



FAO Uzbekistan Newsletter

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The FAO–Uzbekistan Country Programming Framework for 2021–2025 has been launched

FAO and Uzbekistan signed agreement guiding collaboration on food and agriculture through 2025

A roundtable meeting in Tashkent marked the official launch of the FAO–Uzbekistan Country Programming Framework (CPF), covering the period 2021–2025 and giving impetus and further guidance to their partnership.

The framework agreement foresees the transformation of the production, aggregation, processing, distribution, consumption, and disposal of food products originating from agriculture, forestry, and fisheries towards more sustainability, taking into consideration the wider economic, social, and natural environment. The total resource budget for implementation of the CPF is expected to be approximately USD 17 million.

At the event, Viorel Gutu, FAO Subregional Coordinator and Representative in Uzbekistan, and Sherzod Umarov, Assistant FAO Representative in Uzbekistan, presented the planned programmes and activities to national and international partners to discuss future cooperation opportunities. Representatives of the office of UN Resident



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Sherzod Umarov, Assistant FAO Representative in Uzbekistan presenting the Country Programming Framework

Coordinator in Uzbekistan as well as of relevant ministries, state committees, and international organizations, participated.

The FAO Country Programming Framework aims to support the Government transforming Uzbek food systems, as foreseen in the national priorities. In line with the country's Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) priorities, Uzbekistan will receive assistance to implement the 2030 Agenda and ensure sustainability along the entire agrifood value chain.

Third Meeting of the Central Asian Ministers of Agriculture

With focus on science, technology and innovation, Central Asian countries can contribute to agri-food systems transformation and serve as a model for other regions facing similar challenges amid the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond, FAO Director-General QU Dongyu said today at the Third Meeting of the Ministers of Agriculture of Central Asia. The virtual event, hosted by the Government of Kyrgyz Republic, focused on innovations in agri-food systems.

"The pandemic is giving us a rare opportunity to reset, rethink and redouble our efforts to build forward better and greener, using coordinated approaches that are inclusive, holistic, and coherent," the Director-General said.

The Minister of Agriculture of Uzbekistan, Jamshid Khodjaev, said that the food and agriculture sector should serve as a major platform to demonstrate innovations - from the creation of new fertilisers, animal and plant species to the production of safe and nutritious food. He pointed out that companies that would be able to offer solutions at affordable prices would become leaders in the digitalization of agriculture, adding that state authorities should support any such development.

Representatives from the World Bank, the Islamic Development Bank and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) participated at the meeting as well.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Since 2020 three meetings of Ministers of Agriculture of the Central Asian countries have been facilitated by FAO.
- Meetings are held with the aim to provide a forum to deliberate on important and relevant topics related to agriculture and jointly reflect on agricultural development trends in the region.
- They are attended by the Ministers responsible for Food and Agriculture from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan Uzbekistan and FAO as well as by the regional representatives of International Financial Institutions and Organizations



FAO Director-General QU Dongyu and Minister of Agriculture of Uzbekistan Jamshid Khodjaev signed agreement online

New Uzbekistan Lounge heralds a more modern and environmentally sustainable public space in FAO's headquarters

FAO's Director-General QU Dongyu and Uzbekistan's Minister for Agriculture Jamshid Khodjaev today signed an agreement for establishing the Uzbekistan Lounge at FAO's headquarters in Rome.

The FAO-Uzbekistan Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) represents the first contribution from an FAO Member to the planned transformation of the public space at FAO's headquarters – all with the aim to create an innovative space for showcasing agriculture and technology and facilitating knowledge exchange.

The agreement reflects the shared wish of FAO and the Government of Uzbekistan to further strengthen what is already an excellent collaboration.

The Director-General stated that the Lounge is another example of Uzbekistan's contribution to FAO's transformation and alluded to the central role that hospitality plays in the Uzbek culture.

Uzbekistan's Minister for Agriculture Jamshid Khodjaev confirmed: "We want every person who enters the room to feel Uzbekistan's culture, tradition and hospitality".

The Uzbekistan Lounge – with capacity to accommodate 80 people - will also reflect the country's colours and texture and will inspire a sense of light, space and harmony. The Lounge, which will be located on the top floor of the Organization's building, will follow FAO's objectives to embrace modernity, adhere to safety regulations and promote environmental sustainability.

Rural people in Uzbekistan received 34 greenhouses from FAO



One of the greenhouses donated within the scope of the CACILM-2 project

FAO donated altogether 34 greenhouses to rural families living in Uzbekistan's southeastern regions (Bukhara and Kamashi districts) as part of the socio-economic response to the global crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Low-income families were selected for FAO support on the basis of their employment and social situation during the lockdown," said Batyr Togaev, khokim (governor) of Kamashi district. "Thanks to the FAO project, we will continue providing job opportunities and increase livelihoods of rural people living in the most remote areas, and enhance their living standards."



Beneficiaries of the CACILM-2 project from Bukhara district of Bukhara region

The proper installation of the new greenhouses was overseen by FAO experts and representatives of the district administration.

"If the greenhouse is used effectively, one can earn about 10 to 30 million soms per year," stressed Aziz Nurbekov, FAO expert on drought risk management. "Now the most important thing is to ensure proper work in greenhouses. Therefore, we visited all the

beneficiaries and advised them about the sowing of vegetable crops".

"I am grateful to FAO for this opportunity," said Sanjar Rakhimov, a farmer from Bukhara. "Thanks for the installation of this greenhouse, my family and I were provided with employment. Now we have a lot of plans."

He followed the professional advice and planted garlic, spinach, dill, coriander, radishes, and green onions.

The support was provided within the scope of the FAO CACILM-2 project (Integrated Natural Resources Management in Drought-prone and Salt-affected Agricultural Production Systems in Central Asia and Turkey), funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF), and implemented in cooperation with the Ministry of Agriculture.

FAO supported establishing new laboratory for Geographic Information Systems

The opening ceremony of a new laboratory for geographic information systems (GIS) was held at the Tashkent State Agrarian University. It was established with the support of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) under the regional project "Integrated natural resources management in drought-prone and salt affected agricultural production systems in Central Asia and Turkey" (CACILM-2). The new GIS laboratory is equipped with the most modern computers, data center, server, plotter and GPS equipment.

The GIS laboratory will serve as a tool for monitoring land use changes, mapping land degradation trends in Uzbekistan, which will in turn facilitate the implementation of the projects on land degradation neutrality (LDN). laboratory will be used as a center to train students and practitioners, and to conduct researches.

HIGHLIGHTS

- CACILM-2 project contributes to the implementation of the UN Convention to Combat Desertification and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change.
- In Uzbekistan the project partners are the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Water Resources, the State Forestry Committee of the Republic of Uzbekistan and the Center for the Hydrometeorological Service of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

Interim Regional Secretariat of the Central Asian Desert Initiative started its work in Tashkent

The Interim Regional Central Asian Desert Initiative (CADI) Secretariat's new coordinator Temurbek Reymov and assistant coordinator Nargizakhon Khujaeva have started working in Tashkent.



CADI Regional Secretariat team at work

This is the result of a CADI Regional Workshop held by the FAO in Tashkent on 22-23 October, 2019 with representatives from Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. In a Tashkent Declaration, the participants agreed on the mandate of the Secretariat. National Secretariats will be established in the participating countries: Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

The Secretariat is expected to keep the momentum of project interventions directed to biodiversity conservation and sustainable use of ecosystems in cold winter desert areas in the member countries. Among the team's immediate tasks are reaching an agreement on the composition of the National CADI Secretariats in Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan, as well as developing Plan of Work for the Interim Regional CADI Secretariat.

There are already some significant achievements in this area. In particular, the State Forestry Committee of Uzbekistan designated its Department for Combating Desertification and Drought as a national body to coordinate the activities of the Interim National CADI Secretariat. Members of National CADI Secretariat of Turkmenistan have already been approved. Currently, the issue of appointing members of the national CADI secretariat in Kazakhstan is being resolved.

For the development of the 3-year Plan of Work, the necessary documents were reviewed, including policy reviews; strategies for biodiversity protection and against desertification; relevant national strategies and international commitments.

The main tasks of the CADI regional secretariat include development of measures for conservation of deserts, increasing the area of saxaul plantations and creating transboundary protected areas as well as providing support for implementation of national initiatives.

HIGHLIGHTS

- The CADI project, funded by the German government, has been implemented since 2016 by the University of Greifswald, the Michael Zukov Foundation (Greifswald, Germany) and FAO.
- The initiative aims to promote conservation and sustainable use of the temperate deserts, which are unique ecosystems of global importance. These deserts are important migration areas for birds as well as for wild ungulates.
- The target countries of CADI are Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. They bear a special responsibility for the preservation of the temperate deserts, which are threatened by anthropogenic and climatic factors.

Aral Sea: Is there life after death?

Under this title a new video documentary was released on the YouTube channel "Все как у зверей", dedicated to one of the largest environmental disasters of our time - the gradual desiccation of the Aral Sea. The 15-minute video reveals the reasons for the devastation of the once 4th largest lake in the world, analyses the ecological situation, examines the prospects for the flora and fauna of the Aral Sea.

The filming was organized with support of the CADI project, the State Forestry Committee of the Republic of Uzbekistan and the State Committee of the Republic of Uzbekistan for Ecology and Environmental Protection as well as the Michael Zukov Foundation.

It should be noted that the UN pays great attention to the problems of the Aral Sea, to improvement of living conditions of the population affected by the crisis. And this video is intended to draw the attention of a wide audience to the consequences of mismanagement of water resources.

Meeting of the Steering Committee of the Project "Sustainable Forest Management in Mountain and Valley Areas of Uzbekistan"

The State Forestry Committee of the Republic of Uzbekistan and FAO organized a regular meeting of the Steering Committee for the FAO/GEF project "Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) in Mountain and Valley Areas of Uzbekistan".



Meeting of the Steering Committee of the FAO / GEF Project "Sustainable Forest Management in Mountain and Valley Areas of Uzbekistan"

The Project Steering Committee is the main governing and decision-making body. Its main goal is ensuring sustainable, non-depleting, multipurpose forest management, conservation and enhancement of productivity, sustainability and biodiversity of forests. At the regular meeting representatives of the Syrdarya, Dehkanabad, Kitab and Pap state foresteries presented their reports and work plans, and project budgets for 2021 were approved.

"The Coordinating Committee supports the effective and successful implementation of the project. The Committee provides the necessary guidance and supports efforts to ensure timely realization of all planned activities as well as promotes cooperation with national and international partners" - says Olimjon Khakimov, First Deputy Chairman of the State Forestry Committee of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

During the meeting, it was also noted that during the reporting period within the SFM project framework, experts from the FAO Representation in Uzbekistan made significant contributions to the development of the "Concept for the development of forestry in Uzbekistan until 2030". Additionally, a Gender Strategy of the State Forestry Committee of the Republic of Uzbekistan for 2021-2025 and Gender Action Plan for 2021-2022 were designed. These

activities carried out during the reporting period were highly appraised by the Project Coordinating Committee.

FAO's Forest Plantations in Syrdarya Region

More than 30 thousand seedlings of maple, ash, poplar, mulberry, elm and other trees were planted on a 20 hectares territory of the Syrdarya forestry by the FAO Representation in Uzbekistan within the framework of the FAO/GEF project "Sustainable Forest Management in Mountain and Valley Areas of Uzbekistan". Furthermore, 10 thousand seedlings were distributed among the local population to create green spaces in their private plots.

"FAO Uzbekistan team established demonstrational plots for forest plantations in the Gulistan district, forest shelter belts in the Boyavut district, as well as a nursery for ornamental and forest plantations in the Shirin district of Syrdarya region for the purpose of conducting workshops on planting and soil preparation", - Olimjon Kakhkharov, the technical coordinator of the project noted.



People of Gulistan with seedlings donated by the FAO Uzbekistan team

One of the workshops was organized for the local population in Gulistan with the participation of FAO experts, the representatives of the State Forestry Committee and of the Tashkent State Agrarian University. The objective was to engage the participants to work with the new agricultural technology used for the creation of walnut, fuel and wood plantations, giving them the opportunity to apply it on practical examples. The participants discussed matters related to youth and women employment, as well as the provision of forest land for long-term lease as the means of improving the socio-economic conditions of the local population.

FAO Support to Development of Innovative Information Exchange System for Beekeepers

The FAO Representation in Uzbekistan together with the Association of Uzbekistan Beekeepers held a meeting with representatives of the Ministry of Agriculture to discuss an innovative information exchange system that is being designed within the FAO Technical Cooperation Programme "Support to sustainable apiculture development".



Bee landed on the flower

The FAO Technical Cooperation Programme "Support to Sustainable Apiculture Development" opens new opportunities for training and increasing the capacity of beekeeping specialists. Within the framework of the programme, an innovative information exchange system for beekeepers has been developed with several benefits.

New system will help beekeepers to have all the necessary educational and statistical information. The new system will also include data on the location of colonies owned by each beekeeper, which will be reflected on a special map so that beekeepers avoid placing the bee farms close to one another. In addition, the new system will provide early pesticide warning in order to prevent honey bee loses.

FAO Beekeeping Contest

An awarding ceremony for the winners of the best beekeeping industry coverage contest was organized by the FAO team in Uzbekistan together with the Association of Beekeepers of Uzbekistan. The competition on creativity was organized within the

framework of the FAO Technical Cooperation Programme "Support to Sustainable Apiculture Development" and included the following categories: "Best Children's Drawing" and "Best Photo".

The participants reflected their visions of ancient beekeeping traditions, useful properties of honey, and the beauty of the surrounding nature through illustrative media – photos and pictures. When evaluating artwork, both talent and skill, as well as the semantic content were taken into account. As the winners of the "Best Children's Drawing" category were declared the following people: Roza Asylgareeva, Abdumannop Abduvaliyev, Fayzulloh Rustamov and Zakiya Kosimzhonova. At the same time Ibrohimbek Habibullayev, Umida Alikulova and Khislatbek Abduvositov were recognized as the authors of the best photos. All the winners were awarded with valuable prizes from the FAO Representation in Uzbekistan.



One of the photos submitted for the Contest

The aim of the contest was to draw people's attention to the development of beekeeping as an important branch of agriculture of Uzbekistan. Bees are one of the most industrious creatures in nature, and have long benefited humans, plants and the environment. By carrying pollen from one flower to another, bees and other pollinators enable not only the production of an abundance of fruits, nuts and seeds, but also more variety and better quality, contributing to food security and nutrition.

Formulation of Gender-responsive and Socially-inclusive Policies in Agriculture



Woman holding pomegranates

FAO together with the Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Uzbekistan organized the first training for representatives of the agro-industrial complex entities to support national partners in formulation and implementation of gender-responsive and socially inclusive policies that contribute to the achievement of the SDGs. The training was organized within the scope of the FAO project "Support in Implementation of Inclusive Agricultural Policies".

"The gender gap in food production and agriculture is significant and prevents women from reaching their full productive potential, which in turn undermines progress in agriculture and rural development. Of course, the situation varies from country to country in Europe and Central Asia, but in most countries, women living in rural and remote areas are more vulnerable and more likely to suffer from discrimination and poverty" - stressed Dono Abdurazakova, Senior Gender and Social Protection Advisor of the FAO Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia.

The project is implemented in cooperation with the Association "Women of the Agricultural Sector" of Uzbekistan. The participants of the training got acquainted with the basics of gender mainstreaming in agriculture, the national legislation of Uzbekistan on gender issues, the role of women in ensuring the food and nutrition security of the population of Uzbekistan and in the development of agriculture, and other topics.

"According to FAO's international experience, empowerment of women, improving their living and working conditions lead to increased agricultural productivity. This is why investing in rural women

represents investment in critical agents of change for ending poverty and reaching food security for all, thus achieving the Sustainable Development Goals", - Sherzod Umarov, Assistant FAO Representative in Uzbekistan said.

Session on Gender for FAO Uzbekistan Team

A regular gender briefing session has been held for the staff of the FAO Representation in Uzbekistan. The session was conducted by Dono Abdurazakova, regional Senior Gender Equality and Social Protection Advisor.

The session provided an opportunity to review the renewed FAO Policy on Gender Equality 2020-2030, and refresh knowledge on gender equality concepts in relation to FAO's work and the context of Uzbekistan. Participants were also reminded of FAO tools and resources, particularly a publication from FAO country gender assessments, "Gender, Agriculture and Rural Development in Uzbekistan", was emphasized for their preview and perusal.



Women harvesting grapes

Discussion also focused on challenges and opportunities for gender mainstreaming in the project cycles; examples from the Central Asian Desert Initiative (CADI) and Sustainable Management of Forests in Mountain and Valley Areas of Uzbekistan (SFM) got particular attention.

Finally, participants were provided with updates, in particular on the research project initiated by FAO in Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on rural households and women in particular. Also, information was shared about joint country nutrition report to be produced by WFP, IFAD and FAO in 2021.



Potato Harvest

FAO Support to Potato Sector Recovery in Response to the Pandemic

An Inception Workshop was held within the Technical Cooperation Program “Recovery and development of the potato sector in response to COVID-19”. The project is implemented by the FAO in 2021-2023 with total cost of \$195 000.

At the event, FAO experts and representatives of the Ministry of Agriculture of Uzbekistan presented the goals and objectives of the project. Members of scientific and research institutes and other specialized organizations also attended the workshop.

The project will contribute to the development of sustainable potato production system, based on knowledge and good practices. The enhancement of the systems for potato cultivars' registration and potato seed certification will ensure access of the Uzbek potato farmers to good quality seed material for their production. Training workshops carried out

under the project will enhance the capacity of extension services and seed certification inspectors, who will advise farmers on enhanced methods of potato cultivation and protection from pests and diseases for efficient potato farming in Uzbekistan.



Participants of the FAO Technical Cooperation Program Workshop on "Recovery and Development of the Potato Sector in Response to COVID-19"

The project will be implemented following a Human Rights-Based Approach (HRBA) which is gender-responsive and participatory. The core principle of the 2030 Agenda of leaving no one behind will be the guiding principle of the project.



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