



**REPORT OF
THE COMCEC COVID-19 AGRICULTURE CONSULTATION MEETING
(June 30th, 2020, Virtual Meeting)**

1. The COMCEC COVID-19 Agriculture Consultative Meeting was held on June 30th, 2020, in a virtual-only format, with the theme of “The Impacts of COVID-19 on Food Security and Agriculture in the OIC Member Countries.”

(The Agenda and Programme of the Meeting are attached as Annex-I and Annex II)

2. The meeting was attended by the representatives of 18 Member States. The meeting was also attended by the representatives of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), SESRIC, Islamic Organization for Food Security (IOFS), IDB Group, SMIIC and COMCEC Coordination Office.

(The List of Participants of the Meeting is attached as Annex-III)

3. The Meeting started with a recitation from the Holy Quran.
4. At the outset, Mr. Emin Sadık AYDIN, Acting Director General of the COMCEC Coordination Office (CCO) delivered his opening remarks. Welcoming all participants to the meeting, he underlined that the COMCEC Agriculture Working Group was a pertinent platform to address the existing and potential impacts of COVID-19 pandemic on agri-food sector in the OIC member countries. He expressed that although the pandemic has posed serious challenges for the agriculture sector and food systems, it could be turned into an opportunity for restructuring and transformation in a way to enhance the crisis-preparedness and resilience of the agriculture sector in the face of future challenges.
5. Prof. Hami ALPAS, Consultant at the COMCEC Coordination Office moderated the sessions during the meeting. Welcoming the participants, Prof. ALPAS briefly informed the attendees about the program.

I. General Overview of the Impacts of COVID-19 on Food Security and Agriculture

6. Under this agenda item, Mr. Maximo TORERO CULLEN, Chief Economist, Assistant Director-General from FAO, made a presentation titled “From Containment to Consequences of COVID-19 in the Food and Agriculture Sectors.” He shared some figures on the impacts of pandemic on GDP growth and global extreme poverty. He stated that 89-117 million people were pushed to extreme poverty in 2020. He added that jobs particularly in primary production, food processing and food services were at highest risk.

7. Mr. CULLEN pointed out the importance of transformation of the food system. In this transformation, meeting the immediate needs of the vulnerable populations would be crucial. Thereby, he stressed the significance of some actions including, among others, the emergency food assistance, the protection of the basic consumption needs of the vulnerable populations, scaling up nutritional support, promotion of e-commerce for agriculture, providing productivity enhancing safety nets, reducing post-harvest losses and improving food stocks along the value chain, removing artificial constraints to domestic trade throughout the food chain in order to link the smallholder farmers to the market, making necessary adjustments in trade and tax policies.

II. COVID-19's Impacts on Agriculture and Food Security in the OIC Member Countries

8. Mr. Fahman FATHURRAHMAN, Researcher at SESRIC, made a presentation titled "COVID-19 Impacts on Food Security and Agriculture in the OIC Member Countries." In his presentation, he pointed out that multiple threats (pest, conflict, extreme weather) were already pressuring the agriculture and food security in OIC member countries. COVID19 could double the number of food-insecure population, mostly through the disturbance on the consumption side. The decrease in the income of the people, making it more difficult to access food for daily needs.
9. Mr. FATHURRAHMAN also stated that in order to minimize the negative impacts of the pandemic, the OIC Member Countries need to keep the agri-food value chain functioning and protect the most vulnerable populations, including the displaced ones. He added that in terms of Intra-OIC cooperation level, this crisis would be an opportunity for the OIC member countries to strengthen their existing cooperation with each other. He concluded his presentation by mentioning some recommendations, including, among others: enhancing international cooperation to keep international food trade open, forming an OIC Economic Policy Coordination Committee on COVID-19 to have joint concerted efforts, debt relief and restructuring for OIC countries with Least Developed Country (LDC) status, and extending mechanisms to harness Islamic social finance for funding COVID-19 Response.
10. Ambassador Hameed OPELOYERU, Deputy Director-General at IOFS, made a presentation addressing food security problems in the wake of Covid-19 Pandemic. In his presentation, H.E. OPELOYERU traced the current food security situation in OIC member states, characterized by existence of 64.5 million people suffering from acute hunger in 2018, food trade deficit averaging \$67 billion annually, and 28 OIC member states classified as low-income food deficit countries by FAO. Compounded by poor market access, low level of agricultural productivity due to limited rural infrastructure and weak policy and institutional framework, he stressed the importance of concerted intra-OIC action to leverage on the various opportunities available within the OIC region. He also enumerated opportunities such as a large 1.5 billion-wide OIC market, existence of 20 largest producers of world major agricultural staple food products, a young and vibrant youthful rural population and a relatively high revenue profile from its 18 middle income fuel exporting member states.
11. Tracing the impacts of COVID-19, the presentation revealed that the consequences of a sharp decline in local food production between 2.6-7%, initial export restrictions by some countries and the logistical problems arising from the lockdown measures have disrupted

access to food supplies. In this regard, measures were taken to appeal to member states against food export restrictions, including financial interventions by relevant OIC funding agencies, such as Islamic Solidarity Fund (ISF), and the various subsidiaries of the Islamic Development Bank Group (IsDB), the latter allocating funds amounting to US\$730m and US\$850m respectively. He stated that the measures were complementary to such national responses ranging from palliatives and bailout funds to the private sector to address job losses and national campaigns against food waste and food losses. On the medium term measures, he enumerated on-going actions by IOFS to promote application of scientific methods towards increasing food production and nutrition security in its member states. These include such measures as promoting agricultural biodiversity, water use efficiency for food and agriculture and the implementation of such programmes as OIC programme on development of strategic commodities, the creation of a regional food security reserve, and leveraging the COMCEC project funding mechanism, among others.

12. Mr. Nur ABDI, Manager at Agriculture Infrastructure Division of the IsDB Group made a presentation on the IsDB's Response Program to novel coronavirus pandemic's impacts on food security in the Member Countries. He stated that global economy was expected to contract between 3 and 6 percent in 2020, unemployment rate would be historically high and significant wealth losses in the economy would occur. He stressed that the OIC member countries (MCs) would feel the effect of the crisis with significant variations with 28 low-income-food-deficit countries, which would be affected severely.
13. Afterwards, he informed the participants that the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) has launched Covid-19 Strategic Preparedness and Response Package which supported Health-Food-Development trilogy needs of OIC member countries namely; Respond, Restore, Restart – 3Rs. Respond covering short-term (1-3 months) measures has focused on health and food emergence response including social safety nets to sustain and save lives. Restore designed for mid-term (3-12 months) initiatives has targeted to provide lines of finance for MSMEs stimulus, trade finance and increase central bank reserves. Restart, long-term (more than 12 months) approach, has involved in building resilience and robust key industries including agribusiness to create jobs, increase export and income. In order to implement the Program, IsDB allocated US\$ 2.3 billion and launched US\$ 1.5 bn COVID sustainability Sukuk. He concluded his presentation by expressing that this time more than ever, the OIC member countries need to strengthen agri-food trade cooperation around agri-food trade and knowledge and technology exchange to minimize the impacts of the pandemic.

III. Member Country Experiences in Tackling COVID-19 Crisis in the Area of Agriculture and Food Security

14. Mr. Ade CANDRADIJAYA, Director of Bureau for International Cooperation at the Ministry of Agriculture of Indonesia shared his country's experiences in tackling the pandemic in agriculture sector. He informed the attendees about the most affected groups, classes, and sectors in his country. He highlighted the hotels, restaurants, transportation, travel agencies as the highly impacted sectors.
15. He also briefed on the food and nutrition programmes for people in general and the needy groups in specific. He stated that according to Bappenas (Ministry of National Development Planning of the Republic of Indonesia) estimations, poverty would increase from 9.22% (Sept 2019) to 10.54% in 2020 if there is no SSN; number of poor people increase 24.79 million to 28.42 million. With Social Safety Nets Program, the poverty

level only increased to 9.24% and it could prevent 3.5 millions of “New” poor people. Mr. CANDRADIJAYA concluded his presentation with the policy implementation phase in his country and details of short, medium and long term agenda.

16. Mr. Mohd Faizal HARUN, Undersecretary at the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Industry of Malaysia, made a presentation titled “Facilitation of Supply Chain for Food Security during COVID-19 Outbreak.” Mr. HARUN informed the attendees that Malaysia imposed Movement Control Order (MCO) starting from 18 March 2020 to curb the spread of COVID-19 pandemic, which initially affected the movement of food and agricultural products from producers to consumers. Exceptions to the MCO were immediately granted to any activities along the food value chain to ensure food accessibility and availability. He pointed out that COVID-19 altered the demand and supply of food products which caused surpluses of some products in certain areas and shortages in some others. Therefore, he stressed that, government interventions were necessary to ensure the surpluses do not go to waste and shortages of food are addressed properly.
17. Mr. HARUN also stated that the government of Malaysia provided financial assistance to the vulnerable individuals during MCO as well as introduced stimulus packages to the agriculture and food industries to reduce the impact on food security. In addition, the Government announced funds to strengthen food stockpile, food reserves and storage capacities. He added that the government also ensured that imports and exports of food and agriculture products flow smoothly because Malaysia still depends partially on import of food such as white rice, meat, liquid milk and animal feeds. To facilitate the distribution of food to consumers, the government established new controlled fresh markets that adhere to COVID-19 safety measures. Farmers and food producers were also encouraged to use e-commerce platforms. Communication strategies were carefully planned to ensure everyone knows that the Government was doing all the best to ensure no one goes hungry during COVID-19 MCO. At the top level, the Prime Minister chaired the Cabinet Committee on Food Security to ensure food security issues were well addressed. A national task force consisting of experts, industrial players and academicians was also formed to develop long term post-COVID plan to strengthen food security in Malaysia.
18. Ms. Şule Özge İMAMOĞLU, Head of Department at Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry of Turkey made a presentation during the session and shared her country’s experience in the face of Covid-19 pandemic. Ms. İMAMOĞLU informed the attendees of the efforts exerted by the Ministry to ensure efficient coordination with the sector and raise awareness on Covid-19 pandemic. In this respect, she mentioned the close coordination and regular meetings with different target groups, establishment of Provincial Pandemic Boards, close contacts with food industry partners and establishment of a Market Monitoring Committee within the Ministry with the participation of academics and sectoral partners, public spot for COVID-19 and distance education.
19. In her presentation, Ms. İMAMOĞLU also shared the details of the measures taken by her Ministry for agriculture sector in general and for seasonal agriculture workers, agricultural lands, fisheries and meat and milk sector in particular.

IV. Exploring Capacity Building and Experience Sharing Opportunities among the Member Countries

20. The main aim of the session was to conduct a brainstorming on technical cooperation opportunities and capacity building efforts that could be realized under the COMCEC umbrella.
21. The participants deliberated on the cooperation opportunities based on the needs and experiences of the member countries and highlighted the following areas/subjects:
 - Promoting the use of new technologies and digitalization in agriculture
 - Digitalization in agriculture and tackling the issue of unemployment in the sector
 - Enhancing the young farmers capacity and encouraging their skill development in use of new technologies
 - Encouraging young agricultural entrepreneurs to invest in the sector
 - Promoting the design and implementation of evidence-based policies and programs for agricultural and rural development
 - Improving and strengthening agricultural value chains among the member countries
 - Supporting and protecting the smallholder farmers in face of COVID-19 and other pandemics and challenges.
 - Improving stock management to ensure the continuity in production and trade activities
 - Taking measures for minimizing food loss and waste
 - Promoting agricultural trade and development of e-commerce opportunities and e-markets for farmers
 - Encouraging people particularly young populations and women to capitalize on e-commerce opportunities in agriculture sector.
 - Promoting halal food standards and taking occupational health and safety measures and hygiene and sanitary practices for those working in the agricultural sector during COVID 19 pandemic.
 - Developing financial instruments for farmers and those engaged in agriculture and food sectors to overcome the effects of COVID-19
 - Encouraging advanced R&D studies on microbial fertilizers, animal health, seed and seedling, etc., to improve productivity and providing opportunities for sharing knowledge and technology among the member countries.
 - Developing sustainable local crops and agrobiodiversity to enhance the resilience of the farmers and the access to high quality diet with local food /crops;
 - Encouraging cooperation in the area of food packaging

Closing

22. In his concluding remarks, Mr. Emin Sadık AYDIN, Acting Director General of the COMCEC Coordination Office (CCO) thanked all the presenters and participants for the fruitful deliberations made during the meeting. He announced that 15th Meeting of the Agricultural Working Group, which was postponed due to the global pandemic, would be held virtually on September 17th, 2020 with the theme of “Good Governance for Ensuring Food Security and Nutrition in the OIC Countries.” He concluded by expressing his best wishes for all the attendees for a happy and healthy life in the years ahead.



COMCEC COVID-19 AGRICULTURE CONSULTATION MEETING

“THE IMPACTS OF COVID-19 ON FOOD SECURITY AND AGRICULTURE IN THE OIC MEMBER STATES”

(Virtual Meeting, June 30th, 2020)

(Ankara Time - GMT+3)

AGENDA

Opening

1. General Overview of the Impacts of COVID-19 on Food Security and Agriculture
2. COVID-19's Impacts on Agriculture and Food Security in the OIC Member Countries
3. Member Country Experiences in Tackling COVID-19 Crisis in the Area of Agriculture and Food Security
4. Exploring Capacity Building and Experience Sharing Opportunities among the Member Countries

Closing



COMCEC COVID-19 AGRICULTURE CONSULTATION MEETING

*“THE IMPACTS OF COVID-19
ON FOOD SECURITY AND AGRICULTURE IN THE OIC MEMBER STATES”
(June 30th, 2020)*

PROGRAMME **(Ankara Time - GMT+3)**

- 13.15 – 13.30** **Joining the Online Meeting**
(The invitation link will be provided by the CCO)
- 13.30 - 13.35** **Recitation from the Holy Quran**
- 13.35 - 13.40** **Opening Remarks**
- Moderator:** *Prof. Dr. Hami ALPAS*
Consultant
COMCEC Coordination Office
- 13.40 - 13.55** **1. General Overview of the Impacts of COVID-19 on Food Security and Agriculture**
• *Presentation: Mr. Maximo Torero CULLEN*
Chief Economist/Assistant Director-General
Economic and Social Development Department
FAO
- 13.55 - 14.10** *Question & Answer (Q&A)*
2. COVID-19’s Impacts on Agriculture and Food Security in the OIC Member Countries
- 14.10-14.25** • *Presentation: Mr. Fahman FATHURRAHMAN*
Researcher
Economic and Social Research Department
SESRIC
- 14.25- 14.40** • *Presentation: Ambd. Hameed OPELOYERU*
Deputy Director General (Programmes)
Islamic Organization for Food Security (IOFS)

- 14.40- 14.50** • *Presentation: Mr. Nur ABDI*
Manager
Agriculture Infrastructure Division
Islamic Development Bank (IsDB)
- 14.40- 15.00** *Q&A*
- 15.00- 15.30** **3. Member Country Experiences in Tackling COVID-19 Crisis in the Area of Agriculture and Food Security**
- 15.30-15.45** *Q&A*
- 15.45-16.30** **4. Exploring Capacity Building and Experience Sharing Opportunities among the Member Countries**
- 16.30- 16.45** **Closing Remarks**

Annex III

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS COMCEC COVID-19 AGRICULTURE CONSULTATIVE MEETING

A. MEMBER COUNTRIES OF THE OIC

PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF ALGERIA

- Ms. MALIKA FADILA KORICHI HAMANA

Director of Organic Farming, Labelling and the Promotion of Agricultural Productions, Agriculture and Rural Development, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development

REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN

- Mr. NAMIQ SHALBUZOV

Deputy Director, Ministry of Agriculture

- Mr. ELKHAN MIKAYILOV

Advisor to the Chairman, Food Safety Agency

REPUBLIC OF BENIN

- Mr. COSME ZINSE

Focal Point Monitoring and Evaluation of the Directorate in charge of Plant Production, Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries

BRUNEI DARUSSALAM

- Mr. KASUMAWATI MD. JAAFAR

Senior Livestock Husbandry Officer, Ministry Of Primary Resources and Tourism

ARAB REPUBLIC OF EGYPT

- Mr. MAHMOUD KHALLAF

Chief Researcher, Agricultural Research Center - Agricultural Economics Research Institute

- Mr. HAYTHAM ABDELGHANY

Commercial Counselor, Consulate General in Istanbul

REPUBLIC OF GABON

- Mr. FERNAND-CYRILLE YALIS

First Secretary

REPUBLIC OF INDONESIA

- Mr. ADE CANDRADIJAYA

Director, Ministry of Agriculture

- Mr. MOHAMAD ZAENI TASRIPIN

Expert, Ministry of Agriculture

HASHEMITE KINGDOM OF JORDAN

- Ms. NADA AL FRIHAT

Head of Organization Division, Ministry of Agriculture

MALAYSIA

- Mr. MOHD FAIZAL HARUN

Undersecretary, Ministry Of Agriculture and Food Industry

REPUBLIC OF MALI

- Mr. MAHAMADOU NAMORI KEITA

Agro-Economist Engineer, Ministry of Agriculture

KINGDOM OF MOROCCO

- Mr. LARBI TOUMI

Agro Socio Economist, Ministry of Agriculture, Maritime Fisheries, Rural Development, Waters and Forests

REPUBLIC OF MOZAMBIQUE

- Mr. GUILHERMINA SALVADOR RAFAEL MATIQUITE

Deputy Director, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development

THE STATE OF PALESTINE

- Mr. SAMER TITI

Director of Planning and Policies, Ministry of Agriculture

STATE OF QATAR

- Mr. MASUD JARALLAH ALMARRI

Director, Ministry of Municipality and Environment

- Ms. SARA ALMALKI

Assistant Director, Ministry of Municipality and Environment

REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE

- Mr. SAHR JOSEPH KAIFINEH

Senior Planning and Budget Officer, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry

REPUBLIC OF SURINAME

- Mr. ABYGAIL SADI

Senior Officer, Ministry Of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and Fisheries

REPUBLIC OF TOGO

- Ms. ANANI KODJAGAN KPADENOU

Director of Vegetables Department, Ministry of Agriculture

REPUBLIC OF TURKEY

- Mr. İLHAN AYDIN

Deputy Director General, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry

- Mr. ÖZLEM YÜCE ALTINBAŞ

Coordinator, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry

- Ms. ŞULE ÖZGE İMAMOĞLU

Head of Department, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry

- Mr. AYKUT ORDUKAYA

EU Expert, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry

- Mr. AYKUT ORDUKAYA

EU Expert, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry

REPUBLIC OF UGANDA

- Mr. CHARLES MUKAMA

Senior Veterinary Inspector, Ministry Of Agriculture

B. THE OIC SUBSIDIARY ORGANS

STATISTICAL, ECONOMIC, SOCIAL RESEARCH AND TRAINING CENTER FOR ISLAMIC COUNTRIES (SESRIC)

- Mr. MAZHAR HUSSAIN

Director, SESRIC

- Mr. ONUR ÇAĞLAR

Acting Director, SESRIC

- Mr. FAHMAN FATHURRAHMAN

Researcher, SESRIC

ISLAMIC ORGANIZATION FOR FOOD SECURITY (IOFS)

- H.E. Amb. HAMEED OPELOYERU

Deputy Director General, Islamic Organization for Food Security

C. SPECIALIZED ORGANS OF THE OIC

ISLAMIC DEVELOPMENT BANK (IsDB)

- Mr. NUR ABDI

Agriculture Infrastructure Division Manager, Islamic Development Bank

- Mr. SABRİ ER

Trade Specialist, Islamic Development Bank

D. AFFILIATED ORGANS OF THE OIC

STANDARDS AND METROLOGY INSTITUTE FOR ISLAMIC COUNTRIES (SMIC)

- Ms. EMEL GONC

Executive Assistant

E. OTHER INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

FAO

- Mr. MÁXIMO TORERO CULLEN

Chief Economist/Assistant Director-General, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

- Mr. SUMITER BROCA

Senior Policy Officer, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

- Mr. MEHMET TARAKÇIOĞLU

Senior Programme Support Specialist

-Mr. BURAK ÖZ

Junior Technical Officer for Policy and Food Security

F. COMCEC COORDINATION OFFICE

- Mr. EMİN SADIK AYDIN

Director General

-Mr. Fatih ÜNLÜ

Deputy Director General

- Mr. SELÇUK KOÇ

Head of Department

- Mr. DENİZ GÖLE

Head of Department

- Mr. MEHMET ASLAN

Head of Department

- Ms. AYLİN ŞENOL GÜN

Expert