee farmer. The advertisements were designed by a North American advertisement “agency, with the goal of distinguishing Colombian coffee from coffee blended with beans from other countries. He always appears with his donkey Conchita, carrying sacks of harvested coffee beans” (Wikipedia, 2024).

**Messages to targeted consumers**

The above sections present the traditional way to promote GI products that are usually associated with traditional and somehow conservative lifestyles. In some cases, however, the messages and style of the promotion might be otherwise, depending on the targets of the marketing strategy.

Gorgonzola cheese is a blue cheese obtained from cow milk and produced in two main areas – Milano, and a region south of Torino. Gorgonzola cheese production is one of the largest in Italy. It is consumed both domestically and abroad, as table cheese or as an ingredient in many traditional Italian dishes. The Gorgonzola consortium launched a more modern, offbeat, campaign to reach non-traditional consumers and attract a younger and more trendy audience. The campaign was designed after market analysis revealed a lower consumption by the younger generation, who might have perceived PGI cheese as a bit too traditional.

In an interview published on 14 January 2022 on the Food Affairs website, the President of the Gorgonzola consortium, Antonio Auricchio, stated:

> Personally, I am convinced that we still have important growth margins by continuing to focus on new foreign markets and on the involvement of young people, who demonstrate their appreciation of Gorgonzola cheese (Food Affairs, 2022).

It is therefore crucial to identify the target audience and shape the messages according to this audience. In that respect, if tradition, artisanal production, and small-scale agriculture are certainly drivers for European countries, it might be different in emerging countries, where consumers might be more attracted by modernity and product safety, or in some cases by the status associated with a certain type of product.
Different mechanisms in promoting geographical indications

Joint promotion and twinning

Joint promotion aims mainly at pooling resources to reach larger targets and obtaining higher impacts. Twinning consists of promoting two or more complementary products. This strategy is often applied to promote products from the same region that can be consumed together (a cheese, a dry-cured meat, and a wine, for instance).

Joint promotion also helps to promote the PDO and PGI signs. The Swiss GI advertisement explains the benefits of GIs for consumers and producers: “To choose a PDO or a PGI is first to please yourself. But it is also to valorise a traditional know-how and a sustainable agriculture. Swiss PDO and PGI products belong to the Swiss cultural and culinary heritage.”

Twinning can apply to products from the same region, traditionally consumed together, but we have come across creative counter examples, such as the combination of Parmigiano Reggiano from Italy and tequila from Mexico, during the slow food fair Salone del Gusto, when both consortia organized a “twinning of tastes” called Mexico and Clouds to promote jointly their products. The joint promotion of cheeses and beers by Savoy cheeses is another example of twinning promoting products, and also new consumption habits (see chapter on PGI and PDO cheeses from Savoy).

Marketing of geographical indications and territorial brand management

Combining the promotion of GI products with their territory is very common. On the one hand, it contributes to territorial development, and on the other, it allows the GI product to benefit from locations that often have a positive image in terms of landscape and tradition. The interaction between local products value chain and other sectors of the economy often benefits the whole community. The cases of the Tuscany products, the Fleur d'Aubrac, Kampot pepper, and Savoy cheeses, show how the GI value chain, and territory, can reciprocally benefit each other. The potential common benefits include higher visibility of the products, better prices, better marketing capacities of the GI value chain operators, proximity of producers to consumers, new services and offers of rural tourism, visits of farms and processing facilities, museums, traditional products festivals.

Products or groups of products with a quality recognized by the market, and sold outside the region of production, enhance the image of the regions and countries of origin. Scotch whiskies, for instance, contribute to the positive image people have of Scotland, together with its quality wool and lamb meat. Many Italian regions (such as Tuscany, Piemonte, Sicily) are appreciated for the richness and uniqueness of their cuisine and traditional products. Morocco is well known for its food and handicrafts, as are Thailand, Vietnam and India. These aspects improve a country’s image and attractiveness, including with respect to tourism.
While quality products help to improve the image of a given region, the positive reputation of a region can in turn benefit products. Tuscany olive oil and wine, for example, benefit from the positive image of that region. The number of products produced in remote and marginal areas highlights the natural and preserved character of the area of production as central to the value of such products, such as with Savoy cheeses.

In rural areas, the interaction between a local product value chain and other sectors of the economy is most likely benefitting the whole community. Producers farming or processing one product at the centre of the branding strategy often produce other products. Some of the producers might be able to offer a service linked to the tourism industry (such as food and accommodation).

**Geographical indications as flagship products of territorial baskets of goods and services**

One common co-branding scheme is the promotion of one or more products together with the branding of the region of production or services offered in this region. In Morocco, different initiatives were taken by producers, local and national authorities to develop GI value chains, their region, and the country. As the example of argan oil shows, the different branding objects – lead products, other food and handicrafts products, tourism services, the region and the country – are recognized by the public and, developing joint or complementary branding strategies is very sensible when all these elements are present.

Argan forests shape two and a half million hectares of the Anti-Atlas Mountain range in southern Morocco. The production of argan oil is intimately associated with the traditional kitchen of this territory, which also produces saffron, honey, dates, almonds, sheep and goat meat. Tourism in the region has been developed since the 1980s. Mutual benefits for the agrifood and tourism sectors can be observed in many ways:

- development of direct selling of argan oil and other traditional products, including handicrafts;
- bird watching in the Argan Forest Biosphere Reserve; and
- visits of producer cooperatives.

Together, the immaterial value of these products and services contribute to the Moroccan national brand.

**Increase visibility of traditional products through national or regional contests**

National or regional “contests are a powerful tool to foster market access of typical food products by creating linkages between producers and consumers. They also promote quality and encourage healthy competition among producers and products from different regions” (UNIDO, 2017). On the basis of the Competition of the Products of the Terroir organized in Switzerland since 2005, editions of similar competitions have been organized in 2017 and 2019 in Tunisia, and in 2014, 2016 and 2018 in Morocco.

The National Regional Products Contest is an instrument aimed at:

- improving product quality to better meet consumer demand;
- showcasing and familiarizing people with the work of producers;
- bolstering entrepreneurship in the competing sectors;
- promoting and communicating about local products and their regions; and
- marketing these products and facilitating market
For producers, participating in the national competition and possibly earning awards will provide the following benefits:

- improved quality (sensory, presentation, packaging, quality labels and certifications);
- heightened visibility (through the promotion afforded by the national competition and its market, but also by affixing medals to the package and labels of a medal winning product); and
- higher turnover.

For buyers (both national and international), a National Regional Products Contest is a way to identify award winning products as being the very best, according to the contest’s juries. Purchasing organizations can consider medal winners to be quality products or products of excellence (marketed differently depending on the medal received).

For consumers, media coverage and promotion of the national contest and its outcomes help to identify the finest products on the market. Moreover, a market selling the products in competition, held at the same time as the contest, will familiarize consumers with existing products and provide access to quality local products coming from all regions in the country.

For the region and areas involved, a National Regional Products Contest is an opportunity for regions to promote locally medal-winning products, and to emphasize local producers’ know-how. This is essential for marketing origin-linked products, which are usually sold in the region of origin.

From the standpoint of sector structuring, the National Regional Products Contest strengthens the existing links of a given value chain. Moreover, consumers can easily access.

**LEADING PRODUCT**
- Argan Oil PGI
- Indigenous tree, unique worldwide
- PGI managed by the Association Marocaine de l’Indication Géographique de l’Huile d’Argane (AMIGHA).

**BASKET OF GOODS**
- Support to the argan oil embeded in a clear policy of local governemnt to support the different regional handicraft and food product
- Joint promotion through regional and national government webportals and presence on international fairs

**TOURISM**
- Recognition of the typical landscape though the Argan forest Biosphere reserve UNESCO
- Visits to producers
- Traditions
- Gastronomy

**REGIONAL OR NATIONAL BRANDING**
- Argan forest shapes the landscape of south Marocco and plays an important role in regional identity
- The very positive image of argan oil (health) and nearly exclusive location of production (Morocco) is used to promote Morocco. That is one of the reason why Argan oil was the first PGI to be protected

Source: Author's own elaboration.
identify and are drawn to products bearing a medal, familiarizing them with products available on the market; this may encourage other producers also to compete and lead to improved structure and efficiency in the sector involved.

The organization of such events requires significant financial, informational and logistical resources. Private and public partnerships help to bring together all stakeholders and mobilize those resources. The methodology of the contest should also be carefully addressed. Criteria for the selection of products, product categories, jury composition for each category, sensory analysis protocols, and awards, should be thought through by competent people (Friedli X., Freléchoz A., Gilliotte L., Denelin P., Piccinali Schwegler P., Girardin O., 2017.)

Social responsibility
To a certain extent, the production of GI products is often in line with consumers’ and citizens’ expectations in terms of environmental and social impacts, as well as certain nutritional trends. These positive tangible assets can be studied, evidenced and made known to consumers, to further promote the GI image.

FAO and OriGIn have initiated a process to identify the ways in which GIs can contribute to sustainable food systems. The possible role of GI in more sustainable value chains is summarized in Table 2.

Environmentally friendly character of GI production systems
Geographical indications can play an important role in promoting environmentally friendly agriculture and processing:

- Many GIs specifications (CoP) restrain the allowed breeds or varieties, and often ban the use of highly productive animals and plants.
- Specifications often impose grazing and grass-based feeds over cereals or concentrates, requirements that increase biodiversity and reduce energy consumption.

Appellations of origin and to a certain extent GIs are place-based, which tends to reduce the transportation of raw material and other inputs. However, GIs are also meant to enhance trust between producers and consumers. This is also the case for producers and consumers who are very distant from each other, which implies that GIs do in several cases worsen the food miles score of the products sold under this scheme.

The positive effects cannot be taken for granted, with public authorities and other actors reflecting on how to make GIs even more environmentally friendly. Indeed, specific negative effects have been observed:

- Water tables contaminated by nitrates due to

Table 2. Geographical indications contribution to key global issues

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issues</th>
<th>GI contribution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Traditional food systems threatened</td>
<td>GI products with specific races and varieties, and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loss of biodiversity (resilience)</td>
<td>traditional knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Market access for smallholders, gender issues</td>
<td>GI inclusive value chain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delocalization, rural emigration</td>
<td>Local economy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food and nutrition security</td>
<td>GI contribution to diversified and traditional diets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Info and guarantees to consumers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An increasing number of small-scale agricultural operations are involved in GI production, which is in opposition to another positive trend—the industrialization of agriculture. However, this situation is also the result of rural development policies of mostly European countries that have fully implemented the GI system. Other countries might have a different approach, prioritizing productivity over territorial development. It is important to note that producing GIs on large scale farms and processing units is also possible.

Many studies show that GI registered products achieve a price premium over similar standard products. However, the situation can vary, and researchers are reluctant to make definitive conclusions. Nevertheless, prices for GI registered products are on average 10 percent to 15 percent higher than for similar non-GI products in the European Union, and can be as much as 45 percent higher. Recent studies show, however, that price difference is less clear for farmers who supply agricultural raw materials (Vandecandelaere et al., 2018). Retail price difference must therefore be accompanied by a fair distribution of the additional margin through sound value chain governance.

Achieve and promote sustainability of geographical indications

In conclusion, there is no automatic correlation between the implementation of GIs and positive impacts on sustainability. The GI value chain can have both a positive and negative influence on different sustainability dimensions. As consumers and citizens express a growing concern about health, and environmental, demographic and territorial management issues, sustainability should be achieved through GI specifications. Sustainable production processes, guaranteed by the state, should be fully incorporated into the promotion strategy. This is why potential negative impacts on the environment, biodiversity and local resources must be anticipated, and mitigated for the sake of preserving local assets and the image of the GI.

Table 3. Percentage of fatty acids in different oils

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Peanut</th>
<th>Hazelnut</th>
<th>Olive</th>
<th>Sesam</th>
<th>Sunflower</th>
<th>Argan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Palmitic acid</td>
<td>8–13</td>
<td>5–9</td>
<td>8–14</td>
<td>8–11</td>
<td>8–13</td>
<td>10–15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Importance of geographical indication managing organizations

A GI’s reputation is a valuable, collective and intangible asset. It is therefore the responsibility of all players involved in the production process to maintain and enhance this reputation. In countries with a long lasting tradition of GIs, producer GIMOs have two main functions:

- the protection of the GI against usurpation, counterfeits; and
- the promotion of the GI on the market.

The guide Linking People, Places and Products, published by FAO, explains the importance of joining forces to promote GIs among consumers, highlighting in particular:

- The producers collective responsibility to protect the reputation of the GI
- The importance of joint promotion initiatives by pooling resources to reach larger number of consumers.

In the vast majority of the case studies documented in Part III of this document, GIMOs are decisive in promoting GI products and organizing commercial channels, and this is for two main reasons:

- It makes it possible to pool resources to reach bigger and distant markets.
- The words of a community representative are more trustworthy than statements or information coming from single (company or farm) operators.

How can collective marketing efforts pay back producers?

One key role of the GI organization is to define and implement a collective marketing strategy. This collective action is complementary to the individual efforts of the single GI stakeholders, who continue to apply their own marketing strategy to support their own activity, but also using the notoriety of the GI.

In the document Strengthening Sustainable Food Systems through Geographical Indications, FAO highlighted how the stakeholder engagement in marketing efforts influences economic impacts. In particular, the study showed the importance for GI producer organizations to brand their GI, targeting niche markets and assessing new markets in order to see the economic benefits of the recognition of the GI.

Unions or federations of GIMOs

Organizations bringing together GIMOs of different GIs exist and can pursue different objectives. Some organizations federate GIs by sector and family of product, and others by geographical area. The National Council of Dairy Appellations of Origin (CNAOL) brings together more than 50 appellations of origin of French dairy products. The CNAOL protects the interests of the PDO value chains, and conducts national or international promotion campaigns, using their size to mobilize internal and external funding sources. The Association of Italian Cheeses PDO (AFIDOP) is a similar organization in Italy, and gathers 27 PDO cheese consortia.

Other organizations defend the interests and promote PDO and PGI products of a country or a region. This is the case for OriGInal Serbia, Origin Italia, or the Swiss Association of PDOs and PGIs. The purpose of these organizations is to explain to consumers the fundamentals of PDO and PGI, unite all the associations benefiting from the PDO and PGI in a forum, and defend PDO and PGI interests. This is why the organizations can take different forms, with different types of operators, and be product driven or territory specific. The Savoy cheeses case shows how the Association of Traditional Cheeses from Savoy Alps (AFTALP) ensures the promotion of five PDO and three PGI cheeses.

At international level, most of these organizations are together with single GIMO members of OriGIn, which is an international organization that:

- campaigns for the effective legal protection and enforcement of GIs at the national, regional and international level, through campaigns aimed at decision-makers, the media and the public at large; and
- promotes GIs as a sustainable development tool for producers and communities.

In conclusion, different organizations operate at local, national or international level, but they are often connected to address operational, promotional and policy issues. The case studies described in Part III show how GIMOs are instrumental to ensure GI product promotion.

Geographical indication labelling

Co-existence of geographical indications, collective marks and individual trademarks

Companies that have over time developed a successful brand often worry that once the GI is registered, they will have to abandon their brand and use only the GI to label their product. While many GI producers that might rely
Branding GIs. Many cases show that the capacity to build agreements with downstream operators is vital for economic impacts. It boosts the visibility of the GI product and the correct use of the registered name of the product at the point of sale. This is particularly important in cases where the GI system has been developed mainly among producers, either because the GI essentially covers the production stage, while processing takes place outside the production area (for example, roasting for Colombian coffee), or because farmers and processors do not sell directly to consumers, and retailers are not interested in the GI strategy, but are more interested in retaining their bargaining power.

Targeting niche markets. The cases documented in the next section show that marketing strategy is driven by two types of GI approach (offensive or defensive) and two types of marketing channels (niche or mass). The best economic impacts in terms of prices are when the GI organization focuses its strategy on managing supply volumes to prevent prices from falling due to a major increase in volume, which then exceeds demand. This is also linked to the destination market and whether it is a niche market (likely to be so for small volumes) or commodity market (likely to be so for large volumes).

The relation to volume and number of producers is also linked to the “exclusive quality” approach taken in the specifications which influences the type of marketing channel, niche markets being more likely to be related to exclusive quality, while mass markets will relate to less exclusive quality. Exclusivity is associated with lower volumes and potentially higher prices, but benefits fewer producers compared with a non-exclusive strategy. One or the other strategy may be more appropriate according to the situation, or the choice could depend mainly on the decision of the producers engaged in the strategy.

Accessing new markets. Pooling together resources and developing networks and new commercial linkages allow GI producers to reach new consumers, further markets, and premium prices. Before starting collective action to promote their cheese outside Switzerland, Tête-de-Moine was sold mostly in western regions of the country. An active promotion strategy adopted during the process of registration increased the cheese’s notoriety and subsequently boosted sales on export markets. After 15 years, export volumes were equal to the quantities sold on the domestic market, and twice as high 25 years after the registration. The case of Manchego cheese, involving three GI producers in a long negotiation process, illustrates how the specifications can serve an evolving marketing strategy. Initially developed by small-scale producers to differentiate their cheese – made from the milk of local breeds of sheep – from other cheeses and prevent misappropriation of the name, the specifications have been revised twice to facilitate access to new markets. The producers’ group decided to make a change to the specifications in 1995 to allow a smaller size of cheese in order to satisfy demand. This has had an impact in terms of an increase in volume.


solely on the guarantee the collective quality sign gives the consumer, others might opt to position their product using their own trademark, especially if the brand is known on the market. The use of a trademark on a GI product is quite common – the two IP instruments are in fact fully compatible, and even complementary.

While the GI certification guarantees the typicality of the product, individual trademarks might give additional guarantees on a premium quality obtained by individual producers. A company brand is very common, for instance, in wines and spirits. Within single appellations (Bordeaux, Bourgogne, Chianti, Barolo), quality and prices might differ significantly from one producer to the other. The same is true for many spirits. Some Scotch whiskies can be bought for EUR 15, while expensive bottles of the same GI can be found on the market for a couple of thousand euros. Over the years, tequila has become a trendy product, initially among young people whose purchasing power increased. The new wealthy generation is now willing and able to pay premium prices for quality tequila, with its sophisticated bottling and labelling.
The importance of trademarks, and of discrepancies among the different producers, is mainly true for the wine and spirit sectors. For other food categories, prices from one producer to another can vary on the basis of the reputation and difference in quality. However, price differences rarely exceed 100 percent.

Larger producers who position their products in the large retail sector often exhibit individual brands next to the collective marks. The logic here is not to get a premium price, but rather to target the consumer searching for a certain level of quality at an affordable price, and for a product that is easily available.

In all cases, the labelling of single GI products should have common visual identity patterns. Producers can also opt for the same label for all the producers, with just a discrete mention of the name of the producer and the contact. This is the case for Pelardon cheese in France, or Tête-de-Moine cheese in Switzerland.

However, the adoption of a logo – apart from the official logo – is the usually the best way to identify specific GIs on the market and differentiate them from imitations.

Once the GI logo is adopted, which usually happens during the registration process, it is a good idea to register it as a trademark at the national level, and if the product is expected to gain an international reputation, to protect it via the Madrid system (which protects trademarks internationally).

Combining geographical indications with other voluntary standards

Producers often raise another question on labelling in relation to the use of other voluntary quality standards, such as organic agriculture or fair trade. Again, there is no incompatibility between these standards, which can be used on the same products provided the producers comply with CoP requirements. Combining several certified standards can also reduce costs – requirements might be common to several standards, and certification costs reduced if one certification body can certify more than one standard.

Media

These days, e-communication is the most common way to communicate to consumers and professionals. When hard copies are displayed, they include a QR code for more comprehensive information. Web technologies offer ways to communicate information and graphics directly to consumers at very reasonable costs. Beside websites, more and more GIs have Facebook, Instagram, TikTok and Telegram pages to engage with consumers. These tools can be useful, especially when the geographical distance between producer and consumer is big. Besides the benefit of reaching a large audience at reasonable cost, they allow producers to share pictures and movies of product manufacturing, territory landscapes, and people.

If e-media has made leaflet, billboard and television spots somewhat obsolete, traditional media remains useful and must be considered when planning a marketing strategy, taking into account the type and number of the target audience, and the channels through which to access the target audience. Targeting tourists visiting the area of production might require the distribution of leaflets in hotels to promote products, events, and places to visit in relation to the GI product.

Box 2. Example of certification costs of the office intercantonal de certification (OIC)

Certification procedure = CHF 250 per certification (including the fixed costs of the OIC, the realization of the certification procedure in accordance with ISO 17065 standards – with in particular the training of controllers – as well as the edition and validation of the certificate)

Control and certification = CHF 130 per hour

Travel = CHF 150 for the control of one or two labels; for the third label, a supplement will be charged.

Promotion of geographical indication products: Learning from international experiences
PART III.
Case studies of good practices in geographical indication product promotion

Introduction

This section illustrates how marketing good practices have contributed to improve sales of GIs, increase prices, access new markets, and build long term relationships with consumers.

Kyrgyzstan and the other Central Asian countries, such as the other former Soviet republics, have inherited a GI system that aimed mainly to reserve GI names for producers. Central Asian countries all adopted a law on marks and geographical indications in the 1990s. Nearly 30 years later, authorities expressed their intention to use GIs as a tool for product quality, value added locally, and value chain development. This shift towards quality has a number of consequences:

• Quality management system and guarantees to consumers require better governance by public and private stakeholders, while authorities have not taken actions so far that make the system enforceable.
• The management of GIs, that includes first of all their protection and promotion, is mainly ensured by producer communities. Abondance
• The interests of GI value chain stakeholders who are able to give guarantees on their compliance with the CoP must be protected.
• Guarantees on quality to consumers can be used for the promotion of the GI products and improve value chain effectiveness.

These seven cases were chosen bearing in mind the different practices we wanted to illustrate, and their applicability in the Central Asian context. It was also important that the practices presented showed tangible results by impacting positively prices, sales, value chain development, and so on. It was also important to present cases from developing and emerging countries that have undergone reforms and adopted GI systems this century, and not just cases from Europe, which has a longer GI history.
SAVOY CHEESES, FRANCE

Pooling resources to promote several PDO from one single region and twinning promotion of cheeses and complementary products of the Savoy region.

Good practices the case illustrates

The streamlining of human and financial resources of the eight cheeses makes it possible for the Association des Fromages Traditionnels des Alpes Savoyardes [Association of Savoy Alps traditional cheeses] (AFTALP) to mobilize a wide network of local stakeholders and conduct number of actions in support, including promotion activities. The case also shows the value of the twinning promotion of cheeses and beers to adapt to new consumer behaviour.

Situation before the establishment of AFTALP

The AFTALP was created in 1998 to promote the eight PDO and PGI cheeses (AFTAlp, 2023). It represents the vast majority of the cheese sector in the region, and federates the different cheese associations that have made long-term efforts to structure the different value chains involved in the coordination of milk production and collection, cheese-making, ripening and transportation.

The fruitières (cheese-making dairy cooperatives belonging to dairy farmers) were the first formal organizations founded in the late nineteenth century. During the second half of the twentieth century, farmers and cheese producers got organized around the GIs and AO they registered and promoted. By the end of the century, the Savoy cheese value chains were fully structured in terms of quality management and communication strategies. The AFTALP facilitated an increase in communication budgets by pooling resources and to reach new market segments, which in the case of Savoy cheeses consists mostly in marketing their products in the region of production, including ski resorts and summer holiday destinations, as part of the national market.

Promotion strategy and measures

The AFTALP, that gathers the producers of eight PDO and PGI cheeses (Abondance, Beaufort, Chevrotin, Emmental de Savoie, Raclette de Savoie, Reblochon, Tome des Bauges, Tomme de Savoie) plays the following roles:

- Control, selection of one single certification body, organization of internal control and adoption of common control tools.
- Research, on link between quality and the territory, pasture and meadow management, and market monitoring.
- Support of the operators, information, qualification of feeds.
- Representation in front of administration and partners.

The GIs in a few words and pictures

The mountainous region of Savoy is the place of many dairy product specialities. Among them, eight cheeses are registered as PDO or PGI:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abondance</th>
<th>Beaufort</th>
<th>Chevrotin</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reblochon</td>
<td>Tome des Bauges</td>
<td>Emmental de Savoie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raclette de Savoie</td>
<td>Tomme de Savoie</td>
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</table>

All these speciality cheeses have been produced in Savoy over several centuries. They are made of cow milk, except for Chevrotin, which is made of goat milk.
With respect to communication, the AFTALP applies the following principles:

- **HOW** – a shared strategy of communication, analysis of the situation, consistency with the actions of each cheese (market observatory and a technical commission).
- **WHAT** – work on image, mainly in the region, and use our strong points.
- **WHO** – targets are local consumers, tourists, children (schools and colleges), restaurants, journalists.

This umbrella organization is particularly important for the GI value chains that are relatively small. Indeed, the eight GIs involve only 60 dairies and 300 on-farm cheese makers. Of the initiatives developed by the AFTALP related to the promotion of the cheeses, the following are conducted regularly:

- the cheese route;
- the cheese festival;
- pedagogical actions targeting pupils of the region; and
- websites, social networks, newsletters.

A route map allows visitors to explore the region, its people and its products, seven cheeses and 62 sites, offering insights into all stages of the cheese production process. The guiding principle is to showcase everything cheese related through visits to farms, dairies, maturing cellars, and so on.

As tourists are one of the main targeted consumer categories, the AFTALP and the tourist offices have annual meetings for the AFTALP to present the association and the PDO and PGI cheeses of Savoy; provide tourism professionals with the knowledge and tools necessary to relay the territory’s agrotourism offer, with a special emphasis on the cheese route; and recall the importance of the breeding sector for the shaping of traditional landscapes.

An interesting part of the efforts made by the AFTALP is the twinning promotion of cheeses with other products from the region. Experts and partners of the association developed three guides that help consumers to combine cheeses with different types of products:

- wines
- jams, honeys, and spices
- beers

Experts from the AFTALP developed a cheese and beer guide after they started to notice that younger consumers were changing their habits, preferring beer to wine on certain occasions. Bearing in mind the French tradition of drinking wine with cheese, proposing the combination of cheese and beer is a way to avoid losing consumers of cheese.

**Impacts of the marketing strategy**

Nowadays, 1 950 Savoy dairy farms supply 350 000 tonnes of milk annually, and 340 of those farms – and...
Figure 4. Tonnes of milk used for processed dairy products

Source: Breton, S. 2022. Cheeses of Savoy, 4 October 2022, Regional forum. Increasing the recognition of Central Asia as a supplier of high-quality and unique agricultural products: paving the way for successful Geographical Indications systems, Almaty, CANDY project.

Figure 5. Price of PDO, PGI and industrial milk (EUR/1000 L)

Source: Breton, S. 2022. Cheeses of Savoy, 4 October 2022, Regional forum. Increasing the recognition of Central Asia as a supplier of high-quality and unique agricultural products: paving the way for successful Geographical Indications systems, Almaty, CANDY project.
48 fromières – supply the market with 39,800 tonnes of PDO and PGI cheeses. The PDO–PGI cheese turnover is estimated at EUR 310 million, and the sector employs 4,600 people directly. For each 100,000 L of milk, 1.2 people are employed. This is 70 percent more than the 0.7 person/100,000 employed at national level. At the same time, the added value created in farms in the Savoy region is EUR 29,947 per worker, against a national average of EUR 21,343 (or 40 percent additional wealth). Part of the explanation relies on prices of milk paid to farmers that is used for GI and PDO cheeses, which are significantly higher than milk for fresh consumption (see Figure 5). This also explains why 85 percent of the milk collected by the cooperatives who buy 95 percent of the Savoy production is transformed into PDO and PGI cheeses.

A more thorough analysis gives some interesting information on the different cheeses and their prices. The analysis in Figure 4 and Figure 5 shows that over the years, volumes of Emmental de Savoie, which is considered a less prestigious and authentic product, have decreased significantly.

In addition of this shift towards higher quality cheeses, the production structure shows a greater diversity. Figure 4 also shows that the milk increase has mainly been absorbed by the production of PDO and PGI cheeses.

Figure 5 shows the important price difference between industrial milk, and milk that farmers sell to PDO and PGI cheese makers, which for PGI is about +50 percent and for PDO +80 percent. The difference between PGI and PDO can be explained by stricter CoP requirements and higher prices of PDO cheeses compared with PGI cheeses. Another noticeable phenomenon is the stability of raw material prices during crisis periods. Indeed, while industrial milk prices dropped by 15 percent between 2014 and 2016, PDO and PGI milk prices remained steady.
LOFOTEN STOCKFISH, NORWAY

Facilitating producer and consumer linkages by transparent and practical quality criteria and reaffirming the origin

Good practices the case illustrates

Seeking the recognition of Lofoten Stockfish PGI was really motivated by the will of the value chain stakeholders to better inform consumers on the specific drying process and properties of their products. Indeed, despite the long-standing trade between Lofoten and the traditional markets for stockfish, Italian consumers for instance had very little knowledge about the origin and the specificity of Lofoten Stockfish.

Situation before geographical indication recognition and marketing actions

Stockfish from Lofoten is one of the oldest Norwegian export products, and part of the food cultures of southern European countries, particularly northern Italy. As of the early Middle Ages, it was shipped to England, the Netherlands or France by the Vikings, who needed to import in turn wheat, wine and clothes products (Hegnes and Amilien, 2019).

The GI product in a few words

Stockfish designates fish dried in open-air conditions that can be obtained from cod, haddock, ling, pollack or cusk. Lofoten Stockfish PGI designation (Tørrfisk fra Lofoten) refers to individual adult Atlantic cod caught around the islands of Lofoten and Vesterålen, that have been gutted, beheaded and dried. The term stockfish comes from stokvis in Dutch, where stok means the stick (referring to the racks traditionally used for the drying process) and vis means the fish. An important aspect of stockfish is that despite its importance in Norwegian tradition, it has been historically exported to southern Europe, where it was used as a main ingredient in the traditional dishes of Italian, Portuguese and Spanish cuisines.
Between 1200 and 1715, traders in the Hanseatic city of Bergen enjoyed a monopoly on exports. During this period, German Hanseatic traders set the stockfish from Lofoten quality parameters differentiating the stockfish by length, taste and leanness (Hegnes and Amilien, 2019). The combination of these parameters produced two categories of stockfish.

Exports to Italy expanded significantly, to the point that a number of recipes with stockfish as the main ingredient emerged, and those became part of northern Italy traditional food specialities. While stockfish is consumed in the rest of Italy, as well as in Spain and Portugal, northern Italy became the main market, leaving Norwegian stockfish of other origins to southern Italian, Spanish and Portuguese consumers.

In 1998, the Norwegian Seafood Council (the export office that markets fish products) ordered an analysis of the Italian dry fish market (Mangseth and Reichel Teigland, 1998), which revealed a strong interest in and recognition of stockfish from Lofoten in Italy. The idea of developing a GI was later discussed among the producers of stockfish from Lofoten. However, they did not come to an agreement – on the one hand, because their own networks and markets that were well established and, on the other hand, because of existing tensions between some of the local producers (Hegnes and Amilien, 2019). However, the idea of having it recognized as a PGI was not abandoned.

In terms of PGI development, Norway made massive progress in the collaborative work of different agents. It took almost 17 years from setting up the first regulation and labelling scheme, to the award of the first labels. The first product chosen for labelling was stockfish from Lofoten.

In 2007, the stockfish from Lofoten was granted a PGI in Norway, and in 2014, it was the first Norwegian product to receive a European PGI. The registration process dragged on due to difficulties in understanding the law, gathering and organizing the consortium, and collecting all the necessary documentation (Hegnes and Amilien, 2019).

The Norwegian government’s support was vital in obtaining PGI, starting from the ordered research studies on the demand for the stockfish, and developing specific regulations. According to research results, there was demand in Italy for stockfish even of a higher price. Two thirds of Norwegian stockfish is still bought by Italy to this day. Tremendous work was conducted in defining the product, its quality, and promoting information on the unique natural conditions of production.

Promotion strategy and measures

The GI recognition helped to clarify and communicate to consumers and market professionals what was behind the product denomination, the type of fish, the catching regions, and the drying technique. These parameters – influencing product quality and defined in the CoP – were not familiar to many consumers, despite the long consumption tradition. The GI scheme also made possible the simplification and better understanding of the grading system. All these measures helped to build the perception

Figure 6. Export value of stockfish from Norway, 2015–2021

Promotion of geographical indication products: Learning from international experiences

Impacts of the marketing strategy

After the award of a European PGI to Norway in 2014, the value of exports rose until the COVID 19 pandemic in 2020. Stockfish from Lofoten PGI attracts a price premium. Compared with clipfish (dried salted fish), it has a premium of 288 percent at processing and 88 percent at retail level. Costs are similar, so profitability can be compared. At processing level, the relative gross added value is slightly higher for the PGI (10 percent of the turnover) than the reference product (9 percent). But in absolute terms, higher costs (wages and intermediate consumption) for the PGI are offset by the price premium.

In 2017, Norway exported more than 4,650 tonnes of stockfish worth EUR 60 million, including 3,000 tonnes from Lofoten. In term of product volume, it has shown a rather stable flow of trade.

As of 2018, three-quarters of Norway’s total production of stockfish comes from the Lofoten archipelago. One can also see that from 2014, the price of stockfish started rising rapidly, in particular stockfish made from cod (Figure 6).

In the process of building a brand around stockfish, Norway tried to establish the idea that the product was of a high quality one. After receiving a European PGI, producers tried to expand their markets and change the target consumers. They have also considered changing the form of the product, in other words exporting a ready-to-consume product. The environment and conservation of fish stocks also are priorities for Lofoten, so producers collaborate with government to prevent overfishing and aquatic pollution, and to conserve the stock’s fish resources.
Situation before the GI recognition and marketing actions

Before the Oku white honey received its Geographical Indication (GI), beekeepers in the Kilum-Ijim forest region typically owned a modest number of hives. The majority had under 50 hives, with only a few owning hundreds. International NGO, SNV, and Cameroonian enterprise Guiding Hope partnered with research organizations (CIRAD and OAPI) to establish the Kilum-Ijim White Honey Association (KIWHA). This association would champion the cause of white-honey beekeepers, represent their interests, and handle GI-related work.

The Oku Honey Cooperative, founded in 1987, was the area’s largest honey producer and trader. Even before the GI designation, the unique white honey was a premium product, sought after in Cameroon’s cities.

Actions

Initially, KIWHA relied on external support from partners. As it gained strength by 2012, its focus shifted to ensuring beekeepers could find the necessary plants to feed their bees. It also took over marketing the honey, even without dedicated project funding.

Key Developments and Organizations

In 2007, beekeeping exporters formed a union to streamline operations. This led to Cameroon’s first large-scale honey export to the EU in 2009. Despite ongoing discussions since 2006, Cameroon still needs national honey quality standards.

The following organizations play a major role in managing the Oku white honey:

- **Kilum-Ijim White Honey Association (KIWHA)**: The umbrella organization representing beekeepers.
- **Oku Honey Cooperative**: The region’s largest producer and trader of white honey.
- **Union of Apiculture Exporters**: Facilitates honey exports from Cameroon.

Promotion Strategy

The goal was to raise prices, increase sales volume, and find new markets for Oku white honey. Beekeepers’ organizations took collective action, handling aspects like filtering, packaging, wholesaling, and retailing the honey.

Changes in Marketing

Before the GI, honey sales were limited to roadside stands and the Oku Honey Cooperative shop. Now, supermarkets, pharmacies, specialty stores, market stalls, beekeeper associations, and NGOs sell white honey across Cameroon.

Packaging also improved. Dedicated plastic containers largely replaced recycled jars. Guiding Hope, an innovative marketer, used high-quality labels, glass jars, and targeted campaigns highlighting the honey’s origin and quality.

GI Impact: Mixed Results

The KIWHA created a logo and labeling standards to protect the “Oku white honey” brand, but these haven’t been widely adopted due to a lack of funds. Other terms for honey remain equally popular.

Oku white honey prices rose before the official GI registration, likely due to project activities and increased consumer awareness. The GI label further solidified the existing brand value and quality standards.

Shortcomings

The official GI logo still needs to be used.

Some producers resent the focus on “Oku” in the branding, feeling it’s not inclusive of the entire region.
Conclusion

The strategy successfully increased collective action and brand awareness. However, the official GI logo hasn’t gained traction, and the “Oku” focus has caused some friction among producers.

Positive Impacts of the GI

The GI contributed to increased honey prices and average hive numbers per beekeeper. This indicates improved livelihoods for those in the honey business.

Oku white honey gained recognition across Cameroon. The valuable GI designation helped create demand in new markets.

The increased reputation of Oku white honey drew more tourists to the region, providing a boost to the local economy beyond just the honey sector.

Challenges and Limitations

While the GI aimed to promote exports, the high costs and logistical challenges of international trade prevented Oku white honey from entering foreign markets.

Despite the GI’s code of practice, quality and origin were not strictly monitored. This creates a risk of undermining the premium reputation of Oku white honey.

As demand and prices rose, retailers profited significantly. However, producers lacked strong incentives to guarantee quality or adhere to GI labeling as it wasn’t directly tied to their profits.

The GI had short-term positive impacts on beekeeper livelihoods and expanded the national market for Oku white honey. However, challenges remain in ensuring quality control and making the GI a driver for sustainable export growth.
Successful “de-commoditization” of colonial products by the PGI labelling that helps tourism and local economic development

Good practices the case illustrates

Products such as cacao, coffee and spices became treated as commodities during and after the colonial period. Over the past 40 years, the origins of those products have been better communicated to consumers who are increasingly interested in the origins of the food they consume.

Café de Colombia, coffee from Ethiopia, and Darjeeling Tea, are among the most known ambassadors of this new trend. In the coffee sector, the growing interest in single-origin coffees, is just one expression of this consumer behaviour.

Situation before GI recognition and marketing actions

In the 1870s and early 1900s, during the time when France ruled Cambodia, modern methods to produce were used intensively. Back then, Cambodia gathered about 8000 tons of Kampot pepper each year. By the 1960s, Cambodia produced roughly 3000 tons annually from around 1 million pepper poles in Kampot (Him, 2014). During the troubled period that began in the mid 1960s and culminated in the terror of the Khmer Rouge regime, production was much reduced and most markets were lost. It was only after the end of hostilities and the normalization process of the late 1990s that Kampot pepper saw a revival in production, that by then had dropped to 4 tonnes annually. While volume started to grow, however, income remained low until 2008.

Strategy and marketing measures

Kampot pepper was recognized as a promising

The GI product in a few words

Pepper has been present in Kampot province since the thirteenth century. Traditionally, the region produced tonnes of peppers each year, which were mainly consumed locally. Renowned for its delicate aroma and strong spicy taste, Kampot pepper has been recognized as GI since 2010, transforming it into a premium product with export potential, that is currently popular on the European Union market.

As a result, pepper production has grown, boosting exports and attracting visitors from all over the world. The pepper farm has broadened its distribution channels to include shops, supermarkets, hotels, and online platforms. Kampot pepper has gained popularity among tourists, who are eager to explore the traditional plantations of the region and discover centuries-old recipes.

Geographical Indication (GI) in 2007 within a project backed by France aimed at fostering GI development in Cambodia. Then, the Kampot Pepper Promotion Association (KPPA) was established in October 2008 as an interprofessional organization with the aim of promoting and safeguarding the reputation of Kampot Pepper. The association does this by making sure that the Kampot pepper’s unique qualities are officially recognized and protected under Cambodian law. The association also helps Kampot pepper producers, traders, and organizations work together and strengthen their community focusing on improving Kampot pepper’s quality and preventing its name from being misused or infringed upon. To maintain quality, the association has an internal control system and work with external agents, trains members to produce Kampot pepper according to set standards and decides who can use the Kampot pepper label. The association keeps a list of trusted producers and traders and share important information. Lastly, legal steps are taken to protect Kampot pepper’s name.

In March 2009, a cooperative, with many of the same members as the KPPA, was established to: provide agricultural inputs for pepper cultivation, offer financing, engage in pepper trade (purchase, process, package, and distribute), and deliver agricultural training sessions.

Kampot pepper was then registered and recognized as a GI by the Cambodian authorities in April 2010.

The aspect of the marketing strategy worth noting is that not much advertising took place, and that promotion was intended rather as:

• increasing name and reputation by focusing on the quality of the product; and

• investing in the factors that enhance quality as perceived by consumers, such as packaging.
These priorities can be observed when analysing the activities of the KPPA and the budget. In the activities defined in the statute of the KPPA, there is only one reference to GI promotion, that reads as follows: “Promote the reputation of Kampot pepper by the improvement of its quality and prevention of infringement or misuse of the Kampot pepper name.”

A quick look at the budget reveals that the proportion of resources dedicated to promotion and marketing is less than 10 percent of the USD 18 000 budget. This shows that the best marketing tool is ensuring the quality of the GI product, and that de-commoditization means that the product specificity gets recognized by professionals and consumers. However, the emphasis on quality and the guarantee given to consumers meant the need to involve a large number of growers in the association, and the implementation of an efficient control system including internal control and external certification.

The coastal province of Kampot had some 240 hectares of pepper farms in 2021, yielding an average of 2.5 tonnes per hectare annually. The harvest season runs from March to June.

Promotional tools were developed and used over the years, such as leaflets, banners, videos, radio, television, magazine and other media, as well as participation in exhibitions in Cambodia and abroad. The Kampot Pepper Promotion Association website (Kampot pepper promotion association, n.d.) provides information on the product, the method of production, the history, the KPPA organization, the identity of members, and latest news and events.

It is important to recognize the support of the French government and the GRET, that partnered with the Cambodian Centre for Study and Development in Agriculture (CEDAC) and the Cambodian Institute for Research Rural Development (CIRD). On one hand, French know-how in the field of GIs, and their understanding of GIMOs, has been decisive in setting the proper mechanisms and priorities for the GI value chains and also in developing the legal and administrative framework. On the other, the CIRD – which facilitated the AKKP foundation and the creation of the Cambodia Pepper and Spice Federation (CPSF) – stepped out of its comfort zone by exploring (with the CPSF) export potential and connecting with importers in target markets.

![Figure 8. Budget of KPPA, 2015](image)

**Figure 8.** Budget of KPPA, 2015

![Figure 9. Number of members of the KPPA](image)

**Figure 9.** Number of members of the KPPA

https://www.kampotpepper-kppa.com/in-numbers/
Impacts of the marketing strategy

Since 2010, year of the GI registration of Kampot pepper, three facts can be observed:

- penetration of new markets and in particular premium niche markets;
- growth of produced volumes; and
- increase in prices.

These developments are the result of a clear strategy of product positioning in target markets by the GIMOs, and the CPSF with the support of the CIRD. Western markets were first targeted, for different reasons:

Figure 10. Annual production of Kampot pepper (tonnes)

Figure 11. Price of black, red and white pepper (USD)
• New trends with importance given to the origin, sustainability and taste.

• The European market, and in particular France, was the first choice. This can be explained by historical ties between the two countries and the project funded by the French government.

As GRETr explains:

The main stakeholders involved in the Kampot pepper GI are attempting to position the product in the market segments corresponding to high-end or even luxury products. Kampot pepper is sold in Europe in gourmet grocery stores and by rare spice distributors to showcase the product’s specific quality and the efforts required to comply with the specifications.

For the GI approach to work, it is necessary that the product be able to position itself in quality markets, that consumers be willing to pay more for this quality product, and also that the intermediary economic actors who process and/or sell the product be ready to apply this strategy at the instigation of the GI association (GRETr, 2010, p.10).

New perspectives have attracted new growers and provided a strong incentive to expand the crop. In 2021, prices per kg (for three varieties of pepper) reached USD 15 for black pepper, USD 25 for red pepper, and USD 28 for white pepper. Looking at the evolution of volume and price, we can also see that turnover has grown by 1500 percent in 13 years.

According to Ngoun Lay, President of the Kampot Pepper Promotion Association: "Kampot Pepper Promotion Association exported 114 tonnes of Kampot pepper in 2021, up 60 percent from 2020. The growth was driven by high demand from the European market – 85 percent of the pepper was shipped to the EU and the remaining 15 percent was sold to countries including the United States, Canada, China, Japan, and South Korea."
GEORGIAN WINES

The crucial role of the National Wine Agency in promoting and protecting Georgian wines

Good practices the case illustrates

The importance of the state’s role is illustrated in Georgia, with the strong commitment of government in funding the National Wine Agency and in mobilizing sectors, guaranteeing and promoting the quality to reach higher added value.

Situation before GI recognition and marketing actions

Before Soviet rule in Georgia, more than a half thousand vines cultivars grape had been inventoried, as part of a thriving wine industry. The supply chain was characterized by a three stages structure:

The GI product in a few words

The long tradition of winemaking in Georgia has been established by recent archaeological research and explains the importance of the wine industry in six different regions across the country. The diversity of soils and climates combined with an impressive array of 400 varieties of grape produce a wide range of wines with strong typicity. After the USSR collapsed, the sector was revitalized and a number of small and medium scale wineries started working on quality wines and restoring forgotten varieties, even though Rkatsiteli and Saperavi are responsible for more than 80 percent of the country’s processed grapes (Kvakhadze, Surmava and Berovshvili, 2022). Since 2005, 36 AO wines have been registered.

- Vine growers supplying regional wineries
- These wineries produced wine material, they would supply to large wineries often located in the capital
- The large wineries would complete the processing, and bottle and label the wine, commercialized under the brand “Samtrest”.

Just after the Soviet Union collapse, this organization was disrupted. The challenge to reform the sector, to improve quality and position Georgian wines in a competitive world market, was huge. In 2007, with the bans imposed by the Russian Federation, the authorities also understood the need to diversify export markets.

Promotion strategy and measures

The National Wine Agency founded in 2002 is competent for wine and Georgian wine culture promotion on domestic and export markets, quality control and certification, wine land register, and research.

During the project “Georgian Vine and Wine Culture Research and Promotion” launched in 2014 an important scientific activity was undertaken to reconstruct Georgian winemaking history. Teams of Georgian and foreign searchers carried out new archaeological excavations of vine remains, research that has now been systematized, dated and analysed, that proved that wine was produced in Georgia 8 000 years ago.

Figure 12. Georgian wine exports (USD thousands)

Figure 13. Impacts of the marketing strategy

These news of Georgia being the cradle of wine spread like wildfire.

The media around the world seized on this headline, thus participating in the large-scale promotion of Georgian wine, leading to articles publications such as The New York Times, The Guardian, National Geographic, and The Washington Post, and documentary features in broadcast media such as BBC, CNN and Euronews.

In parallel, the National Wine Agency launched a public relations campaign to promote Gregorian wine and boost exports and domestic sales.

Marketing activity focused on:

- regions/countries, where Georgian wine, as well as the Georgian regions, were not popular; and
- regions/countries where awareness was high, but where loyalty needed to be increased.

Those marketing efforts had three main messages:

1. “Georgia the cradle of wine”, based on much historical and archaeological evidence that Georgia is one of the oldest homes of winemaking.

2. “8 000 continuous vintages” – Georgia is the only country where winemaking started 8 000 years ago and this culture has never stopped.

3. “525 unique local varieties” – Georgia is truly unique among the famous winemaking countries of the world. Over 500 varieties of cultivated grape vine are found in Georgia.

Georgian Qvevri wine is a separate category, and the promotion of the unique rules and traditions of Qvevri winemaking is implemented through exhibitions and other communication channels. In 2013, Qvevri winemaking was approved by UNESCO as an intangible cultural heritage monument, which points to the uniqueness of this method and shows how wine is a central part of ancient Georgian culture.

The efforts made by the National Wine Agency since its creation 20 years ago to improve the quality by imposing certain rules and transparency on winemakers, and encouraging small wineries to promote this quality, has paid off in many aspects:

- Exports have multiplied ten fold despite complicated political and commercial relations with the Russian Federation.
- Higher prices of high-quality wines sold to restaurants.
- Small and medium scale wineries have flourished in all wine regions, generating income for families and employees.
- Small-scale and larger wineries producing quality wines developed offers linked with rural and agrotourism, contributing to economic diversification in rural areas, and making Georgia an attractive tourist destination that has seen an increase of 40 percent in visitors over the past seven years.

![Figure 14. Export revenues for Georgian wine, 2000–2021 (USD thousands)](image-url)

WINE, OLIVE OIL AND FLAVOUR ROUTES OF TUSCANY

Routes of geographical indications, strategic components of the territorial network

Tuscany food products are emblematic of the Mediterranean diet and polyculture of grapes, olives and wheat. Tuscany wines and olive oils enjoy a reputation worldwide based on a long tradition that goes back to Etruscan civilization and the quality of these products. The region counts no less than three PDO and two PGI olive oils, and 45 PDO and six PGI wines.

Good practices the case illustrates

From wine production to wine tourism experience: The case of Italy:

Traditional food products and wines can play a highly positive role in tourist destinations attractiveness, to the point to become the main attractions of certain touristic regions. They participate to build the local identity and culture of territories. Typical products can be defined as ‘territorial intensive products’ (TIPs) (Asero and Patti, 2009). Over the past 50 years, gastro- and oeno-tourism brought a great change and innovation to the industry.

This section will illustrate the contribution of several gastro-oenological routes of wine and olive PDO and PGI to rural economic diversification.

Situation before GI recognition and marketing actions

Like in the rest of Italy, in Tuscany there is a solid tradition of producer organizations conducive to collective actions and value chain organization. During the fourteenth century, the Wine of Chianti league adopted the famous Gallo Nero label that 700 years later still guarantees to consumers the Chianti Classico authenticity. The authority also paid attention to the agriculture sector and in particular those crops with high added value. In 1716, with a view to protecting the production area, one olive area and four wine areas were identified. The wine areas still form the current denomination of origin of Chianti – Chianti, Carmignano, Pomino, and Upper Valdarno.

Despite these ancestral traditions, Tuscany winemakers struggled over centuries to achieve excellence in their products. The location of vineyards, varieties, and processing became the subject of experiments when capital from the main cities – earned from trade, manufacturing and finance – was invested in the agriculture sector during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. It was only in the 1980s, however, that the quality of Tuscany wine saw a meteoric rise – this is when the first PDO wines, Vernaccia di San Gimignano and Brunello di Montepulciano, were registered.

Olive oil has gone through similar development over the centuries, even though its cultivation was not so common until the Middle Ages. Olive groves used to be small and established on poor soil, until the conversion of large forest areas into farmland, and construction of terraces, took place. This expansion corresponds also to an increase in olive oil consumption among the working classes. Between the early nineteenth and early twentieth century, the sector developed thanks to technological improvement, the adoption of productive varieties, and further expansion of areas. After the Second World War, the rural exodus slowed down the sector’s development. The repopulation of rural areas in the 1980s boosted Tuscany olive oil, which several years later led to the registration of three PDO and two PGI olive oils.

The typical landscapes shaped by this crop system, that are known worldwide, are among the main reasons – together with the attractiveness of cities such as Florence, Siena, Lucca, and San Gimignano, so rich in renaissance wonders – for Tuscany to register nearly 50 million visitor nights per year (pre-pandemic figures).

Strategy and marketing measures

Wine, olive oil and flavour routes are paths within productive areas that are characterized by vineyards, olive groves and farm cellars, and by cultural and historical attractions that are significant for the purposes of an integrated wine tourism offer. They promote rural development, food and wine tourism, to enhance local products within a cultural, environmental, historical and social context.

Since the very first wine route was created in the 1970s in the northern Friuli-Veneto region, every region of Italy has developed a system of “Wine, Oil and Flavour Roads”, operating and sometimes organized in coordination networks or federations that offer agrifood and rural tourism proposals.

In 1992, Tuscany adopted a local law that recognizes the Wine, Oil and Flavours Roads as schemes that can enhance territories with a wine vocation, with particular reference to places of qualitative production.

In July 1999, the national law No. 268 defined the “roads of wine, oil and flavours” as a tool through which wine territories and related production can be disclosed,
marketed and enjoyed in the form of a tourist offer. The text also specifies that they are routes marked with special signs, along which natural, cultural and environmental values, and with vineyards, olive groves and cellars of single or associated farms open to the public.

Subsequently, in Article 87 of the law of 12 December 2016, No. 238 (the so-called Consolidated Law on Wine), reaffirms the fundamental role of the “wine roads” in the context of the performance of wine tourism activities.

The Federation of Wine, Olive Oil and Tuscan flavours roads succeeded in 2005 to the Wine Roads of Tuscany Federation founded 4 years earlier. This country wide first initiative that aimed at encouraging the wine and HoRe.Ca sector succeeded to integrate different sectors emblematic of the region.

The Federation gathers 20 wine, olive oils and flavour routes that cover the entire Tuscany region, and helps with the promotion of these traditional products. It also creates a number of jobs related to oeno (wine) agrotourism. It is interesting that the scheme associates the two leading products, namely wine and olive oil, with a range of other products, either by including these products in wine and olive oil routes, or by including in the federation routes dedicated only to non-wine and non-olive products. This promotion strategy of basketing regional products using champion products is used often, and is a genuine territorial approach that creates many opportunities for different operators.

The federation insists on the fact that the whole effort of the associative network of wine, olive oil and flavour routes does not aim to link places of interest on linear paths, but rather to aggregate areas that have common characteristics and that create unique products.

Federation activities range from participation in events in Italy and abroad, to raising awareness and training operators, sharing objectives at multiple levels, adapting to quality standards and common images, to ensuring hospitality standards, quality, accessibility and resources sustainability.

In addition to wine and olive oil testing, the federation – together with the 20 routes member organizations – has developed a wide touristic offer that includes online information on events, places to discover agrotourism services, guided visits, experiences on farms, cooking courses, and seminars on agroecology.

The federation has also conducted a Tuscany wine architecture project, organized a wine week, and implemented projects to increase the sustainability of tourist demand, develop promotional and marketing activities aimed at reducing seasonal concentrations and diversifying tourist flows.
The work of the federation benefits 2500 members, 900 wine and olive oil producers, 100 producers of other food products, 100 hotels and guest houses, and 200 agrotourism structures.

These activities are in part financed directly by the members of the federation and single route organizations, but significant amounts of resources come from public entities of different administrative levels. The routes network (federation and the single route organizations) is funded by the Tuscany region, municipalities, the Italian government, and the European Union.

The private sector also sponsors specific activities and events. Among them are local banks, hospitality sector associations, fair companies, consultancy groups, and communication and event agencies. The public also contribute through membership of the different route organizations.

The financial sustainability of the network is of course crucial to ensure all activities deployed by the different members of the network. Through a simple analysis of the Tuscany wine, olive oil and flavour routes' electronic communication channels (including websites and social networks), a study conducted in 2017-18 (Baggiani, 2018) showed that:

- Nine routes present their site in at least one foreign language (English is always used), and of these, another five use more than one foreign language (four of them French, three Spanish, two German).
- Fourteen routes have a map of the area, 13 of which are interactive.
- Only one route has a blog.
- Eleven routes have a link to social networks, and 13 sites have direct links to the member companies’ sites.
- Eight routes have a dynamic responsive site.
- 68 percent of the routes present itineraries on their web portal; some in the form of travel ideas, some through travel guides, and some with proposed tourist packages.
- 18 percent have newsletters, with a questionnaire for feedback.
- 35 percent of operators consider a newsletter a really useful tool.
- 75 percent of the routes have an online events section.
- 85 percent also organize events in the area.
- 35 percent of interested parties reported that they have not updated the web portal graphically since 2015; from the point of view of content, 64 percent of the routes update the site monthly and 36 percent weekly.

Browsing the websites shows that several have not been updated since the beginning of the pandemic, which suggests that organizations and their members face conjunctural difficulties.

**Impacts of the marketing strategy**

The direct economic and social impacts of the routes associative network are not easy to measure for different reasons. The first is the multilayer nature of the network and the multiplicity of types of actions. The second is that this network is operating in a very rich environment in which many other collective initiatives aim at territorial development, which makes it difficult to attribute economic, social or environmental impacts to single activities.

Saxena and Ilbery (2008) point out that after the first phase of rural tourism development in the last 20 years of the twentieth century, the integration of rural tourism improved through the creation of platforms facilitating communication and catalyzation of ideas, projects actors developed jointly:

- New services and activities were developed to hold back tourists in the region: Adventure activities and ,
- Product and wine tasting, cooking classes, horse-riding , and trekking.

(Randelli, Romei and Tortora, 2014).

The impacts can be clustered in two main categories: the effect on the volumes and prices of GI products; and the impacts on rural income diversification and increase in income.

The site InToscana, quoting the 17th report of ISMEA-Qualivita, reports that from 2017 to 2018 sales of Tuscany PDO, PGI and traditional speciality guaranteed (TSG) food products rose from EUR 130 million to EUR 144 million, while PGI and PDO wines dropped slightly, from EUR 969 million to EUR 961 million. Overall, the value in 2018 amounted to EUR 1.1 billion, 0.7 percent up on the previous year.

The 2021 ISMEA-Qualivita report shows that Tuscany is the Italian region with the highest number of PDO, PGI and TSG products, with 92 products registered, of which 58 are PDO and PGI wines. The value of
PDO, PGI and TSG products increased from EUR 130 million in 2017 to EUR 144 million in 2018, and to EUR 151 million in 2020. Tuscany ranks first in the olive oil sector, with EUR 25 million, and third in the wine sector, with EUR 1 billion.

According to Tripadvisor, the Italian regions with the highest number of enogastronomic bookings are Tuscany, Lazio and Veneto. Among the Google trends in food and wine tourism, the most consistent is the Florence–Tuscany combination (Cinelli Colombini, 2019).

The success of wine tourism has helped to diversify and enrich the offer, multiplying both the services of wine companies and those active in the tourism and hospitality industry. Standard packages lasting almost a full day, including wineries, a typical meal and a visit to craftsmen, or special experiences such as truffle hunting, provide income for families in rural Tuscany.

Garibaldi (2022) estimated growth of 21 percent in 2016, 30 percent in 2017, and 48 percent in 2018. Overall, Italian wine tourism turnover is estimated at EUR 2.5 billion to EUR 3 billion, a quarter of which comes from Tuscany alone. This means that the income generated by wine tourism is of the same order of magnitude as income earned from the sale of wine.
FLEUR D’AUBRAC MEAT, FRANCE

Central France quality meat revival thanks to a collective mark and a PGI using the territory’s strong brand

The GI product in a few words

The Fleur d'Aubrac is a unique product which benefits from a PGI granted by the Association Fleur d'Aubrac. The meat is obtained from a heifer, resulting from the crossing between a mother of the Aubrac breed and a father of the Charolais breed. The meat from a Fleur d'Aubrac heifer is characterized by a distinct red colour. It is relatively lean and slightly marbled. It constitutes the combination of the meat quality of the two breeds, and it boasts strength and finesse.

Good practices the case illustrates

The success of this GI has been made possible thanks to the partnerships between value chain operators and public bodies, such as agricultural and commerce chambers, or research institutes. The case also documents the step-by-step process towards GI recognition that lasted over two decades. However, during those years, value chain stakeholders reached intermediary milestones, with the adoption of a trademark and a public quality sign.

The case also shows that the outstanding factor of success is the relationship breeders first created with butchers of nearby urban centres before expanding to more distant markets.

Situation before the GI recognition and marketing actions

For centuries, trade flows have existed between the Aubrac plateau and the coastal areas of Nimes and Montpellier – sheep and cattle, raised in the mountains, would then be consumed by the urban population of the plain.

The history of the genisse (heifer) Fleur d'Aubrac begins in 1988 with a consumer survey in the French department of Hérault commissioned by the Regional Centre for Food Studies. The survey reveals the existence of an interesting local outlet for quality meat. At the same time, artisanal butchers were facing a decline in their market share due to mass distribution.

In 1991, the Fleur d'Aubrac association promoting the quality of the meat of Génisse Fleur d'Aubrac, contacted the breeders’ cooperatives of Aveyron and Lozère.

That same year, the Hérault Chamber of Commerce, in collaboration with the Chamber of Agriculture, organized a test phase for the recovery of heifer carcasses with Hérault butchers, with a view to defining the suitable meat characteristics for human consumption.

This phase culminated with the creation of the Association of Aubrac Products (APA) in May 1991. The founding structures were the Hérault Butchers’ Union and the breeders’ cooperatives; APA was the first association in France to bring together producers and distributors of bovine products within its Board of Directors.

The purpose of the association is to:

- Define the framework in which value chain stakeholders must operate and manage it.
- Define the quality criteria and the specifications by allowing implementation and control.
- Define the traceability system to identify the Heifer Fleur d'Aubrac on the market.

Three months later, a procedure with the National Institute of Industrial Property was initiated and a collective trademark was the result. The first Genisse Fleur d'Aubrac was marketed in October 1991.

The following year, the Hérault Butchers’ Cooperative replaced the Hérault Butchers’ Syndicate within the APA. It brought together 20 convinced artisanal butchers responsible for the promotion and exclusive distribution of the brand in Hérault. In 1992, two new breeders’ cooperatives were founded – Bovin Plateau Central Cooperative and the Velay Gévaudan Livestock Cooperative.

On 19 September 2002, the Official Journal of the French Republic published a decree approving the specifications for the product conformity certification “Génisse Fleur d’Aubrac”.

In 1996, an application file for PGI called Viande Bovine du Pays de l’Aubrac was also filed. This received a favourable opinion from the Institut National des Appellation d’Origine (INAO) for its transmission to the European Commission.

The Association Fleur d'Aubrac has existed since 1991, when the first Fleur d'Aubrac were marketed.
Promotion of geographical indication products: Learning from international experiences

Since then, the sector has undergone constant and progressive development. Today, the number of farms is stable, with 150 breeders producing Fleur d’Aubrac heifers in Lozère, Aveyron, Cantal and Haute-Loire.

The Fleur d’Aubrac value chain is now more profitable for fattening than large mass production operations and it maintains its price profile. It has grown over EUR 0.80/kg since 2012 with animals marketed on average at EUR 2108/head in 2019, and there is a strong demand from butchers because consumers are looking for quality.

Need more production in winter

From November to March, production struggles to keep up with demand from butchers. Indeed, each year during the winter period, the supply of Fleur d’Aubrac heifers does not meet demand. The president of the Association Fleur d’Aubrac encourages fattening breeders to use the pasture resources and start slaughtering animals not earlier than late August.

Looking for new producers

Despite a constant increase in labelled volumes, they could not honour all the orders received. It is important to have a long-term vision and not year to year based on market shocks. Breeders should understand that an organized system involving all actors including breeders, abattoirs and butchers, is important in order to secure their production and income. An increase in promotion can also help to attract new breeders. The Fleur d’Aubrac value chain has also introduced diversification to farms through crossbreeding and fattening, thus avoiding dependency on a mono-production of the weanling.

Promotion strategy and measures

To increase prices and volumes, access markets and overcome obstacles, the association chose to collaborate with other organizations promoting not only products of the Plateau de l’Aubrac, but also the territory, its traditions and culture – organizations such as the tourism body, Aubrac Laguiole. Such collaboration creates a win-win situation, with the marketing and promoting of the specific products of the region, which are only possible to produce because of the region’s specific characteristics. The Pays de l’Aubrac includes a number of small natural regions in the mountains of the southern Massif Central. It is a volcanic area mainly situated at over 600 m in altitude and consisting mainly of pastures – natural pastures, moors and rangeland, wooded pastures and basalt, granite or schist summer mountain pastures. The altitude and landscape have led the people living on this territory to develop pastoral economies, based on mountain grass.

The Aubrac is a vast basaltic plateau between 1000 m and 1500 m above sea level. It extends over 2500 km², with six inhabitants per square kilometre. The plateau is bordered to the north and west by the Gorges de la Truyère, to the south by the Lot Valley, and to the east by the Margeride.

The Aubrac plateau straddles three departments (Aveyron, Cantal and Lozère) and three regions (Midi-Pyrénées, Auvergne and Languedoc-Roussillon). The

**Figure 15. Fleur d’Aubrac branding and labelling process**

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<td>On 7 August 1991, a procedure with the National Institute of Individual Property was initiated and resulted in the obtaining of a collective enterprise mark for Fleur d’Aubrac quality red meat.</td>
<td>The story continues in 1996, the managers of the sector decided to embark on the path of product conformity certification for the Fleur d’Aubrac heifer. In 1996, an application file for the PGI “Viande Bovine du Pays de l’Aubrac” was also submitted.</td>
<td>In 2002, favourable opinion of the Institut National des Appellations d’Origine for its transmission to the European Commission.</td>
<td>After nearly 15 years of administrative investigation, the European Commission registers the appellation Génisse Fleur d’Aubrac PGI in the register of PGI.</td>
<td>In 2021, the brand image is completely revised, with the silhouette of a heifer and the slogan: “grass, space and time”.</td>
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**Source:** Author’s own elaboration.
Cross of the Three Bishops before the village of Aubrac symbolizes the junction of three dioceses and the fact that the inhabitants share the plateau.

**Partnership with the Association Traditions Aubrac “for the harmonious development of Aubrac”**

The association aims, within Aubrac territory, to:

- preserve and promote the cultural traditions and heritage of Aubrac;
- organize or sponsor public events, fairs, exhibitions, conferences; and issue leaflets and press articles, to inform third parties about the values and wealth of the heritage of Aubrac;
- contribute to the maintenance of regional pastoral activities within a cultural, social and humanitarian framework; and
- carry out unifying actions, mobilizing actors of the territory wishing to work on the development of Aubrac, as well as at interdepartmental and interregional levels, to include Aveyron, Cantal, Lozère/ Midi Pyrénées, Auvergne, Languedoc Roussillon.

To meet these objectives, the association implements various activities during transhumance, but it also extends its action across the year, in particular by publishing interpretation documents on the Aubrac breed, and by conducting promotion activities outside the territory.

The transhumance of herds by foot disappeared little by little, in favour of transport in faster cattle trucks.

In the early 1980s, on the initiative of the Lions Club of Haut Rouergue and Gévaudan, thanks to the combined efforts of breeders and partners from the Aubrac plateau, the transhumance of herds reverted to its former reality.

Since 2010, the association has been divided into three colleges:

- communities represented by five municipalities;
- transhumant herders represented by five herders; and
- associations represented by five associations.

In order to develop the association, so-called qualified associate members have been integrated into it, and divided into two groups:

- “traditions in Aubrac – actions towards the future”; and
- “traditions in Aubrac – reflection on the positioning of the association to lead territorial actions in the Regional Natural Park of Aubrac”.

**Impacts of the marketing strategy**

In 2012, the Génisse Fleur d’Aubrac PGI took new steps to consolidate the value chain with 1535 heifers sold under the GI, distributed at 50 points of sale, partnering with the breeders. In 2021, the brand image was completely reviewed, clarified and modernized. Thus, the logo has been completely transformed. The emblematic trefoil is retained, but stylized to reveal the notion of a virtuous loop between breeders, abattoirs, butchers and customers.

The silhouette of a heifer in the grass makes it easier to understand what product it is, while the slogan “grass, space and time” has also been added, allowing the Fleur d’Aubrac brand a strong and direct expression of its values and the quality of the product.

It now has nearly 70 points of sale that distribute the meat.
Promotion of geographical indication products: Learning from international experiences
PART IV.

Recommendations to promote geographical indications in Kyrgyzstan

Recommendations to public authorities

Enforcement and continuous improvement of the legal and institutional framework

As mentioned in the first part of this document, the Kyrgyzstan authorities, and in particular Kyrgyzpatent, began the legal reform of the GI system in 2019 and this has already produced results. The law adopted in February 2023, as well as the laws adopted in other Central Asian countries, clearly indicate a shift towards a system envisaging other benefits of GI apart from the protection of the name and the origin of the product – namely, a product’s quality and method of production. This should be continued, with the most challenging task ahead being the enforcement of the system.

Awareness-raising

As GI is envisaged as a new tool to improve market transparency and the protection of the interests of producers and consumers, there a strong need for public awareness. The promotion of the concepts of GI and AO, the guarantees, the commitment and duties of producers, can be done together with the promotion of single GIs. The use of an official logo should be obligatory on all marketed and certified GIs, in order to promote the scheme, make GI products more visible on market shelves, and facilitate the work of inspectors in charge of market surveillance.

Cross-cutting policies

Authorities should embed support for GIs in possible support schemes and not treat it as an isolated policy topic. If support measures are adopted, ministries in charge of agriculture and tourism should consider collective action from the GI producers or GIMOs. This requires intragovernmental coordination. Local authorities, usually very supportive of GIs when they see the benefit for territorial development, should also support GIMOs and facilitate potential collective action. This could consist of providing publicly owned land for storing, packaging and processing facilities, premises for office space, and the joint organization of events such as festivals.

Research and knowledge improvement

In order to better understand GIs and how they can support development of value chains and territories, their introduction to research and academia is strongly advisable. Research institutes should also be associated with ongoing and future international projects aiming at knowledge transfer.

Obvious role for local authorities

Local government has an obvious incentive to support GIs that could provide local added value, generate employment, have a multiplier effect on other sectors, and enhance the region’s image. That is why in many cases, local authorities – together with agriculture chambers, tourism offices, and nature protection agencies – are keen to support to GIs financially, and also promote them through their network. Material support can take different forms, supporting the GIMOs’ organization and capacity, providing spaces for meetings and offices, direct sales facilities, and access to local markets. When local financial resources are insufficient, then local authorities can assist GIMOs to apply for state funding, and lobby at the central level to obtain state financial support.

The other forms of support local authorities and the local network can provide are multiple. They can facilitate engagement with stakeholders of other sectors (tourism, hospitality, nature protection) that can result in common projects and the increased visibility of GI products. When organized within a GIMO, producers can voice more clearly their positions, needs and views. In turn, local authorities have a reliable interlocutor when GIMOs are consolidated to address issues like management of communal land, access to local markets, infrastructure and processing facilities, water management, and impacts on the environment from production activities.

Recommendations to value-chain operators

Forming and strengthening geographical indication managing organizations

The necessity for GIMOs has been underlined in the earlier sections of this document. The marketing of GIs by single producers or companies is important and will
benefit these entities, and also enhance the notoriety of the GI. In return, single producers and companies will enormously benefit from collective promotional actions that can only be conducted by GIMOs.

Despite the challenge of building up trust among the different operators and of managing such an organization, GIMOs are a must for the protection and promotion of each GI, and in general for the good governance of the value chains.

Kyrgyzstan value chain operators should set reasonable objectives for their GIMOs, and work together to reach these objectives. The common efforts and successes shall then reinforce common trust and allow further steps.

Each GIMO should try to benefit from capacity development programmes proposed by international organizations. These organizations can refer to training material developed by REDD and FAO on a participatory approach to GIs and on sustainable interprofessional bodies for GIs and origin-linked products, focusing on management of GIMOs (REDD, 2017).

Collective action in the field of marketing

In Kyrgyzstan, GIMOs could initiate different types of collective action, such as:

- Involvement of the retail sector in the GI value chain association, like in the case of Fleur d'Aubrac in which butcher shops are a full part of the association managing the GI. The involvement of the retailers means they are associated with the development of the GI. In this way, and because of their proximity to customers, retailers become the best ambassadors and promoters of the GI. This association can take different forms; in the case of Aubrac, retailers located in the nearby towns are members of the GIMO. In the case of Oku honey, it partners with NGOs, who act as retailers.

- Consolidation of quantities and standards to access large retailers should be a priority, especially for those that need to sell large quantities. Well managed GIs implementing a control and traceability system will have a clear advantage in these commercial channels.

- Building on the tourism development trend (see Figure 18) offers interesting opportunities for GI producers to sell directly to tourists and make their products known in other countries. Producers could also arrange touristic visits to production units, and GI product testing.

Tourism offers great opportunities for hospitality sector development, with new commercial channels, potential premium prices, and few logistical constraints. In this context, GI producers should seek stable partnerships with operators in this sector. Hospitality professionals, tour operators, and tourism value chain operators have the benefit of being part of territorial networks that associate with other value chain groups outside the tourism and hospitality sectors.

Improving packaging and labelling of GI products is a must if producers want to keep a premium value. Investments in packaging units in the regions are necessary to avoid producers selling their products in bulk, and increase the added value locally produced. Such investments can be made by single aggregators (fruit and vegetable packers, dairy processors, meat primary and secondary processors, and so on) or GIMOs and cooperatives. The second option should be carefully envisaged, in particular in terms of management and ownership. In case the GIMO is the investor, financial risk should be carefully considered.

The development of mountain and valley routes linking different production sites could offer a model adapted to Kyrgyzstan’s geography and social structures. Touristic experiences and activities could be developed around these, offering social unity and product diversity.
Recommendations to promote geographical indications in Kyrgyzstan

Coordination

Over the past three years, development organizations have initiated projects assisting the Government of the Kyrgyzstan and GI producers. These have been well coordinated due in part to the establishment of a working group on GIs that gathers public authorities, Kyrgyz research and academic institutes, NGOs, the private sector, as well as development organizations such as FAO, Hilfswerk International, and GIZ (the German Agency for International Cooperation).

Such a forum not only allows for a coordinated and compatible approach; it helps to build local knowledge and form a core group of expertise that will be able to support the system in the long term. It is therefore highly recommended to keep this forum alive.

Continuous assistance to help the transition to geographical indications

The shift from a pure producer IP rights protection to a GI system aiming also at giving guarantees of quality to consumers and contributing to rural and territorial development requires institutional and operational mechanisms, implemented by trained and competent human resources. Support organizations should provide all the necessary capacity development means to establish an efficient control system and train public authorities, certifications bodies performing external controls, and GIMOs performing internal control. The success of marketing of GI products will depend on the capacity to ensure quality and compliance with CoP.

Bring together local authorities, national scientists, experts, NGOs and other stakeholders to assist producers and create territorial networks

Development organizations can play an important role in territorial development with instruments, institutional arrangements, and linkages that are not always familiar to Central Asian stakeholders. In addition to the forum established in Bishkek in 2020, gathering governmental organizations, researchers and producers, and local networks that bring together public and private sector stakeholders, are key to territorial development processes in which GI products can play an important role.
Annex

Communication strategy and operational plan contents

Marketing strategy
Section 1: Executive summary
  • Overview of the strategy

Section 2a: Analysis
  • SWOT of your product on the market
  • Current market geography
  • Current client profiles
  • Pricing

Section 2b: Identified market information gaps and actions to be taken
  • List the missing information and needed actions to be taken (that will be included in the operational plan) e.g. market survey, consumers preferences, image survey, etc.

Section 3: Target customers and markets
  • Consumers profiles, demographic (e.g. age, gender), psychographic (e.g. interests), socioeconomic (middle, upper class)
  • Market (local, domestic, export)
  • Who are they?
  • Where are they?
  • Why would they buy your product?

Section 4: Value proposition
  • Uniqueness of the GI: Origin? Characteristics? Guarantee? Other____________________?

Section 5: Positioning strategy & pricing
  • Price setting
  • Image of the products

The price and the image must be aligned. Is your product a premium product, a niche product, an average or mass consumption product?
Section 6: Distribution plan
• How customers will buy from you?
  Channels: Direct sales, e-marketing, hospitality, retail, wholesale

Section 7: Offers
• Special deals you put together to secure more new customers and drive past customers back to you.
• Promotional discount to attract consumers

Section 8: Communication materials
• Website, e-marketing, printed material, videos, etc.

Section 9: Promotion strategy
• Different channels promotion/communication to the consumers and clients, plan of action with frequencies

Section 10: Online marketing strategy
• Website
• Social network (FB, Twitter, Instagram)
• Online sales

Section 11: Partnerships
• Tourism, natural parks, other GIs, cooks, gastro, airways, etc.

Elements of the operational plan
Activities
• Single activities and responsible body/person
• Plan implementation monitoring

Resources
• Budget per activities
• Gantt chart
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