



## NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2013



## Markets for Meghri (M4M) Project



### MAIN EVENTS

The month of March was of new partnerships initiations. From March 12 to March 15 the M4M team was in Meghri in order to have discussions on further ways of cooperation with the potential local partners such as Agricultural Support Center (ASC Syunik region) and Meghri Horticultural Association (MHA). As a part of the trip meetings were also held with the leading farmers in the region. Furthermore, the project team finalized the detailed workplan of the project implementation in 2013. On March 19 another meeting was held at Yerevan office with Meghri Cannery and FREDa (Fund for Rural Economic Development in Armenia) representatives for possible partnership.

### PARTNERSHIPS DEVELOPMENT

Within the scope of Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between CARD and the Small and Medium Entrepreneurship Development National Center of Armenia (SME DNC), Mr. Armen Sargsyan is hired to represent SME DNC in Meghri and carry out projects directed to the development of start-up and operating businesses. Mr. Sargsyan will be working from M4M project's office in Meghri. Both organizations will carry out joint projects for more efficient contribution to the economic development of Meghri region. M4M project staff has already initiated a joint pilot project with the SME DNC and USAID EDMC in

the sphere of the dried fruit production. The main objective of the project is to improve the farmers' knowledge and skills on the production of demanded products and improved marketing for higher profit as well as establishment of a long-term and sustainable relationship with potential buyers. According to the MoU signed between CARD and SME DNC some activities such as trainings on entrepreneurship development, seminars, and consultations will be undertaken. SME DNC will also support in disseminating information about investments in Meghri region and will provide loan guarantees through active regional universal credit organizations and banks.

### UPCOMING EVENTS

In April M4M team is planning to start pilot projects with ASC and MHA for early cherry and grape cultivation. From April 9 to 12 ToT will be conducted for the M4M team in Yerevan by Mr. Malossi, food and industrial engineering specialist in Central Asia. It is worth to mention that the specialist has been invited by SME DNC and USAID. The main topics of discussion will be HACCP, dried technologies, dried fruit international standard, packaging and labeling. After the ToT, Mr. Malossi will visit Meghri to meet the farmers and provide consultancy regarding the cultivation differentiations. Mr. Gavin Anderson, who is an M4P specialist from the "Spring Field Centre", UK, is also going to visit M4M project staff in April.