



CCO BRIEF ON AGRICULTURE

**COMCEC COORDINATION OFFICE
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I. Introduction

Agriculture remains strategically and historically important in the OIC countries. After examining the macro agricultural indicators, sectoral indicators and state of food security, it is evident that agriculture is still one of the prominent sectors in the OIC member countries. Even though agricultural activity in most OIC member countries has been slightly replaced by services and industrial activity over time, the significance of the agriculture sector to national economies is still undeniable.

The agricultural sector in OIC member states has shown notable expansion in recent decades, with the value of agricultural production increasing due to both higher output levels and rising global prices. As a result, the share of OIC countries in world agricultural production has followed an upward trend. This performance can largely be attributed to agricultural and economy-wide growth rates that outpaced global averages between 1994 and 2024. Nevertheless, the sector remains structurally fragile: productivity growth has stagnated, and no significant improvements have been observed in key inputs such as labour, land, and technology utilization. In 2000, the OIC agricultural GDP was USD 197 billion with a share of 17.53 per cent of world agricultural production. In 2020, OIC agricultural GDP reached USD 655 billion with a share of 17.8 per cent of world agricultural production. This ratio increased to 19.21 per cent in 2024 reaching USD 860 billion.

However, OIC member countries face challenges in ensuring agricultural development and food security for their populations. 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 the Agriculture Working Group (AWG) was established with the strategic objective of “Increasing the productivity of the 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.

In its previous gatherings, the AWG elaborated on the above-mentioned output areas and discussed irrigation systems, on-farm and post-harvest food losses, food waste, agricultural market institutions and market information systems, agricultural inputs, livestock production and fishery, food security, and good governance for ensuring food security and nutrition.

II. Agricultural Cooperation under the COMCEC

Considering the significant resilience of family farmers and small-scale producers in the OIC Member States, the COMCEC AWG devoted its Meetings in 2025 to discuss "Strengthening the Resilience of Family Farmers and Small-Scale Producers in the Agriculture and Food Sector in OIC Member Countries."

A. Strengthening the Resilience of Family Farmers and Small-Scale Producers in the Agriculture and Food Sector in OIC Member Countries (24th and 25th Meetings of the Agriculture Working Group)

The 24th and 25th Meetings of COMCEC Agriculture Working Group (AWG) were held on 22 April 2025 and 22-23 September 2025, respectively, with the same theme "Strengthening the Resilience of Family Farmers and Small-Scale Producers in the Agriculture and Food Sector in OIC Member Countries".

In this framework, a research report, which aims to examine strengthening the resilience of family farmers and small-scale producers, was prepared for enriching the discussions for two consecutive COMCEC AWG Meetings (24th and 25th). While the preliminary findings of the report were submitted to the 24th AWG Meeting, the final version of the report was submitted to the 25th AWG Meeting.

The report assessed methods to measure resilience and identified the factors that influence the resilience of the family farms and small-scale producers in the OIC member countries and came up with some policy options to provide permanent and feasible solutions to such problems.

The report examines potential for strengthening the resilience of family farmers and small-scale producers in OIC Member Countries. The report also underlines that, as the farmers' access to capital and arable land increases, their resilience also increases measured as the percentage change in value of agricultural production per hectare. Higher access to arable land could reflect economics of scale, which could enable farmers to gain advantage in the use of new technologies and make investment that require higher fixed costs.

Main challenges regarding the issue were identified in the report such as limited access to markets, technology, and finance, and proposed solutions to improve productivity, sustainability, and market integration. By addressing these issues, the research seeks to show the ways and means to empower small-scale players in the agricultural value chain, fostering economic growth, food security, and equitable development across OIC Member Countries.

During the 25th Meeting, the participants elaborated on the main findings of the research report and discussed the policy options to contribute to family farmers and small-scale producers.

In line with the discussions, the Meeting came up with a set of policy recommendations to be submitted to the COMCEC Ministerial Session for adoption as below:

- *Developing sound financial support programs for family farmers and small-scale producers in cooperation with local cooperatives and microfinance institutions towards promoting ownership of productive assets such as modern equipment, machinery, storage facilities and also access to inputs.*
- *Increasing family farmers' and small-scale producers' access to arable land and agricultural machinery through government-backed long term leasing and rent cost-sharing tools.*
- *Developing climate-resilient, alternative and innovative production systems that reduce reliance on imported inputs through effective financial incentives, extension services, and research–extension partnerships.*
- *Strengthening farmers' resilience by promoting off-farm income opportunities for family farmers and small-scale producers.*
- *Developing effective extension systems by institutionalizing direct linkages between universities, government institutions, private entities and farmers.*
- *Enhancing social capital among farmers by supporting cooperatives and producer associations, integrating community-based risk-sharing mechanisms, and providing financial and educational incentives to promote collaboration and mutual support.*
- *Promoting contract farming to enhance small-scale farmers' productivity and market access through the improvement of agricultural supply chain.*

All the documents and presentations made during the 24th and 25th Working Group Meetings as well as the above-mentioned research report are available on the COMCEC website. (www.comcec.org)

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 OIC Member Countries and should 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, 6 projects have been selected to be implemented in 2025. These projects are as follows:

The Project titled “Boosting Competitiveness of Azerbaijani Small Family Farms and SMEs by Adopting Climate-Resilient Agricultural Practices” is being implemented by Azerbaijan in partnership of Türkiye. The project aims at increasing capacities of small-scale agricultural enterprises in Azerbaijan on climate-resilient and low-emission practices. Under the project, Azerbaijani experts will conduct a peer-to-peer experience-sharing visit to the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry of Türkiye to understand the Türkiye’s experiences about the project topic.

The Project titled “Capacity Building in Efficient Water Management and Agricultural Practices Resilient to the Effects of Climate Change for Market Gardening” is being implemented by Benin with Morocco and IOFS,. The project aims to increase capacities of stakeholders in market gardening sector within the context of the effects of climate change. Within the scope of the project, a study visit to Morocco will be conducted to understand Moroccan model of efficient water management. Also, a training program will be realized with the attendance of experts from the project partners.

The Gambia is implementing a project titled “Building Capacities of Livestock Technicians and Smallholder Livestock Farmers on Sustainable Climate Resilient and Innovative Techniques” with the partnership of Niger. The project aims at increasing technical capacity of different stakeholders on sustainable, climate resilient and innovative techniques in livestock production.

Within the context of the project, a study visit will be conducted to Niger to understand Niger’s experiences on the project issue. After the visit, a training program focusing on building the capacity of extension service providers, farmer organizations and farmers will be organized.

The project titled “Development of Dairy Production to Ensure Sustainable Food and Nutritional Security in Niger” is being implemented by Niger in partnership with Türkiye. The project aims at increasing capacities of small scale producers on milk production and processing systems. In this regard, a study visit to Türkiye was organized and different on site visits to the facilities working on producing dairy products were realized. Also, two national training programs will be conducted to share Türkiye’s experience with relevant stakeholders in Niger.

Egypt is implementing a project titled “Enhancing the Capabilities of Farmers in Some OIC Countries by Expanding and Sustainability of Using Organic and Organo-Mineral Fertilizers” in partnership of Sudan, Benin and IOFS. The project aims to enhance capacities of the target groups in organic fertilizer production techniques. Within the scope of the project, a study visit will be conducted and also a training program focusing on relevant techniques will be realized.

The project titled “Promoting Unconventional Water Resources to Enhance Agriculture Productivity in Water-Scarce OIC Member Countries” has been implemented by SESRIC in partnership of 7 OIC member countries. The project aimed at promoting unconventional water resources practices to ensure water-secured agriculture practices. Under the project, a four-day training program was conducted. Also, as part of the program, a field visit was carried out to a facility operating on reusing of treated wastewater in agriculture.



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