

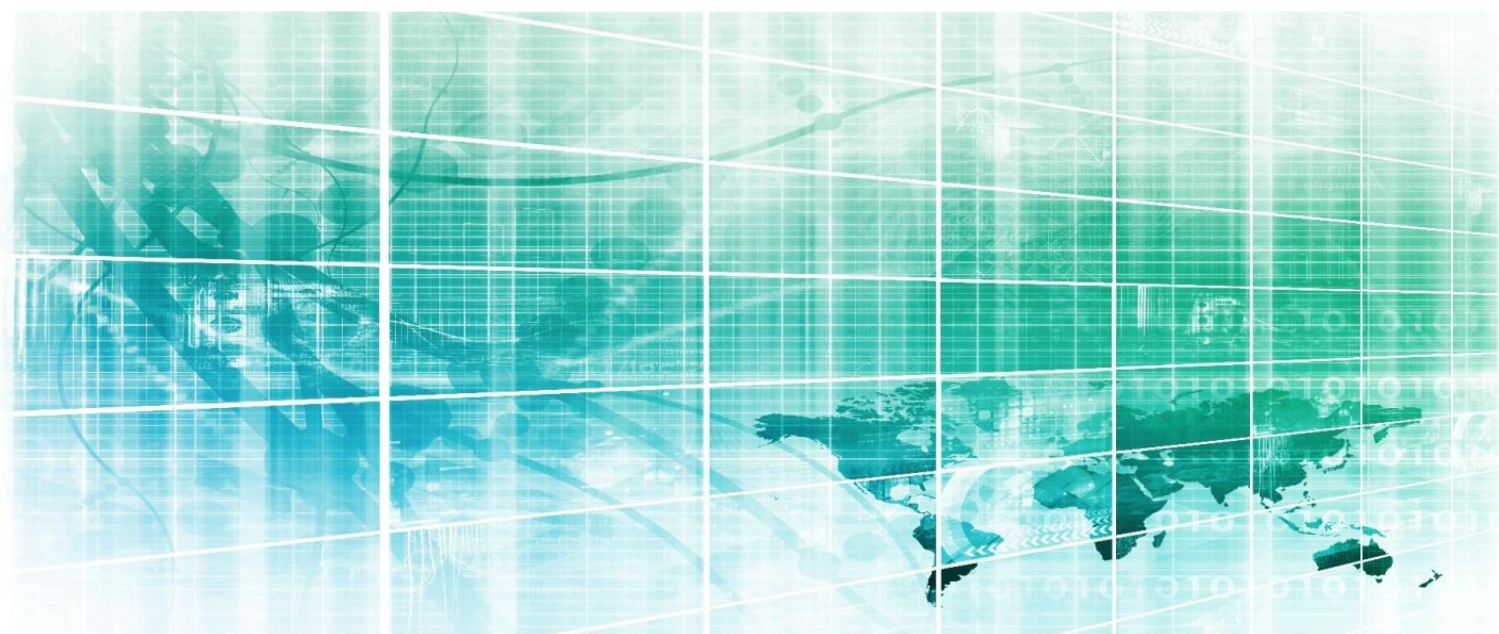


**COMCEC**

**Standing Committee  
for Economic and Commercial Cooperation  
of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (COMCEC)**

## **Proceedings of the 11<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the COMCEC Agriculture Working Group**

### **“Improving Agricultural Market Performance: Developing Agricultural Market Information Systems”**



**COMCEC COORDINATION OFFICE**

**April 2018**



**Standing Committee  
for Economic and Commercial Cooperation  
of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (COMCEC)**

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE 11<sup>TH</sup> MEETING OF THE COMCEC  
AGRICULTURE WORKING GROUP**

**ON**

**“IMPROVING AGRICULTURAL MARKET PERFORMANCE:  
DEVELOPING AGRICULTURAL MARKET INFORMATION SYSTEMS”**

**(22 February 2018, Ankara, Turkey)**

**COMCEC COORDINATION OFFICE**

**April 2018**

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## Introduction

The 11<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the COMCEC Agriculture Working Group was held on February 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2018 in Ankara, Turkey with the theme of “Improving Agricultural Market Performance: Developing Agricultural Market Information Systems”.

The Meeting was attended by the representatives of 14 Member States which have notified their focal points for the Agriculture Working Group. Representatives of COMCEC Coordination Office, Islamic Development Bank, SESRIC, Deniz Bank and Eastern African Grain Council (EAGC) have also attended the Meeting.<sup>1</sup>

At the outset, the representative of the COMCEC Coordination Office (CCO) made a presentation on “COMCEC Agriculture Outlook 2017”. During the presentation of the COMCEC Agriculture Outlook 2017, the participants were informed about the general overview of agriculture sector in the OIC Member Countries through focusing macro agricultural indicators.

Afterward, the Meeting considered the research report titled “Improving Agricultural Market Performance: Developing Agricultural Market Information Systems” which was commissioned specifically for the 11<sup>th</sup> Meeting with a view to enriching the discussions.

The Representatives of the Member States shared their experiences, achievements and challenges in improving market performance through developing agricultural market information systems in their respective countries. The participants had the chance to discuss the policy options for enhancing the cooperation in this important field in a moderation session. The Room Document based on the findings of the research report submitted to the Agriculture Working Group Meeting and the answers of the Member Countries to the policy questions sent to the Member States by the CCO were the main inputs for the discussions during moderation session. As an outcome, the Meeting has agreed on a set of policy recommendations on improving agricultural Market Information Systems in the member countries.

Lastly, Deniz Bank and Eastern African Grain Council (EAGC) have made a presentation on their experiences with regards to agricultural Market Information Systems.

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<sup>1</sup> The list of participants is attached as Annex 1.



## 1. Opening Session

In line with the tradition of the Organization of the Islamic Cooperation (OIC), the Meeting commenced with the recitation from the Holy Quran. Afterwards, Mr. Burak KARAGÖL, Director at the COMCEC Coordination Office welcomed all participants. Briefly informing the participants about the Programme of the Meeting, Mr. KARAGÖL invited Mr. Charles MUKAMA, Senior Veterinary Inspector, Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries of republic of Uganda, to chair the Meeting. Mr. MUKAMA welcomed all the participants to the 11<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Agriculture Working Group.

## 2. The COMCEC Agriculture Outlook 2017

Mr. Mehmet TARAKCIOĞLU, Agriculture Sector Specialist from the COMCEC Coordination Office summarized the key features of COMCEC Agriculture Outlook 2017 which was published in September 2017.

Mr. TARAKCIOĞLU informed the participants about the key features of COMCEC Agriculture Outlook 2017 through summarizing main progress made from the previous Outlook period. His presentation on Agriculture Outlook 2017 outlined the state of agriculture in the OIC member countries in terms of macro agricultural indicators of agricultural value added, employment and trade, sector indicators of land use, production and productivity and undernourishment and domestic food price volatility as indicators of the state of food security.

He briefed on the main structure of the Outlook and further emphasized that the trade section was revised and new series of data was added for the details of partner countries and main trade items in exports and imports. He also reminded that a new section on fisheries production statistics was introduced.

Regarding progress in terms of macro agricultural indicators, he expressed that over the last three decades, OIC's agricultural value added increased to 653 Billion US Dollar with a share of 21 percent from 186 Billion US Dollar with a share of 16 percent but that a relatively stable average 20 percent share points to a lower performance compared to the world average. In terms of OIC groups, he emphasized that more than half of the value added in 2015 was made by Asian Group while African Group was the one that increased its share most among these three groups. Arab Group's contribution was shown remaining stable around 22 percent. He also reminded that there was an overall increase in the level of the value added in parallel to the rest of the world but the change was most striking in case of African Group's performance.

Furthermore, Mr. TARAKCIOĞLU stressed that the value-added ranking of top ten country did not change over the year but drew attention to the fact that there was a diverse structure of agriculture among these top ten countries where, in 2015, the share of agricultural value added is the highest in Sudan with 28.4 percent while Iran, Malaysia and Turkey were only three countries whose share was below 10 percent. Regarding trends in growth rates, he also showed that over the last decades, OIC countries with such diverse agricultural economies succeeded to surpass average world growth rates which in terms of both agricultural and overall economy, except Asian Group countries' growth rates remained around world average.

Mr. TARAKCIOĞLU pointed out to a continuous gap between the OIC and world averages in both agricultural employment and rural population although they showed a constant decreasing trend compared to their past performance and further said that an average agricultural employment with a share of around 35.8 percent in 2015 pointed to the importance of agriculture as a key driver for development. Moreover, Mr. TARAKCIOĞLU informed the participants that the figures showed a rapid increase at the levels of both exports and imports over the last two decades but seemed to be stabilized around 65 percent exports/imports ratio in post-2010 period because of slower growth and even decrease in world's export markets in the last 3 years. He further iterated that with this performance the OIC's trade deficit mainly came from the trade of Arab Group while Asian Group enjoyed a trade surplus in addition to the insignificant level of trade deficit of African Group.

Regarding broad trade structure of the OIC in terms of composition of trade partners and main products, he reminded that new series of disaggregated trade data introduced into Outlook 2017 showed that the African Group countries have trade networks with partner countries in other regions with lowest intra-OIC trade share in its exports, 7.4 percent while Arab and Asian Groups



have intra-OIC trade shares of 46 and 11 percent. The Asian Group also appeared to have a higher share of its own regional exports share of 36 percent. He also took attention to a similar pattern in case of OIC's imports. With these figures, he pointed out to the opportunity to increase intra-OIC trade integration. Furthermore, he showed that the product group of cereals was the top item in OIC's imports of different group of countries followed by dairy and meat products. He also discussed the case of exports where OIC groups have their own regional specialty items as top exports items, namely cocoa for African, nuts for Arab and edible oils for Asian members of OIC.

Mr. TARAKCIOĞLU informed the participants that although there was a significant amount of production increase in OIC countries, the rest of the world also had high growth performance which led to a relatively stable share of OIC in world production over the last decade. He also reiterated that OIC countries with almost one-third of all agricultural area and one-fifth of the arable area indicated a great potential for further development efforts.

Mr. TARAKCIOĞLU briefed on the state of fisheries production and said that first time the statistics on fisheries were introduced into Outlook. He touched upon the undergoing structural change in the fisheries production and further showed that there was a dramatic increase in fish farming while global capture fisheries production level remained stable and unchanged. He showed that the steep line for the share of OIC in global production indicated a better performance of OIC fisheries sector compared to the rest of the world.

Afterwards, Mr. TARAKCIOĞLU stated that the OIC member countries' land productivity showed a point of convergence to the world average in 2014 while labor productivity started to lag behind the world average after 2010 as a result of the relatively higher rate of increase in the rest of the world. But, he reminded that the labor productivity rate of change was still on growth track despite relatively being lower than world average. He also stressed that the same trend of starting to lag behind was also the case for the growth in individual staple crops productivity.

Mr. TARAKCIOĞLU also briefed the participants that over the last two decades, the OIC member countries reduced the nominal number of undernourished people from around 187 Million people to 169 Million people with a share of 9,8 percent, decreased from 13 percent , in total number of undernourished people in the OIC member countries but a relatively higher decrease in the rest of the world average led the share of OIC in the total number of undernourished people in the world slightly increased.

Mr. TARAKCIOĞLU concluded his presentation emphasizing the importance of stable domestic food price volatility for the state of food security, especially for the stability dimension of food security which affected the other dimensions of security, availability, access and utilization as well. He showed that OIC countries had diverse trends of domestic food price volatility which also showed an opportunity for collaboration in agricultural and food policy approximation among OIC member countries.

### Questions and Remarks

**Question:** In order to get benefit more from Outlook Study, it should have quantitative targets and trend analysis which could incorporate the many policy targets as well.

**Answer:** Such an endeavor to include quantitative analysis with projections requires high-quality data availability and strong and continuous commitments for statistical analysis capacity. It would be considered to be a part of prospective Outlook publications in parallel to progress in appropriate data availability and development of respective statistical capacities.

**Question:** What independent variable is used for domestic food price volatility index?



**Answer:** It is an index prepared by FAO and defined as the standard deviation (SD) of the deviations from the trend over the previous five years.

**Question:** Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are also important for OIC member countries and could they be a part of Outlook?

**Answer:** Given the current status that many countries are not ready to report on these goals, all related UN agencies support such capacity development and preparedness efforts of the countries and therefore, in parallel to the progress made in that area, a section on achievements of OIC's member countries on SDGs would be incorporated into Outlook.

### **3. Improving Agricultural Market Performance: Development Agricultural Market Information Systems**

#### **3.1. Overview of Agricultural MIS in the World and the OIC Region**

Dr. Gideon ONUMAH, Natural Research Institute, made a presentation to present a general overview of agricultural MIS in the world and in OIC countries. At the beginning of his presentation, Dr. Onumah pointed out that most developing countries prioritized setting up market institutions such as market information systems (MIS) after liberalizing the agriculture sector in the 1970-80s.

He underlined that MIS is defined in the study as systems which are set up to collect, process/analyze and disseminate market-related information to actors in agricultural value chains, including farmers, traders, processors and financiers. The information provided is to improve the quality of decisions by the actors regarding production, trade and investments and should, therefore not be perceived as being limited to publication of price data. Also required are: analysis of price and supply trends; monitoring output forecasts, demand and stock levels; weather reports as it affects supply; and also tracking quality premiums as that can influence postharvest handling and marketing decisions.

Dr. ONUMAH stated that, over the past three decades, MIS in most countries followed a similar trajectory of advancing from mainly government-run First Generation MIS (1GMIS) to the more ICT-intensive Second Generation (2GMIS). Two typical examples of 1GMIS cited are the Zambia Agricultural Market Information System (ZAMIS) and the MIS run by the Federal Agricultural Marketing Authority (FAMA) in Malaysia. He expressed that in both cases the focus on staple food products traded mainly in the domestic markets. They are operated by governments, mainly by the Ministries of Agriculture and report wholesale and retail prices from a large number of rural and urban markets. Dissemination is mainly via government-owned radio and television broadcasts as well as national print media. Paper-based transmission of primary price data caused to delays in dissemination of prices, often making them outdated and discouraging uptake by most stakeholders except by policymakers. High dissemination costs also undermined the sustainability of 1GMIS.

Dr. ONUMAH argued that the advances in ICT catalyzed the evolution to 2GMIS, making it possible to speed up collection, transmission and dissemination of information; enhance data accuracy by minimizing human intervention in data entry and processing; and improving prospects for sustainability by making cost-recovery possible through charging user fees. He added that it also made trend analysis possible and led to increased participation by private sector providers as well as regional and international monitoring platforms. Dr. ONUMAH highlighted that most of the early government-run 1GMIS such as ZAMIS and the FAMA-operated MIS have transited to the typical 2GMIS model by adopting the relevant technology. It emerged from the cases from non-members and OIC member countries that the advance to 2GMIS has been beneficial, especially for governments in terms of policy actions and food security management. He mentioned that this is due in part to the inclusion of information crop output forecasts such as occurred in Ethiopia as noted below. However, the anticipated benefits to private sector stakeholders, especially farmers and traders, appears to be less tangible mainly because most private and government MIS continue to focus on collecting and disseminating price information, with little or no investment in trend analysis. Other identified gaps include lack of output forecasts and stock monitoring data which are critical in assessing the supply situation and projecting future prices.

Dr. ONUMAH expressed that the exceptions to the above include cases such as the national MIS in Ethiopia for food staples traded in the domestic market. A key feature of this system is that it takes

advantage of improved output forecasting technology operated by the Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWSNET) to anticipate supply shortfalls. He added that food shortages are managed through a well-structured coordinating forum involving representatives of government and donor agencies. Other MIS rely on international/regional market monitoring systems such as the Agricultural Markets Information System (AMIS), which was set up with support from the G20 and the Mediterranean Agricultural Markets Information Network (MED-AMIN) which provide valuable global and regional supply information mainly used in managing food security.

Dr. ONUMAH briefed the participants that Ethiopia's national MIS for food grains is distinctly different from the system run by the Ethiopia Commodity Exchange (ECX), which focuses on reporting prices discovered through trading on the exchange floor. He underlined that a similar situation exists in Malaysia where, in addition to the FAMA-run MIS, Bursa Malaysia runs an information system which reports spot and futures prices from its trading floor as well as information on output forecasts, stock levels and utilization of fresh oil palm products generated by the Palm Oil Registration and Licensing Authority (PORLA), a government agency. The MIS run by South Africa's Johannesburg Stock Exchange (JSE/SAFEX), which mainly trades food grains for the domestic market, consists of futures prices from trading as well as output forecasts, stock levels and utilization generated by a government agency, the South Africa Grain Information Service (SAGIS), which is part of the Ministry of Agriculture. He touched upon that new 2GMIS models are also emerging, including ESOKO in West/Central Africa, Manobi with its headquarters in Senegal but serving other West African countries as well as the platform developed by Deniz Bank in Turkey. These platforms use ICT to monitor market conditions as well as farm enterprise performance, hence providing information which enhances trade and finance transactions. The major challenge is the quality of price information as they tend to rely on data from interviewing traders rather than recorded transactions as is the case with commodity exchanges.

## Questions and Remarks

**Question:** How often data should be collected given that prices change over a period of time?

**Answer:** Prices should be collected throughout the year and not just during specific seasons and that information disseminated should not be limited to prices but also include trend analysis and output forecasts.

**Remarks:** Online data collection can be subjective, therefore field data collection is suggested. To identify "best practices" comparisons between systems at national and sub-regional levels will be more interesting than reviewing cases of sub-groups in the OIC. The price information should be reported for different levels in the value chain. There is a need to report differences in price levels for farmers and traders.

**Answer:** The methodology adopted was not limited to the online survey but also included a literature review and case studies in three countries (see below). The study did not focus on identifying differences between a range of national and/or regional MIS but rather on the generic features of the systems as they evolved from 1GMIS to the 2GMIS and beyond. Whilst an important objective of MIS is to empower farmers, this has not been achieved in most cases because prices are not based on transactions using standard measures and grades, creating major challenges in converting volumes related prices into weight-based prices and missing out on quality premium in most markets.

## 3.2. Selected Case Studies and Policy Recommendations

In the second presentation Mr. Ulrich KLEIH, Consultant / Marketing Economist at Natural Research Institute, presented the findings of the report on selected case studies namely Egypt (Arab Group), Indonesia (Asia Group) and Uganda (Africa Group). At the final part of the presentation, Dr. ONUMAH presented the policy recommendations.

### 3.2.1 Egypt

Mr. KLEIH stated that Egypt is an important producer, consumer and exporter of agricultural goods and the sector contributes around 16% to GDP and employs about 34% of all labor. He underlined that the main MIS is run by the Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reclamation and is linked to various projects such as Cotton Sector Promotion Programme (CSPP) and the Agricultural Transfer and Utilisation Project (ATUP). He added that there are also private MIS initiatives such as the Bashaier Network, which aims to promote digital trading through farmer groups. Mr. KLEIH briefed the participants that Egypt is a member of AMIS and MED-AMIN. He argued that an assessment of MIS in Egypt shows that smallholder farmers continue to be held back by limited access to reliable market information, a situation which is hampering planting and marketing decisions. He highlighted that this is due partly to under-investment in MIS and limited capacity among smallholder farmers to use up-to-date ICT to unlock huge marketing and financing opportunities which can be linked to MIS.

### 3.2.2 Indonesia

Mr. KLEIH stressed that Indonesia is a major producer of staple grains (e.g. rice, maize), livestock products (e.g. chicken, eggs, beef), horticultural crops (e.g. onions, chilies), estate crops (e.g. palm-oil, rubber, cocoa, coffee). It also has a long history of running donor-supported MIS dating back to the 1980s. He underlined that the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) runs the main MIS which reports farm gate and wholesale prices data collected by its field staff and displayed on the MoA website for a wide range of agricultural commodities. Mr. KLEIH added that the Ministry of Trade also provides retail prices from urban centers for selected commodities whilst the Bureau of Logistics (BULOG), a state-owned marketing board, displays agricultural commodity prices and data on stock levels (mainly for rice). The Badan Pusat Statistik (BPS or National Office of Statistics) coordinates MIS actions under specific legislation. MR. KLEIHH informed the participants that Indonesia is a member of AMIS and is, therefore, able to obtain vital global supply information. Donor agencies such as WFP also use output forecast and available price data to publish market trends, especially during the Ramadhan period when food security issues are paramount. He argued that these have evidently contributed to the more effective use of MIS for food security as well as sector policy management. However, most farmers rely on informal sources such as traders for price information. He mentioned that some private MIS service providers have launched e-commerce platforms to promote trade but the reliability of price data and available of suitable IT equipment are hampering uptake by farmers.

### 3.2.3 Indonesia

Mr. KLEIH highlighted that Uganda is one of the trailblazers in MIS in Africa, has launched the first such platform, FOODNET, in 1993. He expressed that the country is a major food grain producer and exporter of commodities such as cotton and coffee. He touched upon that Uganda currently has a range of private MIS including FARMGAIN Africa, AGRINET and Infotrade. In addition, the government commodity marketing boards such as the Uganda Coffee Development Authority (UCDA) run 2GMIS which disseminates information on local market prices, export parity prices, local supply and output forecasts through e-mail, website and mobile SMS. Mr. KLEIH underlined

that Stakeholders can also access information from regional sources such as the Regional Agricultural Trade Intelligence Network (RATIN) which provides information on food crops traded in the regional market; regional prices, stock availability and product flows. Also available is FEWSNET which provides information on local market prices, regional prices, supply availability, regional produce flows and forecasts based on weather information. He added that these sources of information are used by donor agencies such as WFP to publish market monitoring reports. He stressed that no formal legislative or regulatory framework exists in Uganda for MIS, which has partly contributed to a large number of MIS providers in the country without significantly driving up uptake among key market players such as farmers, traders and financial institutions. He claimed that that lack of effective market institutions to facilitate trading based on standardized quality and measures makes it difficult to generate reliable price information. This partly explains the low level of uptake of MIS by market players, which in turn is frustrating efforts to promote institutions such as WRS and a commodity exchange.

### 3.2.4 Conclusions and Policy Recommendations

Dr. ONUMAH underlined that the study shows that deploying ICT to catalyze the evolution from 1GMIS to 2GMIS speeded up data transmission and processing and also reduce the cost of dissemination. He added that advances in technology have improved capacity to generate information on crop forecasts and monitoring of supplies at regional and international levels, especially by international and regional market monitoring platforms. He highlighted that the improved quality of supply information is enhancing food security management by governments, especially where effective coordination systems have been instituted as is the case in Ethiopia and Indonesia. He argued that entry by private sector providers as well as professional organisations e.g. farmers' organisations have also created opportunities to better tailor services to the needs of non-government actors but uptake remains low in most countries, except where price data is linked to structured markets such as commodity exchanges where trading is based on defined grading and quantity standards. Based on the foregoing, the following recommendations were proposed:

- a. The design of MIS should take into account the needs of stakeholders (policymakers and others e.g. farmers, traders and financial intermediaries), requiring an assessment of the needs of these players. Furthermore, the focus should not only be on disseminating price information but also publishing trend analysis and output forecasts as well as monitoring stocks and performance of farm enterprises.
- b. Effective coordination systems should be set up to ensure the quality of information and concerted action in responding to food supply emergencies (as is the case in Ethiopia and Indonesia).
- c. Food security policies should be aligned to agricultural trade and market development policies and initiatives to avoid undermining the development of MIS and other market institutions.
- d. The development of MIS and other market institutions and risk-management tools should be linked in order to optimize the mutually-reinforcing benefits from such institutions.
- e. Based on "public good" arguments, governments should support the development of effective MIS.

He stated that in terms of monitoring MIS the following are recommended: regular review of user satisfaction; assessment of the quality, relevance and timeliness of information provided; analyzing cost-efficiency of service provision and effectiveness of governance of the system; and evaluation of the impact of MIS on the development of agricultural markets, despite apparent attribution challenges.

## 4. Policy Debate Session on the Agricultural MIS

The session was moderated by Mr. Sariyang M K JOBARTEH, Director General, The Government of The Gambia. At the beginning of the session, Mr. Selçuk KOÇ, Director at the CCO, made a short presentation on the responses of the Member Countries to the policy questions on agricultural MIS in the OIC Member Countries that were already sent by the CCO. Afterward, the policy recommendations provided in the room document were presented.

Later on, the participants expressed their views and comments on each policy recommendations. Following intensive discussions, the participants have agreed on the following policy recommendations:

- ✓ Designing Market Information Systems (MIS) through assessing and reviewing targeted stakeholders with a sustained budget support and an effective monitoring and evaluation framework.
- ✓ Building sufficient capacity for stock monitoring, trend analysis and forecasting as well as other relevant subjects beyond providing price information for a better functioning MIS.
- ✓ Linking MIS to other market-supporting institutions and/or other risk-management tools to increase the mutual benefits.
- ✓ Forming the necessary mechanisms/platforms for an improved coordination among the key stakeholders and ensuring the effective review of the quality of information provided.

The policy recommendations are attached to this report as Annex 4.

## 5. Utilizing the COMCEC Project Funding

Mr. Burak KARAGÖL, Director at the COMCEC Coordination Office, made a presentation on the COMCEC Project Funding introduced by the COMCEC Strategy. At the outset, Mr. KARAGÖL informed the participants about essentials of the COMCEC Project Funding. He mentioned that COMCEC Strategy has two instruments; working groups and project funding.

Mr. KARAGÖL continued his presentation by underlining the objectives of the COMCEC Project Funding. Mr. KARAGÖL stated that COMCEC Funded Projects can be in two different types as activity-based projects and research projects. He also touched upon the eligible activities under each type of project.

Mr. KARAGÖL underlined that topics of the funded projects should be in line with the COMCEC Strategy, Policy Recommendations adopted by the COMCEC Ministerial Session and Sectoral Themes published on the COMCEC website. He briefly informed the participants regarding the supported topics in Agriculture.

Mr. KARAGÖL shared brief information with participants regarding main characteristics of successful project proposals as well as previously funded projects. He concluded his presentation by informing participants on preparation process for project.

### Question(s) and Comment(s)

**Question:** Does CCO provide financing for preparation for project submission?

**Answer:** CCO doesn't provide financing for the project preparation process. The member countries should cover the expenses for preparation for project submission.

**Question:** What kind of projects are financed?

**Answer:** Mr. KARAGÖL underlined that there is not a limit with regards to the number of projects that the CCO can approve for any given year for the Financial Cooperation Working Group.



## 6. Member Country Presentations

In this section, member country representatives had a chance to present their experiences with regards to agricultural market information systems.

### 6.1. Malaysia

Mr. Mohd Anis Mohd YASIN, Deputy Director General, Federal Agricultural Marketing Authority (FAMA) made a presentation on FAMA's role in Malaysian agricultural marketing. He stated that the establishment of an efficient Market Information Division (MID) in FAMA is essential in order to provide reliable market information for the industry which is not only important for the formulation of a proper pricing policy and its successful implementation at a macro-level, but also for farmers to aid them in improving their marketing performance.

Mr. YASIN underlined that as the marketing agency for the Ministry of Agriculture, Malaysia, FAMA strives to provide accurate, adequate and timely information on prices and quantities of agriculture produces under FAMA's purview. This information is important to farmers as it will assist them in planning production and harvesting dates, and also give guidance on time, place and price at which to sell the product. It will also assist traders and buyers to source their supply at reasonable costs which should yield the best returns for all parties.

He stressed that information such as prices collected in intervals at the farm level, helps to alert the Government should there be any surplus or shortage of particular commodities in the market. Quick remedial actions could be taken by the Government to stabilize the market to avoid significant distortion.

Mr. YASIN expressed that the information provided by MID also helps their consumers. Through their research and reports, consumers can benefit from such information by the greater competition generated among the retailers and by a greater awareness of price conditions. The type of information needed by all persons includes market prices obtained at farm gate, wholesale and retail points. Export and import market information are also important for those venturing into international business opportunities.

Mr. YASIN highlighted that FAMA is yet to implement the system that tracks trading volumes which is an important aspect of Market Information Systems as they can be used to determine market prices through the demand versus supply equilibrium. The establishment of Trade Monitoring capabilities in our MID will be a priority as it will help to make the market more efficient and transparent. Once it is formed, the Division will be able to publish weekly information on price and volume of products which will be very useful for a continual assessment of market strategies, and this cumulative information on a monthly and annual basis can give good indications of the performance of the product over a period of time.

He argued that MID FAMA has proven to be an important contributor to the advancement of the industry. FAMA envisages that in the future, the role of MID providing market information will see continuous improvement in order to support the steady growth of the industry.

### 6.2. Morocco

Ms. Fatima Zahra ELMIRI, Head of Bilateral and Technical Cooperation, Ministry of Agriculture of Morocco made a presentation on the experience of Morocco with regards to improving the performance of the agricultural markets. Ms. ELMIRI determined the overall objective of the system as:

- The ASAAR information system, set up by the Moroccan Ministry of Agriculture, is a system designed to make the market more transparent, thereby improving expectations, trade-offs and decision-making by economic actors.

During her presentation, specific objectives of the system were mentioned as below:

- The spreading of agricultural prices at the right time
- Better integration of the value chain, as well as an improvement in quality and a more "equitable" distribution of value-added, creates throughout the value chain.
- Provided the administration with important information on local market conditions.

She also gave information regarding the technical components of the system. Ms. ELMIRI underlined that Assar is an information system that collects, transmits and disseminates price data. This solution consists of three parts:

- A database for storing and processing collected prices and an administration application. This database is fed automatically by the data transmitted via the investigators of the Department of Agriculture.
- A mobile app for phones dedicated to the collection and transmission of data via the 3G / 4G or GPRS network.
- A dynamic website accessible to the public allowing the display of daily prices, price history, analysis of different markets.

Ms. ELMIRI stressed that since the first version launching in September 2011, the number of visitors on ASAAR website continues to increase and reached more than 60 thousand visitors a year. Today, many innovations have been introduced on the ASAAR website. With a new look and more features, ASAAR gives more information and allows more analysis with more ease of reading and more user-friendliness at the research level.

Ms. ELMIRI underlined that the new features planned for the next version of ASSAR (2018-2019) will focus on adding the following features:

- **Creating an alert and notification module**

This module will automatically generate and send notifications to users to inform them about the unusual behavior of prices of an agricultural product in a defined area and within a specific time range. This module uses data sent in real time by the Department's investigators.

- **Creating an automatic reporting module**

This module will allow the automation of periodic reporting on given products. The produced reports will be generated automatically at a given frequency and sent by email to a list of recipients.

- **Price Publication Mobile App**

The purpose of the ASSAR mobile app is to allow the public to consult different information on the prices of agricultural products in a more convenient way via smartphones. It contains the items (i) the "Stock Exchange" of prices for agricultural products (ii) an interface for publishing the supply and demand for agricultural products and (iii) a news and watch area.

### 6.3. Oman

Mr. BAQIR AL LAWATI, Director of Agricultural Marketing Information and Studies, Ministry of Agriculture, made a presentation on OMAN's experience on Agricultural MIS.

At the beginning of his presentation, MR. AL LAWATI shared general information on OMAN's geographical location, population and economy. The major crops grown in Oman are vegetables (tomatoes, cucumber, potatoes, watermelon, and okra), fruits (dates, coconut, lemon, mango, and banana), field crops (wheat, barley, maize) and fodders (alfalfa, rhodes grass, sorghum). Besides, goats, sheep, cattle, and camels are widely raised.

He mentioned that in general, there are around 62 agriculture markets (For Agricultural & Livestock Products) distributed in different provinces of Oman. Al Mawaleh Market is the only Agriculture Central Market for Vegetables & Fruits, located in Muscat governorate, with an area more than 33 thousand square meters, and cold storage capacity around 15 thousand tons.

Mr. AL LAWATI highlighted that major challenges of the agriculture sector in Oman are derived from natural factors and topographical conditions. The main challenges are rising temperatures, desertification of soil, declining groundwater resources, scanty rainfall, salinity affecting available soil and water, low productivity of land and water use, and relatively, high post-harvest losses. The government plays a key role to overcome of these challenges and reduce the effect of the mentioned risks.

He touched upon that current market performance in the Sultanate of Oman based on local and imported agricultural fresh products prices. Al Mawaleh Central Market of Fruits and Vegetables, where prices are recorded on daily bases except on official holidays, established a price database of local and imported agricultural fresh products. It prepares periodic reports on trade status of agricultural products based on trends of the collected prices, publishes and distributes the reports to beneficiaries on the ministry's official website ([www.maf.gov.om](http://www.maf.gov.om)), its social media accounts ([agrifishoman](https://www.facebook.com/agrifishoman)), and the Public Authority of Consumer Protection.

Mr. AL LAWATI underlined that the long-term strategy of the Agriculture sector, Oman is looking ahead to develop Agriculture Market Information Network (AMIN), and promote the different communication channels for best market performance and integration, by using new technologies available in Oman for approaching farmers and other stakeholders in agricultural markets in various governorates and province in Oman.

#### 6.4. Palestine

Mrs. Hiba Abbas ALLAN, Head of IT Division, Ministry of Agriculture of the State of Palestine made a presentation about the MIS functioning in Palestine. First, she gave a brief about the agricultural sector in Palestine and some indicators and facts. Then, she stated that the General Directorate of Marketing (DGM) under the Ministry of Agriculture needed a database that is capable of monitoring supply, demand and prices of agricultural products with the aim of informing policy decisions. She added that the MOA of Palestine has been cooperating with FAO to build this monitoring system.

Mrs. Hiba ALLAN pointed out that the market information system that has been built in Palestine is a web based application run by Ministry of Telecom & Information. She indicated that the system includes the information about imports from Israel, imports from rest of the world via Israel and Jordan, exports to Israel, to the rest of the world via Jordan, to the rest of the world via Israel, local production, local price of agricultural output and local consumption.

She underlined that District Marketing Departments have a crucial role in collecting the data from the field through receiving export or import forms from the producers or importers and transmitting them to the DGM for reporting. She stated the similar procedure is applied to the local production. She added that the companies which make imports from the countries other than Israel directly start import process through the DGM and DGM produces the required data and reports it accordingly.

Mrs. ALLAN indicated main limitations in the MIS in Palestine including human capital, hardware and software equipment etc. She mentioned about insufficient Staff, lack of computers, printers, networks at the district-level departments. Moreover, she stated that the licensed copies of software are too expensive to be purchased and updated regularly. She also attracted the attention of the audience to the system security.

Mrs. ALLAN concluded her presentation with some recommendations such as enhancing human resource including IT staff, improving the MIS capacity and speed and also the usage of cloud servers for system security.

### 6.5. Qatar

Mr. Masoud ALMARRI Director, Ministry of Municipality and Environment, made a presentation on Agricultural Marketing System in Qatar. He mentioned that local farmers give up cultivating vegetables and instead produce green fodder because of the difficulty in marketing local vegetables. For this reason, some initiatives are run in Qatar for marketing local vegetables such as Local Products Yards, Date Palm Marketing Program, and Marketing Program of Premium Qatari Vegetables.

He stated that during the yards period there are many activates such as honey festival and flowers festival etc. He added that date palm festival is also organized to promote date palm marketing. In addition, the ministry purchases around 1000 Ton of date palm from local farmers every year.

Then Mr. ALMARRI touched upon the Marketing Program of Premium Qatari Vegetables and enumerated some requirements for the products to be included in the Program such as being in good packaging that is new and not used before. Also, the packaging box should have the logo of "Premium Qatari Vegetables" and the name of the farm should be shown on the packaging label.

At the end of his presentation, Mr. ALMARRI showed a table including the total quantity, value and average of local vegetables at all the markets in Qatar throughout the year.

### 6.6. Senegal

Dr. MBENE DIEYE FAYE Project Coordinator, Ministry of Agriculture, made a presentation on several MIS experiences of Senegal such as West African Network of Market Information Systems (WAMIS), AGRITRADE and ECOAGRIS.

Dr. FAYE mentioned that WAMIS is a regional MIS for West Africa which aims to provide to stakeholders up to date and accurate information on about 400 rural and urban agricultural commodity markets. He stated that ECOAGRIS is also a regional MIS run by the ECOWAS.

Afterward, he stated that AGRITRADE serves as a platform for discussion and debate about the latest critical trade issues. It also provides information about 60 agricultural products and the agricultural news are updated every month. The users can set regular alerts about the interested products and also read out executive briefs as well as special sector reports on bananas, cereals, cocoa, coffee, cotton etc.

Dr. FAYE also briefly informed the audience about two important MIS namely CSA and MANOBI operating in Senegal. As a government institution, CSA has been operating since early 1990's. The CSA collects and disseminates prices on several products, mainly on cereals. MANOBI is a private company providing market prices of products, mainly vegetables, to traders via SMS. He also pointed out that Senegal has also some MIS about specific products such as rice, onion and millet.

Then, Dr. FAYE touched upon some benefits of MIS such as facilitating spatial movement of products, enabling farmers to make appropriate production decision and also helping them to negotiate with a more powerful position.

He concluded his presentation by mentioning about some challenges of MIS such as cost-effectiveness and coverage of a huge number of products. He underlined that private sector has difficulty in running MIS cost-effectively while the public institutions cannot follow up all the products and thus do not include much information on a large number of products.

### 6.7. Turkey

Mr. BURCAK YUKSEL, Expert at Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock of Turkey, presented the MIS operating in Turkey.

Mr. YUKSEL firstly informed participants about Price Monitoring System for Agricultural Products (TÜFİS) which is coordinated and monitored by General Directorate of Agricultural Reform under the Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock. He stated that there are 100.000 data entries on daily basis in TÜFİS by various stakeholders. He showed the main stakeholders that are entering data such as Turkish Meat and Milk Board, Turkish Grain Board (TMO), General Directorate of Food and Control, General Directorate of Plant Production, General Directorate of Livestock, 81 provincial/district directorates under the Ministry; and widespread supermarkets. Mr. YUKSEL indicated that around 70 agricultural products are monitored under the TÜFİS.

Secondly, he touched upon TMO and briefly explained the main role of TMO such as regulating cereal markets and keeping extraordinary cereal stocks that can be used in the state of emergency etc. Then he showed a sample of daily market and commodity exchange prices bulletin of TMO.

Mr. YUKSEL lastly briefed the participants about the AMIS of which Turkey is a member. He stated that it was launched in 2011 by the G20 Ministers of Agriculture following the global food price hikes in 2007/08 and 2010. He pointed out that AMIS provides reliable, accurate, timely and comparable market and policy information focusing on four grains that are particularly important in international food markets namely wheat, maize, rice and soybeans.

In the last part of Turkey's presentation Mr. HARUN BOLUT, Manager at the Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey (TOBB), continued with the practices of TOBB contributing to the agriculture market as a kind of MIS. He informed the participants about the renewed physical capacity of the exchanges in many cities including service buildings of Commodity Exchanges as well as laboratories and also sales halls that are newly put into service. As an output of these developments, Mr. BOLUT stated that fast and effective product analysis can be made in the laboratories and formulation of trusted prices has become possible in the sales halls. Therefore, transaction volume has increased 14 times over since 2001.

Mr. BOLUT added that products are converted into electronic products receipts (ELÜS). ELÜS can be used as bonds for credit and can be traded at the product specialized exchange. He concluded that, with these improvements, electronic platform integration and simultaneous operation have been achieved between laboratory and sales hall, as well as between sales hall and licensed warehousing.

## 6.8. Uganda

Dr. MUKAMA CHARLES Senior Veterinary Inspector, Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries of Uganda made a presentation on market information structure in Uganda.

Dr. CHARLES started his presentation by giving general information about the agriculture sector in Uganda and production structure which is dominated by small-scale farmers with 90 percent. He also briefed the participants about the most severe risks in agriculture such as crop pest and diseases, post-harvest loss, price risk food and cash crops, droughts, floods etc.

Dr. CHARLES also briefly touched upon some challenges faced by farmers about marketing their products such as volatile and fluctuating prices and information asymmetry between producers and traders. Producers in the remote areas are rarely aware of prices of their products in the terminal markets.

Then, he shared some benefits of market information for producers, for example, up-to-date and current market information enable farmers to negotiate with traders from a position of greater strength. It also facilitates spatial distribution of products from rural areas to urban areas and between urban markets by sending clear price signals on quantities and varieties required. Another benefit, proper market information permits traders to make better decisions regarding the viability of intra and inter-seasonal storage.

Afterward, Dr. CHARLES informed the audience regarding the MIS providers operating in Uganda namely FARMGAIN Africa, AGRINET, Infotrade, Uganda Coffee Development Authority (UCDA), Regional Agriculture Trade Intelligence Network (RATIN), Betta Grains and FEWSNET. Among them only UCDA is a public institution while RATIN is run by an NGO and FEWSNET is operated by donors. Other systems are provided by private stakeholders. Each of these information systems offers a variety of market knowledge including market prices, stock availability, product flows, supply availability and output forecasts etc. These systems share the information with beneficiaries via their websites, email and SMS.

Dr. CHARLES also presented some challenges regarding the MIS, for example, the collection of market data and analysis is costly. Moreover, market data is dynamic, difficult to meet the need at the real time. Then he mentioned about some recommendations such as standardization of the price and data collection parameters to allow for both the private and public data to be comparative statistics. References to the data collected from both public and private mediums should also be provided. Information providers also need to ensure data verification and traceability.

Dr. CHARLES concluded his presentation by providing information on the investment opportunities in several sub-sectors including livestock, dairy and dairy products, meat products etc.



## **7. Perspective of International Institutions / National Market Institutions**

### **7.1. The Role of Regional Agricultural Trade Intelligence Network (RATIN) in the Activities of EAGC**

Ms. Janet NGOMBALU, Regional Programs Coordinator at Eastern Africa Grain Council (EAGC), made a presentation on the Regional Market Information System that operates in the Eastern Africa region known as 'Regional Agricultural Intelligence Network - RATIN'. She highlighted that RATIN is a production of the EAGC. The Eastern Africa Grain Council is a private Membership Organization of the Grain Sector Stakeholders, who include Farmers/Producers, Traders, Processors/Millers in the Eastern Africa region. EAGC focuses on all the grains and cereals that are traded in the region, which are the main staple food. She noted that EAGC is present in 10 Countries in the Eastern Africa region, namely, Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Rwanda, Burundi, Malawi, Zambia, Ethiopia, DRC Congo, and South Sudan. Therefore, RATIN - a market Information System covered all these countries, making RATIN the largest Market Information System in the region.

She noted that EAGC's main mandate is to facilitate Efficient and Effective Grain Trade in the Eastern Africa region and its vision is "to be a leading voice of the private sector in the grain industry in Africa" so as to positively influence policy and practice in the market development and trade facilitation in the Eastern Africa region.

Ms. Ngombalu underlined that the EAGC business model focuses on provision of services to facilitate investment in development of market infrastructure and institutions at national and regional level, strengthen business and financial linkages, increase access to market information, improve capacity to comply with regionally and internationally accepted standards, regulations and practices, and improve policy and regulatory processes that lead to better integrated markets and expanded grain trade in the region.

In order to achieve these goals, RATIN was formed by EAGG to address the main challenges in the grain sector such as:

1. Lack of marketing information to farmers, traders, processor of where to sell, where to buy and quantities available
2. Diverse information needs such as prices, the location of grain, quantities, quality of the grain, trade regulations, policies, trends and forecasts, production estimates, imports and export among other information needs

She added that without such kind of market information system, stakeholders in the grain sector would suffer and incur high costs trying to obtain the information for timely decision making. As a result, trade is affected and so are the incomes, food availability and increase price volatility. This leads to a disincentive for producers, traders and millers to invest in the grain sector, yet it provides the staple food for most of the people in the region.

Ms. Ngombalu informed the delegates that RATIN is an integrated Regional Marketing Information System that provides a one-stop-shop for market Information and Trade in the region. The importance of RATIN is that it provides timely and accurate market information, provides market transparency, provides recourse for arbitration among sector actors, reduces



risks for the farmers and traders, and it enhances price stability thus reducing transaction costs for the grain sector actors.

Ms. Ngombalu added that RATIN covers 8 countries in Eastern and Southern African countries where 38 sentinel grain markets and, 13 trade corridors are monitored for informal grain trade that account up to nearly 40-60% of total trade. RATIN focus on all strategic grains consumed in the region.

Ms. Ngombalu further informed the delegates that RATIN had conducted several user assessments in the past to make sure that it remains relevant to its users. The first survey was conducted by Ipsos Synovate, a leading market and opinion research agency in East Africa to assess the level of RATIN usage and satisfaction by stakeholders. The findings of the RATIN usage and satisfaction survey indicate high awareness and usage of RATIN products and services, including commodity prices, trade flow data, production data, and the food balance sheet data.

Ms. Ngombalu also added that another assessment was carried out in 2017 as utilization of RATIN. From the study, it was noted that the flagship product under RATIN which is market prices; resonated more with users as it ranked high in terms of importance (N=75, M=2.63, SD=0.632). Other services did not score as high as market prices, and this can be attributed to the interest of the cohort as information needs of a trader might not be the same as that of the farmer. Farmer's interests solely lie in getting returns on their investments.

Ms. Ngombalu reported that RATIN has the following Products and services and shared some details information on Regional Food Balance Sheet.

Ms. Ngombalu also added that as part of the Information and ICT based innovations EAGC developed a web-based trading platform known as GSOKO. GSOKO is a regional grain trading system a web-based/electronic system comprising of:

- A network of automated grain aggregation centers and certified warehouses;
- Virtual trading platform;
- Participating banks for payment settlement;
- Grain partners (grain sellers/buyers/warehouse operators - all regulated under EAGC.

At the final part of her presentation, Ms. NGAMBALU shared information on the key challenges and future plans of RATIN

### **Question(s) and Comment(s)**

**Question:** How the system has been funded?

**Answer:** EAGC RATIN has been supported over time by development partners who support EAGC to achieve its mandate such as the Swedish Development Cooperation (sida), USAID, among others

**Question:** How does EAGC RATIN operate in all the countries it covers?

**Answer:** EAGC has country Offices at the country level and in each country, EAGC has RATIN Monitors who are part of the data providers in country Markets and at Border points.

## 7.2. Finance- Integrated Agricultural MIS: The Case of Denizbank

Mr. Sinan KOSAVALI, Marketing Director at DenizBank, made a presentation on DenizBank's mobile agricultural application. At the outset, MR. KOSAVALI informed participants regarding DenizBank in particular agricultural activities of it.

Mr. KOSAVALI mentioned that after Tarıřbank merge, DenizBank should have chosen a path to compete with state banks and that path was not the loan costs. DenizBank had to be more innovative, practical and simple. He briefed the participants that DenizBank's flagship product, Producer Card, has been released in consequence of those thoughts and have become maybe the most important financial innovation of the business. He underlined that despite being a plastic credit card, Producer Card re-payment period is not monthly; it is annually. Those re-payment period is being specified according to the harvesting period of the farmer. He added that it is not permitted to use Producer Card for transactions of personal use; farmers can only shop from merchants selling agricultural inputs. So Producer Card; is not supporting consumption but production differently from all plastic cards. He expressed that Producer Card released by DenizBank 15 years ago and now 535K farmers use that card which is the % 25 of all registered farmers. He argued that this product is a game changer innovation of business.

Mr. KOSAVALI underlined that with the help of Producer Card and other specially designed products for farmer's requirements; DenizBank has the biggest market share among private banks. With more than 500k customers and more than 11 Billion Turkish Liras agricultural loans, DenizBank has managed to grow average % 64 each year in 15 years. He argued that the agricultural activities of the DenizBank; has forced 12 other banks to establish agricultural banking sector. Thanks to DenizBank, farmer's reached easy and cheap financial instruments and increased competition between the banks have multiplied the total loans 1100 times comparing to 2002.

Mr. KOSAVALI continued his presentation by sharing information on DenizBank's ultimate digital product namely "Deniz'den Topraęa". He stated that predicting the future of the business; DenizBank has determined the lack of valid, quick and effective information flow was a big problem in Turkey for agri business. DenizBank has tried a different type of channels to reach the farmers. After a field research; DenizBank has seen that Facebook could be a useful channel to reach the customers. In 2015 more than % 30 of the farmers were using the internet (now that rate is % 52) and % 90 of that audience had a Facebook account. Establishing in May 2016, DenizBank's Facebook page now has 100K followers and has a huge engagement rate. They have responded thousands of questions both from direct messages and comments of the posts.

He underlined that the success of Facebook page forced them to create a mobile app which they can give more personalized services and manage Q&A process better. Deniz'den Topraęa agricultural mobile application has been released in September 2017 and has been awarded "Best New Product of the Year" by EFMA in October 2017. The said mobile app stands at 5 different functions: Stock Market Prices, Farm Registration, Ask to Engineer, News, Rent A Tractor.

Mr. KOSAVALI highlighted that Market Prices function was not one of the key figures of the application but what they have seen after release; it was the most popular function. The software has an online connection with that stock markets and wholesale halls and prices appear on the mobile application automatically. Data connection is being completed each day and daily updated prices are presented to customers. For now, Denizbank just present 10 crops price of wholesale halls and 15 different products of stock market prices. But with the upcoming update, DenizBank is ready to present more than 100 agri products. He added that they are working on how they could manage to add livestock prices also.

MR. KOSAVALI mentioned that another important function is Farm Registration. User registers his farms via “Add a field (Tarla Ekle)” function by entering the necessary data such as agri product, type of product, field location, field size, time of harvest, type of soil, humidity of soil etc. Farm data is used to create advice for fertilization, irrigation, pest control and weather forecast warnings for each field and send push notifications to farmers for each process. Once all information is given for a field and “add a field” step has ended up, a farmer can control all fields in separated tabs for each field. Also, 3 days of the weather forecast is shown in that tab. He stressed that they really pay attention to that function; not only to make the farming process more productive and efficient but also to protect soil pollution against wrong use of fertilizers, water and pharmacy.

Mr. KOSAVALI also shared some information on “Ask To Engineer” function. With the help of that function, Farmers can ask questions about the problems they have encountered during their production or preparation processes. These questions are being answered by agricultural engineers and responses are delivered to users with notifications. There is also a “Message History” section under that function so that users may be able to see previous questions/unread answers/not yet answered questions. He stated that they have received more than 2000 questions via that function and their agri expert team responded all of them. Most popular issues are wheat (one of the important crop of Turkish farmers) and grant supports. While concluding his remarks, Mr. KOSAVALI shared user statistics with the participants.

#### **Question(s) and Comment(s)**

**Question:** Is there a fee for services provided by the application?

**Answer:** All the services provided by the application are free.

## Closing Remarks

The Meeting ended with closing remarks of Mr. Mukama CHARLES, Chairman of the Meeting and Mr. Burak KARAGÖL, Director at the COMCEC Coordination Office (CCO).

In his closing remarks, Mr. KARAGÖL informed the participants that the 12th meeting of the COMCEC Agriculture Working Group will be held on 20<sup>th</sup> September 2018 in Ankara with the theme of “Analysis of Agri-food Trade Structures to Promote Agri-food Trade Networks among the OIC Member Countries”. He mentioned that a research report will also be shared with the focal points and other participants at least one month before the aforementioned meeting.

## ANNEXES

### Annex 1: List of Participants

#### LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

#### 11TH MEETING OF THE AGRICULTURE WORKING GROUP

(22 February 2018)

##### A. MEMBER COUNTRIES OF THE OIC

##### ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF AFGHANISTAN

- Mr. NOORULLAH STANIKZAI  
Deputy Director, Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock
- Mr. AHMAD FARIDON KAKAR  
APP Advisor, Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock

##### PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF ALGERIA

- Mr. M'HAMED TIFOURI  
Director, Ministry of Agriculture, Rural Development and Fisheries
- Mr. SEBABIL CHOUTHAT  
Agronomy State Engineer, Ministry of Agriculture, Rural Development and Fisheries

##### ARAB REPUBLIC OF EGYPT

- Mr. AMR SELIM  
Counsellor, Deputy Chief of Mission, Embassy of Egypt in Ankara

##### REPUBLIC OF GAMBIA

- Mr. SARIYANG M K JOBARTEH  
Director General, the Government of the Gambia

##### MALAYSIA

- Dr. HANISAH HUSSIN  
Undersecretary of Marketing and Export Division, Ministry of Agriculture and Agro-Based Industry Malaysia (MOA)
- Mr. MOHD ANIS MOHD YASIN  
Deputy Director General, Federal Agricultural Marketing Authority (FAMA)
- Ms. NORHAZLIN ESKAKH

Principal Assistant Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture and Agro-Based Industry Malaysia  
(MOA)

#### **KINGDOM OF MOROCCO**

- Mr. FARESS YAHYA  
Head of Statistics Service of the Vegetal Subsector, Ministry of Agriculture
- Ms. FATIMA ZAHRA ELMIRI  
Head of Bilateral and Technical Cooperation, Ministry of Agriculture
- Ms. NAILA HIDOUR  
Counsellor for Economic Affairs, Embassy of Morocco in Ankara

#### **SULTANATE OF OMAN**

- Mr. BAQIR AL LAWATI  
Director of Agricultural Marketing Information and Studies, Ministry of Agriculture
- Mr. KHASIB SULAIYM SALIM AL MAANI  
Director of Agriculture and Livestock Research, Ministry of Agriculture

#### **THE STATE OF PALESTINE**

- Mr. SAMER ALTEETI  
Director of Policies and Planning, Ministry of Agriculture
- Ms. HIBA ABBAS  
Head of IT Division, Ministry of Agriculture

#### **STATE OF QATAR**

- Mr. MASOUD ALMARRI  
Director, Ministry of Municipality and Environment
- Mr. AHMAD ALKUWARI  
Researcher, Ministry of Municipality and Environment

#### **KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA**

- Dr. RAJAH AL RAGES  
Economist, Ministry of Environment, Water and Agriculture

#### **REPUBLIC OF SENEGAL**

- Dr. MBENE DIEYE FAYE  
Project Coordinator, Ministry of Agriculture

- Dr. CHEICKH SADIBOU FALL  
Economist, Ministry of Agriculture

#### **REPUBLIC OF TUNISIA**

- Mr. KAMEL ZEIDI  
Head of Service, Ministry of Agriculture, Water Resources and Fisheries

#### **REPUBLIC OF TURKEY**

- Mr. AHMET VOLKAN GÜNGÖREN  
Deputy Director General, Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock
- Mr. HARUN BOLUT  
Manager, The Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey
- Mr. BURCAK YÜKSEL  
Expert, Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock
- Dr. MELİK AYTAÇ  
Expert, Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock
- Ms. PINAR DOĞU  
Expert, Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock
- Ms. BURCAK AKANSEL  
Assistant Specialist, Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock
- Mr. HAKAN ARSLAN  
Engineer, Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock
- Mr. MUHİBBET ULUDOGAN  
The Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey
- Mr. ORHAN MURAT BAHTİYAR  
The Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey

#### **REPUBLIC OF UGANDA**

- Mr. CHARLES MUKAMA  
Senior Veterinary Inspector, Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries
- Ms. NASIKYE TOLOFANA  
Diplomat, Embassy of Uganda in Ankara

#### **B. THE OIC SUBSIDIARY ORGANS**



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

- Dr. ERHAN TURBEDAR  
Senior Researcher
- Ms. ALIA SHARIFY ORTAQ  
Training Expert
- Mr. DAVRON ISHNAZAROV  
Data Registrar

**C. SPECIALIZED ORGANS OF THE OIC**

**ISLAMIC DEVELOPMENT BANK (IDB)**

- Mr. NUR ABDI  
Manager, Economic, Agriculture Infrastructure Division

**D. INVITED INSTITUTIONS**

**DENİZBANK A.Ş.**

- Mr. SİNAN KOSOVALI  
Marketing Director

**EASTERN AFRICA GRAIN COUNCIL**

- Ms. JANET K. NGOMBALU  
Regional Programs Coordinator

**NATURAL RESOURCE INSTITUTE, UNIVERSITY OF GREENWICH**

- Dr. GIDEON ONUMAH  
Consultant,
- Mr. ULRICH KLEIH  
Consultant / Marketing Economist

**E. COMCEC COORDINATION OFFICE**

- Mr. SELÇUK KOÇ  
Director
- Mr. BURAK KARAGÖL

Director

- Mr. MEHMET ASLAN  
Director
- Mr. MEHMET TARAKCIOĞLU  
Agriculture Sector Specialist
- Mr. MEHMET AKİF ALANBAY  
Expert
- Mr. OKAN POLAT  
Expert
- ALİ ORUÇ  
Expert

## Annex 2: Agenda of the Meeting



### AGENDA

#### 11<sup>TH</sup> MEETING OF THE COMCEC AGRICULTURE WORKING GROUP

(February 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2018, Ankara)

***"Improving Agricultural Market Performance:  
Developing Agricultural Market Information Systems"***

#### Op Opening Remarks

1. The COMCEC Agriculture Outlook
2. Overview of the Agricultural Market Information Systems in the World and the OIC Region
3. Selected Case Studies from the Member Countries
4. Policy Debate Session on the Agricultural Market Information Systems
5. Utilizing the COMCEC Project Funding
6. Member Country Presentations
7. International Institution(s)' / Private Sector's Contributions

#### Closing Remarks

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## Annex 3: Programme of the Meeting



### PROGRAMME

#### 11<sup>TH</sup> MEETING OF THE COMCEC AGRICULTURE WORKING GROUP (February 22nd, 2018, Crowne Plaza Hotel, Ankara, Turkey)

#### *“Improving Agricultural Market Performance: Developing Agricultural Market Information Systems”*

08.30-09.00	<b>Registration</b>
09.00-09.05	<b>Recitation from Holy Qur'an</b>
09.05-09.15	<b>Opening Remarks</b>
	<b>COMCEC Agriculture Outlook</b>
09.15-09.35	Presentation: <i>Mr. Mehmet TARAKCIOĞLU, Agriculture Sector Specialist</i> <i>COMCEC Coordination Office</i>
09.35-09.45	Discussion
	<b>Overview of Agricultural MIS in the World and the OIC Region</b>
09.45-10.25	Presentation: <i>Dr Gideon E. ONUMAH, Natural Resources Institute (NRI)</i>
10.25-10.55	Discussion
10.55-11.10	<b>Coffee Break</b>
	<b>Selected Case Studies and Policy Recommendations</b>
11.10-11.50	Presentation: <i>Mr Ulrich KLEIH/ Dr Gideon E. ONUMAH, NRI</i>
11.50-12.30	Discussion
12.30-14.00	<b>Lunch</b>

### **Policy Debate Session on the Agricultural MIS**

There was a moderation session under this agenda item. Participants deliberated on deliberate on the policy options/advices for improving agricultural market information systems in the OIC Member Countries. At the beginning of the session, the CCO made a short presentation on the responses of the Member Countries to the policy questions as well as the Room Document.

*Moderated by Mr. Sariyang M K JOBARTEH, Ag Director General,  
The Gambia*

- 14.00-14.10 Presentation: "Responses of the Member Countries to the Policy Questions on Agricultural MIS in the OIC Member Countries"

*Mr. Selçuk KOÇ, Director  
COMCEC Coordination Office*

- 14.10- 15.15 Discussion

### **Utilizing the COMCEC Project Funding**

- 15.15-15.30 Presentation: *Mr. Burak KARAGÖL, Director  
COMCEC Coordination Office*

- 15.30-15.45 Discussion

- 15.45-16.00 **Coffee Break**

### **Member Country Presentations**

- 16.00-17.00 - Presentations  
- Discussion

### **International Institution(s)' / Private Sector's Contributions**

- 17.00-17.15 Presentation: "The Role of Regional Agricultural Trade Intelligence Network (RATIN) in the Activities of EAGC"

*Ms. Janet NGOMBALU, Regional Programs Coordinator  
Eastern African Grain Council*

- 17.15-17.30 Presentation: "Finance- Integrated Agricultural MIS: The Case of Denizbank"

*Mr. Sinan KOSOVALI, Marketing Director  
Denizbank*

- 17.30-17.50 Discussion

- 17.50-18.00 **Closing Remarks and Family Photo**

## Annex 4: The Policy Recommendations

### THE POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS HIGHLIGHTED BY THE 11<sup>TH</sup> MEETING OF THE COMCEC AGRICULTURE WORKING GROUP

The COMCEC Agriculture Working Group (AWG) has successfully held its 11<sup>th</sup> Meeting on February 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2018 in Ankara, Turkey with the theme of “Improving Agricultural Market Performance: Developing Agricultural Market Information Systems”. The Room Document, prepared in accordance with the main findings of the analytical study conducted specifically for the 11<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the COMCEC Agriculture Working Group titled “Improving Agricultural Market Performance: Developing Agricultural Market Information Systems” and the answers of the Member Countries to the policy questions sent to the COMCEC Agriculture Working Group focal points by the COMCEC Coordination Office. During the Meeting, participants agreed on the policy recommendations included in the Room Document. The Existing document includes these policy recommendations highlighted during the Meeting.

#### **Policy Advice I: Designing Market Information Systems (MIS) through assessing and reviewing targeted stakeholders with a sustained budget support and an effective monitoring and evaluation framework**

##### **Rationale:**

A well-functioning agricultural Market Information System (MIS) requires a careful design which aligns information provided to the identified needs of targeted stakeholders, especially farmers, traders, financial intermediaries and other private actors in the agricultural value chains through regular assessments and reviews. Because of the “public good” characteristics of the market information, sustainability of the MIS implementations can be achieved by governments’ budget support. Furthermore, a well-established monitoring and evaluation framework at the beginning is of utmost importance for the efficiency and sustainability of an MIS and ensuring that the target audience gains the anticipated benefits.

#### **Policy Advice II: Building sufficient capacity for stock monitoring, trend analysis and forecasting as well as other relevant subjects beyond providing price information for a better functioning MIS**

##### **Rationale:**

Based on evidence found with regards to the expectations of market players, it is clear that the content of MIS should go beyond price information and include reporting trend analysis which can signal supply and demand conditions and allow market players to take positions regarding immediate and future price levels. To achieve this, there is a need to make necessary investments in building output forecasting capacity, which is becoming increasingly more feasible with the advances in ICT.

**Policy Advice III: Linking MIS to other market-supporting institutions and/or other risk-management tools to increase the mutual benefits.**

**Rationale:**

Linking the development of MIS to that of other market-supporting institutions such as line ministries, producer unions, farmer and traders' cooperatives, marketing boards, state-owned economic enterprises and other institutions on the supply chain and/or other risk-management tools such as warehousing receipt systems, agricultural commodity exchanges as well as agricultural insurance programs can lead to mutual benefits. On the one hand, such institutional innovations will ensure that price discovery is more transparent and therefore worth accessing. On the other hand, effective and reliable MIS is an important prerequisite for developing these market institutions successfully.

**Policy Advice IV: Forming the necessary mechanisms/platforms for an improved coordination among the key stakeholders and ensuring the effective review of the quality of information provided.**

**Rationale:**

The needs of the relevant stakeholders along the agricultural value chains could be mediated by setting up necessary mechanisms/platforms such as specific working groups with representation from government, providers, key stakeholders and donors. These mechanisms facilitate coordination and rationalization of the information collection and dissemination process and thereby contribute to the efficiency. Furthermore, the quality of information provided and its relevance to target users could also be regularly reviewed through these mechanisms/platforms.

**Instruments to Realize the Policy Advices:**

**COMCEC Agriculture Working Group:** In its subsequent meetings, the Working Group may elaborate on the above-mentioned policy areas in a more detailed manner.

**COMCEC Project Funding:** Under the COMCEC Project Funding, the COMCEC Coordination Office calls for projects each year. With the COMCEC Project Funding, the member countries participating in the Working Groups can submit multilateral cooperation projects to be financed through grants by the COMCEC Coordination Office. For the above- mentioned policy areas, the member countries can utilize the COMCEC Project Funding and the COMCEC Coordination Office may finance the successful projects in this regard. These projects may include organization of seminars, training programs, study visits, exchange of experts, workshops and preparing of analytical studies, needs assessments and training materials/documents, etc.

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