



AGRICULTURE



CCO BRIEF ON AGRICULTURAL COOPERATION

COMCEC COORDINATION OFFICE
May 2022

CCO BRIEF ON AGRICULTURAL COOPERATION

I. Introduction

Agriculture is seen as an important engine of growth and unique source for poverty reduction in most of the developing world. Empirical studies demonstrate that agriculture is the most effective sector in generating income for the poorest segments of the population. Hence, it is accepted as a key sector for economic growth, reducing poverty and sustainable rural development especially in developing countries. In many member countries of the OIC, agriculture is one of the leading sectors in terms of income, employment and trade.

Given its importance agriculture was identified as a cooperation area in the COMCEC Strategy and Agriculture Working Group (AWG) was established with the strategic objective of “Increasing the productivity of agricultural sector and sustaining food security in the COMCEC region”.

In order to reach this objective, the COMCEC Strategy has determined (i) increasing productivity, (ii) regulatory framework and institutional capacity, (iii) reliable and up-to-date data, and (iv) market performance and access as output areas under the agriculture cooperation area.

The AWG elaborated on the above-mentioned output areas in its previous gatherings and discussed irrigation systems, on-farm and post-harvest food losses, food waste, agricultural market institutions and market information systems, resilience of and ensuring food security and good governance for ensuring food security and nutrition.

II. Agricultural Cooperation under the COMCEC

Considering the need for increased capacity and productivity in the agriculture sector which is facing challenges arising from the climate change and the recent disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the COMCEC AWG devoted its Meetings in 2022 to discuss on "Transforming Food Systems After COVID-19: Agricultural Knowledge and Information Systems in the OIC Member Countries."

In order to understand the agricultural production systems, challenges faced and good examples of AKIS that can be applied in the OIC Member States a research study is being carried out with the ultimate aim of supporting the stakeholders to develop better knowledge and information systems to increase and strengthen their capacities to enhance agricultural production and the productivity. The research study is also planned to include a guide to show the way for establishing/improving AKIS systems in the OIC Member Countries.

A. Transforming Food Systems After COVID-19: Agricultural Knowledge and Information Systems in the OIC Member Countries

(18th Meeting of the Agriculture Working Group)

The 18th Meeting of the COMCEC Agriculture Working Group will be held on May 16th, 2022 with the theme of “Transforming Food Systems after COVID-19: Agricultural Knowledge and Information Systems in the OIC Member Countries”.

The Working Group will discuss the use of AKIS across the globe and in the OIC Member Countries and their role in increasing the production volume as well as improving the productivity in the agriculture sector. Moreover, the preliminary findings of the aforementioned research report will be presented during the Meeting. The final version of the report will be submitted to the 19th Meeting of the AWG to be held in October 2022.

B. COMCEC Financial Support Instruments

COMCEC Project Funding

COMCEC Project Funding (CPF) is the other important instrument of the Strategy. Projects financed under the CPF need to serve multilateral cooperation and must be designed in accordance with the objectives and the expected outcomes defined by the Strategy in the finance section. Projects also play important roles in realization of the policy recommendations formulated by the member countries during the AWG meetings.

Under the 7th and 8th Calls for Project Proposals, five projects were selected to be financed by the CCO. The projects completed during the 2021 implementation period are as follows;

The project titled “Enhancing Capacity for Warehousing and Storage of Cereals and Cowpeas” was implemented by Benin in partnership with Niger, Togo and Côte d'Ivoire. The project aimed at increasing the awareness and knowledge of the stakeholders on good practices for warehousing and storage of grains in West Africa.

The second project titled “New Breeding Technologies for Food and Nutritional Security” was implemented by COMSTECH in partnership with Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Malaysia, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Türkiye. The project aimed at increasing public and private sector institution’s capacity on nutrition and food security through advanced breeding technologies.

The third agriculture project titled “Capacity Building on Cereals and Cowpeas Storage” was implemented by Niger with the partnership of Benin, Côte d'Ivoire and Nigeria. This project aimed at sharing knowledge and good practices on warehousing and storage of grains among the partner countries.

Other important project titled “Enhancing Food Security through National Food Balance Sheets” was implemented by SESRIC in partnership with Bangladesh, Djibouti, Indonesia, Jordan, Oman, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sudan, Suriname, Türkiye and Uganda. Purpose of the project is promoting reliable and up-to-date data collection so as to ensure sound analysis of food security through increasing the capacity of the member countries on developing and preparing the annual food balance sheets.

Moreover, Surinam implemented the project titled “Capacity Building on Irrigation Systems in Vegetable Crops” with the partnership of Indonesia and Türkiye. This project aimed to contribute to ensuring food security and food safety for the populations in the project partner countries by increasing capacity of the stakeholder on water management.

In addition, under the 9th Call for Project Proposals, five projects were selected to be financed by the CCO in 2022. The selected agriculture projects to be completed during the 2022 implementation year are as follows;

The project titled “Promote Nutrition Sensitive Agriculture to Ensure Food Security and Good Nutrition in West Africa” will be implemented by Benin in partnership with Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, Niger, Nigeria and Togo. The project aims at increasing the capacity human and institutional capacity on the implementation tools of nutrition sensitive agriculture for food security and good nutrition.

Other important project titled “Creating Awareness on the Importance of Agriculture Commodity Exchange Markets” will be implemented by ICCIA in partnership with Bangladesh, Indonesia, Egypt, Nigeria, Sudan, Pakistan and Türkiye. Purpose of the project is to create awareness among the relevant stakeholders on the importance of agriculture commodity exchange markets and its benefit to the agriculture sector. The project also aims at sharing knowledge among the partners on the business model for a successful the respective exchange markets.

The third agriculture project titled “Capacity Building on New Technologies to Reduce Post-Harvest Losses” will be implemented by Türkiye with the partnership of Pakistan and Jordan. This project aims at sharing knowledge and good practices on warehousing and storage of grains among the partner countries.

Another project titled “Adaptation and Mitigation Strategies for Reducing the Climate Changes Effects on Agriculture Production” will be implemented by Qatar with the partnership of Morocco, Sudan and Egypt. The project aims at raising awareness on the adverse effects of climate change on agriculture and experience sharing on tools and models to avoid these effects.

Lastly, IOFS will implement the project titled “Building the capacity of OIC member states in Food Security Governance”. This project aims to assist OIC member states in building the institutional capacity of government agencies in the implementation of food security governance practices. A training in Cairo will be conducted with the attendees from 10 different OIC member countries.

COMCEC COVID Response

Under the COMCEC COVID Response Program initiated by the CCO in order to assist member states in their efforts to alleviate the negative effects of the COVID-19 Pandemic on member country economies, 2 projects were financed by the CCO in 2021. These projects are as follows;

Türkiye implemented the project titled “Acceleration of Transformation of Digitalization in Agriculture Sector for Ensuring Sustainable Food Security”. This project aimed at determining a road map for adoption and dissemination of digital technologies by key actors in Turkish agricultural sector as well as to investigate the gaps, obstacles and challenges triggered by COVID-19.

The project titled “Facilitating Poor, Vulnerable and Marginalized Groups’ Access to Food in West Java Province” is being implemented by Indonesia. Purpose of the project is assessing the current conditions of the vulnerable groups to further formulate policies for them to facilitate their access to food. Implementation of the project has yet to be completed and it is planned to be completed in the first half of 2022.

In addition, under the second Call for Project Proposals three projects were selected to be financed by the CCO in 2022. The selected agriculture projects to be completed during the 2022 implementation year are as follows;

The project titled “Resilience in the Seed Sector with the Rising of Risks after Covid-19” will be implemented by Türkiye in partnership with Republic of Azerbaijan, Morocco, Malaysia, Pakistan and SESRIC. The project aims at sharing expertise and best practices for the effective seed management and distribution during the pandemic in order to strengthen the resilience of agri-food systems against the threats and crisis to enable food security.

Other project titled “Reduction of Food Loss and Waste during COVID-19 through Promoting Climate Smart Agriculture” will be implemented by Azerbaijan. The project aims at increasing human and institutional capacity of Azerbaijan on measurement of food loss and waste and also development strategies and effective tools for preventing the loss and waste.

The last project titled as “Increase rice productivity to ensure food security and sovereignty in Benin” will be implemented by Benin. The project targets to increase the availability of rice by improving its productivity.