The partnership between FAO and Turkey has thrived since the establishment of the country office in 1982 and the Subregional Office for Central Asia in 2007 in Ankara. Today, cooperation continues to prosper through implementation of the FAO-Turkey Partnership Programmes on Food and Agriculture and on Forestry. The country has benefited from wide-ranging assistance from FAO and is at the same time an active resource partner, providing indispensable technical and financial support to FAO’s activities, particularly within the Central Asian subregion.

Hosting the subregional office

FAO’s Subregional Office for Central Asia is located in Ankara. Established in 2007 with operational support from the Government of Turkey, the Office has enhanced FAO’s ability to respond to national needs as well as regional priorities of countries in the subregion – Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. FAO’s technical assistance to the Subregional Office contributes to institutional capacity building, the development of knowledge and competencies, and knowledge exchange among countries transitioning from planned to market economies.

The multidisciplinary technical expertise of the Subregional Office encompasses food security, animal production and health, plant production and protection, fisheries, forestry, land and water management, rural investment and agricultural policy.

Global knowledge transfer

An important partner for South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SSTC), Turkey has been sharing and tailoring its knowledge and experiences to the specific development priorities of countries in Central Asia and Caucasia. Turkey and FAO are now exploring opportunities to finalize an SSTC Memorandum of Understanding.

Matching FAO’s expertise to Turkey’s development priorities

FAO assistance in Turkey is shaped by the 2016-2020 FAO Country Programming Framework (CPF), which is centred on three priority areas:

- **Food and nutrition security and food safety**, with a view to improving food security, availability, accessibility, safety and quality at all stages in the food chain, by supporting government institutions, enhancing human resources, and improving control mechanisms and legislative capacities.

- **Sustainable forest and natural resources management, including fisheries**, with a view to protecting and improving sustainable use of such resources while raising awareness of climate change issues.

- **Enhancing institutional capacity in the public and private sectors**, providing technical assistance for strengthening farmer organizations, developing training programmes for institutions, and developing agricultural data for more effective decision-making.

Jointly formulated with the Government and other partners, the CPF reflects relevant priorities in key national development policies, including Turkey’s five-year National Development Plan (NDP). The CPF is also fully aligned with the 2016-2020 UN Development Cooperation Strategy for Turkey.
Supporting countries in the subregion

**FAO-Turkey Partnership Programme on Food and Agriculture**

“Sustainable food and agriculture are at the heart of FAO’s agenda, and we can only achieve them in cooperation with committed partners like Turkey.”

Vladimir Rakhmanin
FAO Assistant Director-General

The overarching objective of the FTPP is to provide assistance in support of food security and rural poverty reduction in Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, as well as in Turkey itself. Set up in 2007, to date the Programme has benefited from trust fund contributions totalling US$20 million. It is financed by the Government of Turkey, represented by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry.

With a budget of US$10 million, a second phase will focus on food security and nutrition, agricultural and rural development, natural resource management, agricultural policies and food safety, under which eight projects will be underway by the end of 2019. Action areas range from capacity building for sustainable fisheries and aquaculture management to strengthening collaboration among Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) countries; and promoting economic growth through greater empowerment of rural women.

**FAO-Turkey Forestry Partnership Programme**

The FTFP is financed by the Government of Turkey and represented by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry which has provided a trust fund contribution of US$10 million for 2019 to 2023. The Programme Agreement provides for cooperation in sustainable forest management, plantations and rehabilitation; forest products and ecosystem services; forests and the environment; people, forests, governance, assessments and monitoring, combating desertification and interdisciplinary issues. A project has recently been operational with the objective of improving the condition and productivity of the agrosilvopastoral landscapes and community livelihoods in the African Great Green Wall countries of Eritrea, Mauritania and Sudan.

Farmer Field Schools for crop management

In collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry and related partners, FAO has been promoting and supporting sustainable crop production and Integrated Pest Management (IPM) practices. Following FAO’s renowned Farmer Field School (FFS) concept, and building on the previous extension work on biological control and IPM methods, a coordinated FFS approach was recently introduced in the Konya Closed Basin to strengthen farmers’ capacities in conservation agriculture. In this approach, local research and extension institutions collaboratively facilitate farmer led processes and experiential learning around experimental study plots. More than 20 field schools are promoting reduced tillage techniques and programmed irrigation and water saving. These initiatives will build on the knowledge and experience of 2 000 farmers in seven districts of Konya and Karaman provinces, with further potential for scaling up to other topics and regions.

Livelihood opportunities for Syrian refugees

FAO has been implementing the Syrian Refugee Resilience Plan in Turkey since 2017. The main objective of the most 2019-2020 phase of the plan is to enhance the resilience of more than 60 000 households from Syrian refugee and host communities affected by the Syrian crisis. Action revolves around: i) income, nutritional knowledge and food security; ii) investing in agriculture and socio-economic integration; iii) knowledge generation, coordination and efficiency.

In 2017 and 2018, with US$3.3 million in funding from Japan and UNHCR, FAO carried out three projects in partnership with the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry and local departments. Syrian refugees and host communities in southern Turkey received technical and vocational training in collaboration with private sector to improve their agricultural employment opportunities. Two more projects (funded by Japan and UNHCR for US$1.9 million) are ongoing, while a larger-scale intervention (funded by EU-Madad for US$11.2 million) is due to start by end-2019.

Global environmental benefits

Projects funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) in Turkey are focusing on biodiversity, land degradation and climate change mitigation. Focus areas include forests, pastures and agricultural areas managed under dryland conditions in the Konya Basin (US$5.75 million); sensitive steppe ecosystems in Sanliurfa Province (US$2.3 million); and a Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) model for decision-making and demonstration in the Upper Sakarya Basin (US$2.4 million).