



AGRICULTURE



CCO BRIEF ON AGRICULTURAL COOPERATION

COMCEC COORDINATION OFFICE
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I. Introduction

The world has been undergoing a rapid economic and technological transformation in recent years. In this process, global major problems, including drought, increases in cost of production and global hunger due to climate change as well as regional conflicts, are adversely affecting the food supply chains. Considering this reality, agriculture is one of foremost sectors for the economies worldwide, particularly in OIC member countries. The development of this sector is also critically important for addressing the pressing issues such as food security, poverty, and economic development.

As one of the leading sectors in most OIC member countries, agriculture is providing food, income, and employment for the large segment of societies. The agriculture sector accounts for 10.4% of GDP in OIC countries, which is much larger than the world average of 4.3%. Additionally, 216 million people in OIC countries are working in agriculture sector, equivalent to 32% of their total employment. While the proportion of employment in agriculture has decreased in the past decade, it is noteworthy that about 1.4 billion hectares of land in OIC countries, amounting to one-third of the world's total agriculture land, is still dedicated to agriculture sector.

However, OIC member countries face challenges in ensuring agricultural development and food security for their populations. Among these challenges, the escalation of conflict and insecurity within their territories stands as a critical concern. Therefore, the agriculture sector is critical for many OIC member countries to generate income, increase welfare, and eradicate extreme poverty and hunger.

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, agricultural inputs, food security and good governance for ensuring food security and nutrition.

II. Agricultural Cooperation under the COMCEC

Considering the important livestock production and fishery to foster food security in the OIC Member States, the COMCEC AWG devoted its Meetings in 2023 to discuss on " Developing Livestock Production and Fishery to Foster Food Security for a Sustainable Agricultural Development in OIC Countries."

Rising input prices and increases in agricultural production, costs have led to a decline in agriculture and the livestock sector. In addition to rising costs, external factors such as regional conflicts that disrupt supply chains, increases in energy prices, epidemics and climate change also have a negative impact on livestock development. Developing efficient livestock production and inclusive, resilient, and sustainable practices requires building the capacity of stakeholders in the livestock value chain. In this direction, it is of great importance to increase productivity and production through the efficient use of resources from primary production to the end consumer.. In this framework, this study aims to examine developing livestock production and fishery to foster food security in OIC countries with their demand and supply sides and to present good practices for country and region-based problems in the form of a guide.

A. Ensuring the Sustainability of Agricultural Inputs to Combat Food Insecurity in OIC Member Countries

(20th Meeting of the Agriculture Working Group)

The 22nd Meeting of the COMCEC Agriculture Working Group was held on April 30th , 2024 with the theme of "Developing Livestock Production and Fishery to Foster Food Security for a Sustainable Agricultural Development in OIC Countries".

The Working Group discussed about developing livestock production and fishery to foster food security, and to provide permanent and feasible solutions to this issues. Moreover, the preliminary findings of the aforementioned research report presented during the Meeting. The final version of the report will be submitted to the 23rd Meeting of the AWG to be held on 19th-20th September 2024.

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 cooperation among member counties and must be designed in accordance with the objectives and the expected outcomes defined by the Strategy in the agriculture section. Projects also play important roles in realization of the policy recommendations formulated by the member countries during the AWG meetings.

In this regard, 9 projects have been selected to be implemented in 2024. These projects are as follows:

The project titled "Experience Sharing on Climate Smart Agriculture (CSA)" will be implemented by Azerbaijan in the partnership of Türkiye. The project aims at reducing the

negative impact of global warming on agriculture and food security through climate smart agriculture practices.

The project titled “Capacity Building on Enriched Organic Fertilizers Production” will be implemented by Benin with Egypt and IOFS. The project aims at increasing agricultural production through using enriched organic fertilizers.

The Gambia will implement a project titled “Improving Human and Institutional Capacity for the Development of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) in the Agriculture Sector of the Gambia and OIC member Countries” with SESRIC and Türkiye. The project aims to increase technical capacity of the officials working in agriculture sector on developing Key Performance Indicators (KPI).

The project titled “Sedentary the Ruminant Herds to Ensure Food and Nutritional Security in Niger ” will be implemented by Niger. Partners of the project are Benin, Uganda and Egypt. The project aims at strengthening the capacities of producers on technical breeding in livestock based on experience of the partner countries.

Nigeria will implement a project titled “Capacity Building on Organomineral Fertilizers” in partnership of Sudan and Egypt. The project aims to increase capacity of the farmers on producing organic fertilizers by using wastes.

The project titled “Capacity Building on Inclusion of Seasonal Workers into Agricultural Knowledge and Information System in Qatar and GCC countries” will be implemented by Qatar in partnership of Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Oman and IOFS. The project aims at technical and institutional capacities of the countries on including the agricultural workers into Agricultural Knowledge and Information Systems.

Türkiye will implement a project titled “Common Steps towards Climate Change: Adaptation, Mitigation and Resistance Strategies in Stone Fruits” with Azerbaijan and Morocco. The project aims at addressing technical and economical bottlenecks in stone fruits, particularly apricots, in the context of climate change impact.

The project titled “Promoting Food Security in OIC Member Countries through Sustainable Agricultural Inputs” will be implemented by SESRIC in partnership of 15 OIC member countries. The project aims to increase agricultural productivity and food security in the OIC member countries by promoting the use of sustainable agricultural inputs such as improved seeds, fertilizers and pesticides.

The last project’s title is “Promoting Agricultural Knowledge and Information Systems (AKIS) and Precision Agriculture” and the project will be implemented by COMSTECH with the partnership of Pakistan, Mauritania and Senegal. The purpose of the project is to enhance use of precision agriculture technologies such as Artificial Project Purpose Intelligence (AI) and AKIS to increase agriculture production in the beneficiary member states.