UNDER THE IOFS PROGRAMME OIC FOOD SYSTEM TALENT DEVELOPMENT



l'Organisation Islamique pour la Sécurité Alimentaire المنظمة الإسلامية للأمن الغذائي



IOFS HIGH-LEVEL FORUM ON FOOD SECURITY



organized by the Islamic Organization for Food Security and Kazakh National Agrarian Research University

8-9 June 2022, Almaty, Kazakhstan

IN COOPERATION WITH



























BACKGROUND

Food Security Challenges

Food insecurity is mainly defined as a lack of consistent access to enough and adequate food for an active, healthy life. It is commonly described in terms of food availability, food access and food utilization, as well as the sustainability of these three aspects. Food insecurity is also at the heart of the international movement to overcome hunger and poverty. In fact, UN SDG 2 focuses explicitly on food by seeking to "end hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture", at the same time, multiple other SDGs relate to challenges in the food system in broad.

Food insecurity remains the top major problem faced by the world population that suffer from acute hunger and malnutrition largely because of global recession, conflicts and climate change effects. The situation day by day has been even worsening due to direct and indirect consequences of COVID-19, current Ukraine crisis, as they are following with border lockdowns that disrupt the food supply chains, increase the costs of food for vulnerable households, and overall, intensify the vulnerabilities and inadequacies of national, regional and global food systems.

Growth in the agriculture sector is one of the most effective way of reducing poverty. Food insecurity – often rooted in poverty – decreases the ability of countries to develop their agricultural markets and economies. Access to quality, nutritious food is fundamental to human existence. Secure access to food can produce wide ranging positive impacts, including: Economic growth and job creation; Poverty reduction; Trade opportunities; Increased global security and stability; Improved health and healthcare.

In fact, agricultural development projects have been promoted in many places as a feature of poverty-reduction strategies. Such projects have often been implemented without a strong in-built education component, and hence have had little success. Agricultural projects seek to improve food security by diversifying a household's resource base and facilitating the social and economic empowerment of smallholders and rural population.

In this regard, sustainable agricultural sector continues to play an important role in the social and economic development of countries, as governments separately aims to provide the food provision domestically by ensuring the food independence. Therefore, the role of science, technology and innovation is being promoted to boost the smart agriculture. Also, governments seek to find solutions regionally and globally to the big threats of staple foods supplies and disruptions from grain-growing countries of Russia and Ukraine.

In addition, food insecurity is closely linked with the under-education that both are common in many countries. The challenges are enormous, especially in rural areas where food insecurity, poverty and educational deprivation often create a vicious circle. Designing food security and education programs with an explicit recognition of these positive linkages can benefit both sectors and contribute directly to the achievement of food security and nutrition.

Food Security and Education

Education has multiple individual benefits. It increases present human capital and future earnings. In this context, universities play an important and largely unfulfilled role in the well-being of small-scale farmers and the economic development of countries. Globally, there is a justified recent trend for universities to establish Institutes or Centers of Food Security considering its commitment to help the government in identifying the current challenges, reviewing the food insecurity problems from wide range of perspectives and propose ways of solutions to address the problems of food systems and the challenge of feeding the exponentially growing population. There is also a strong demand for strengthening the cooperation among universities and research entities, because researchers need to be able to better communicate in order to effectively inform policy makers.

At the same time, currently universities provide education on many agricultural aspects, including agricultural science, natural resources, land management, agricultural management, food safety and food innovation. However, the ongoing global challenges necessitate the teaching on basics of food systems, food security and food supply chains. Because, the food security and food systems are cross-dimensional subjects and require the coverage of multiple subject areas. To meet the demands and address the food security problems, universities shall consider establishing a Faculty of Food Security by designing the specific syllabus and education program on food systems.

Importance of Extension

Universities engage in research and teaching, but they also have a critical mission - extension. Through extension, universities bring vital, practical information to smallholder farmers, agricultural producers, small business owners and local livelihoods. Extension provides non-formal education and learning activities to people throughout the country, both urban and rural population. It emphasizes taking knowledge gained through research and education and bringing it directly to the people to create positive changes.

Extension activities are widespread throughout the developing world and most governments have set up formally structured extension services to implement extension programmes and projects. The practice of extension is supported by budget, offices, personnel and other resources. It has been seen that the extension agent's task is an educational one. Farmers and their families need to learn new skills, knowledge and practices in order to improve their farming and other productive activities.

Practices on Cooperation between Universities

The Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM), established by ten Vice Chancellors in 2004, is a consortium of 126 African universities operating within 38 countries spanning the African continent. RUFORUM is coordinated by a Secretariat hosted by Makerere University in Kampala, Uganda. The organization evolved from its predecessor, the Forum on Agricultural Resource Husbandry (FORUM) program of the Rockefeller Foundation. RUFORUM is registered as an International Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) and has mandate to oversee graduate training. In July, 2014, RUFORUM signed a cooperation agreement with the African Union to support the implementation of the new African Union for Science, Technology and Innovation Strategy for Africa, 2024 (STISA 2024). RUFORUM supports universities to address the important and largely unfulfilled role that universities play in contributing to the well - being of small - scale farmers and economic development of countries throughout the sub - Saharan Africa region. 3

The Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) comprising from post-Soviet countries also established the Council of Rectors of Leading Agrarian Universities of the CIS Member States. Annually, the Council have a meeting among heads of agrarian universities from countries: Azerbaijan, Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Ukraine. Five universities are OIC member states. The main purpose of the annual meeting is the development of cooperation of CIS agrarian universities, exchange of results in the field of education, science and meaningful and effective management decision making to improve the quality of agricultural education and science. The Council also focuses on holding joint winter and summer schools, internships for young scientists, doctoral students, postgraduates, undergraduates in research laboratories and centers. In 2021, Kazakhstan has chaired the Council.

Women and Food Security

The role of women is key in agricultural production and in food security. Women are the primary farmers and producers in a large part of the world; however, their work continues to go largely unrecognized. In fact, in developing countries women comprise approximately 43% of the agricultural work force. A significant proportion of women work in informal non-agricultural sectors, such as trading and small-scale processing, which both contributes to the food value chain and generates income for them to purchase food.

However, rural women often face constraints to market engagement due to factors such as lack of mobility, capacity, and technical skills. Likewise, women food crop entrepreneurs can play important economic roles that have positive effects beyond the micro level (e.g., supplying food products and employment opportunities), but are often hindered by discriminatory practices and stereotypical attitudes from accessing opportunities to expand their businesses. Improving women farmers' participation in marketing chains and entrepreneurial activities – e.g., by investment in transport and infrastructure, improved provision of training and information, or changes in policy and regulatory frameworks – would mean giving a boost to aggregate food security.

Agricultural productivity and income gains are necessary but not sufficient to eliminate hunger and malnutrition. Women are responsible for nutrition in most homes, including the purchase and preparation of food. However, because of traditional norms, they often have limited access to education and control over resources. When given the opportunity to manage household finances, studies show that women are more likely than men to spend on their family's nutritional needs, healthcare, and school fees for children. Therefore, empowering women to increase access to and control over resources is critical to attaining food security in the developing world.

Youth and Food Security

Youth plays an important role in the multifaceted challenges that global food systems face. It's estimated that by 2050 there will be 9 billion people in the world and they will all need sufficient safe, nutritious food. That's why it's important that today's youth are engaged in the decisions that will affect their future and that the next generation of agricultural producers are empowered. Most of the education currently offered has little room for interdisciplinarity and soft skills, and focuses on knowledge-based single disciplines.

Young men and women are engaged in the agri-food system in a variety of ways — through formal and informal wage work, unpaid family labor, self-employment, and cooperative membership — and across all levels of the value chain. Overall, youth earn "mixed livelihoods" from various sources — on-farm, off-farm, and non-farm — and with self-employment and migration playing particularly important roles. While there is some evidence that youth are not attracted to agriculture and are leaving the sector, the absolute numbers of youth who are dependent on farming or livestock production is likely to increase because of population growth

Youth tend to favor modern agriculture practices, use of technology, and opportunities for "quick money" with relatively higher returns than staple crops. Youth decisions to engage in agriculture work are also shaped by the environment in which they live: the economic and political context, social norms and customs, the nature of the agri-food system, institutions, laws and regulations, parental and peer influence, media, previous experiences, and gender relations.

At the same time, the majority of youth do not currently see agriculture as a viable career path given the low productivity rates and the difficulties, they know previous generations have faced. However, it is important for smallholders to achieve a viable income through agricultural activities in order to continue the production cycle by their children and their children's children. Developing the knowledge, skills, and talent of youth will also require investing in smallholder agriculture in order to provide successful examples and viable livelihoods for all future generations.

Young professionals have fresh ideas, a strong grasp of emerging trends and are up for the challenge of trying new approaches to work with food security and nutrition. To mobilize greater innovation in the agricultural sector, insight from today's youth is needed; young people must be instrumental in creating their own future. Realizing this significance of youth role, several organizations are prioritizing the youth empowerment and involvement in agriculture, might it be research, academic or extension.

Food Security Education for Young People

As there are strong positive correlations between food security and education, schools can educate children about agriculture, nutrition, and hygiene, and provide basic literacy training, all of which can lead to higher standards of living and greater food security. In many countries, high levels of mild to moderate malnutrition continue to exist in areas that produce plenty of food. Even when food is available, millions of children are physically and mentally stunted due to low quality diets with limited diversity (for example, an over-reliance on basic staples like rice or maize). Poor hygiene and sanitation practices lead to disease and malnutrition even when food is available. Education can improve food though basic literacy, skills development, and direct learning.

It has long been understood that the skills derived from basic literacy enhance options for future earnings, which translates into poverty reduction and future food security. Educated children learn how to process and acquire new information and are therefore more likely to be economically productive than illiterate children. In addition, schools teach students about subjects relevant to improved food security, such as health (e.g., learning to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS or other diseases), agricultural practices, and nutrition knowledge. Educating students, especially girls, pays off later in life when they provide better care and feeding to their own children. In 2000, the International Food Policy Research Institute conducted a study of the factors that helped reduce child malnutrition by 15 percent in the developing world between 1970 and 1995. The results demonstrated that increases in women's education accounted for 43 percent of the total reduction in child malnutrition, by far the largest contribution, with improvements in food availability coming in a distant second (Smith & Haddad, 2000).

IOFS HIGH-LEVEL FORUM ON FOOD SECURITY

The core objective of the IOFS is to ensure the food security and promote agricultural and rural development in OIC member countries. Moreover, the IOFS puts the topic Food Security Education as a priority at the IOFS Agenda. Within the 4th General Assembly on 8-9 September 2021 in Nur-Sultan, Kazakhstan, OIC member states adopted the IOFS Strategic Vision 2031 that included the implementation of 16 programs in the long-term perspective, one of which "OIC Food System Talent Development". Therefore, the IOFS pays the significant attention to the development of human capital for sustainable food security, supporting smallholder farmers through extension, strengthening the role of universities, raising awareness on food and nutrition security from the early ages in OIC region.

Considering the above-mentioned, the IOFS in cooperation with the Kazakh National Agrarian Research University (KazNARU), as well as UAE Government, OIC Institutions, namely ICESCO, FIUW, COMSTECH, WDO, ICYF, international organizations of ICBA, ICARDA, National Agrarian Science and Educational Center of Kazakhstan (NASEC) and leading agricultural universities/institutions, research entities in OIC member countries, will conduct the "IOFS High-Level Forum on Food Security", on 8-9 June, 2022, in Almaty, Kazakhstan.

The Forum will be highlighted with the High-Level Panel Session with welcoming speeches of Prime-Minister of Kazakhstan (TBC), Ministers of OIC member states and Heads of Hosting Organizations, as well as cover the participation from OIC countries in Asia and Arab countries in the Middle East. Further in autumn 2022, the Forum's core Agenda will be extended to OIC member states in Africa with the financial support of donor organizations.

The Forum will be also enriched with the active involvement of world scientific community considering the 70th Anniversary of Academician H.E. Tlektes Yespolov, Rector of KazNARU. Prof. Tlektes Yespolov is the Vice President and Academic at the National Academy of Sciences of Kazakhstan, Head of Council of Rectors of Leading Agricultural Universities of the CIS Member States. His scientific work has been recognized throughout the world with honorary professorships at no less than 14 leading agricultural universities in South Korea, China, Hungary, Russia, Lithuania, Ukraine, Belarus, Moldova, Azerbaijan, Armenia, and others. He is a Laureate of the State Prize of Kazakhstan in the field of science and technology and was awarded with international and national awards.

FORUM OBJECTIVES:

- To discuss current challenges of food systems in OIC countries and explore ways of solutions;
- To present international, regional and national projects on sustainable agriculture, use of agricultural technologies and innovations, new farming practices to address food insecurity;
- To elaborate on challenges and perspectives in the cross-sector of education and food security, as well as identify the role of universities in the domain of agriculture and food security;
- To strengthen the cooperation among agricultural universities of OIC member states and share their experience and practices on developing and implementing higher educational programs on food security and agricultural development;
- To explore the opportunities of extension by agricultural universities and its impact in empowering the small-scale farmers;
- To promote the role of women and youth, as well as their engagement in food security, agriculture and sustainable food systems.
- To review the importance children's education on food security and possibilities of its introduction to the secondary schools.

FORMAT: In-person with extending to online participation (dependent on epidemiological situation/funding opportunities).

TIME: 8-9 June 2022

VENUE: Almatv. Kazakhstan

LANGUAGE: English (interpretation into Arabic, French and Russian)

PROVISIONAL AGENDA

Time	SESSION name	SESSION topics	STRATEGIC PARTNERS				
FIRST DAY, 8 JUNE 2022							
09:30- 10:45	PLENARY SESSION	Welcoming speeches of High-Level Officials Ceremony of 70th Anniversary of Academician H.E. Tlektes Yespolov Signing Ceremony Group Photo	Guest of Honor – First Lady of Nigeria (confirmed) Prime-Minister of Kazakhstan Ministers of OIC member countries Heads of Hosting Organizations				
10:45-11:10 COFFEE-BREAK							
PARALLEL SESSIONS: MAIN SESSION 1.1 and FOCUSED SESSION 1.2							
11:10- 13:00	SESSION 1.1: Education and Food Security: Challenges and Perspectives	 Quality health and education for children, supporting women and vulnerable communities Global Food Policy Report 2022 Challenges and perspectives in the cross-sector of education and food security Role of universities in promoting and teaching food security education Role of international/regional organizations on awareness raising & capacity building in food security and agriculture 	 Aisha Buhari Foundation IFPRI ICARDA ICBA American University of Beirut RUFORUM 				
11:10- 12:45	SESSION 1.2: Investment opportunities in agricultural sector (with participation of High-Level Government Officials)	 Successful cases of implemented investment projects in agricultural sector Leading areas of agricultural sector for potential investment Cooperation between private sector, investment promotion agencies and other stakeholders for boosting the agriculture in OIC region IFPA: IOFS's B2B are in the promotion of trade and investment in the OIC region 	 IOFS AAAID IFPA Qatar (Hassad Food, Widam Food) Oman (OFIC, ATYAB) UAE (Dubai FDI, ADIO) 				
13:00-14:30 LUNCH BREAK Pole of woman in food security adjustion - WDO							
14:30- 15:45	SESSION 2: Women and Food Security	 Role of women in food security education, particularly in educating the young generation on food security Empowerement of women in boosting agricultural production Women engagement in decision-making process for improving food security and ensuring sustainable agriculture 	- ICBA - ICARDA - NASEC - RUFORUM				
15:45-16:10 COFFEE-BREAK							
16:10- 17:30	SESSION 3: Role of Universities in Food Security and Sustainable Agriculture	 Problems and ways of solution for teaching "Food Security" in agricultural universities Developing an education syllabus on "Food Security" (opening faculties, education programme on food security as interdisciplinary subject) 	 American University of Beirut KazNARU UAE University Agriculture Science Academy of Abu Dhabi RUFORUM 				

17:30- 17:45	CONCLUDING SESSION, DAY 1	 Cooperation among agricultural universities on sharing knowledge and experience in food security/agriculture Educating high school students on agriculture Extension services by agricultural universities to farmers Conclusion and Announcement for DAY 2 	- Hosting Organizations			
18:30 OFFICIAL GALA-DINNER (for all participants)						
SECOND DAY, 9 JUNE 2022						
09:30- 09:45	OPENING SESSION, DAY 2	- Announcement for Day 2	- Hosting Organizations			
PARALLEL SESSIONS: MAIN SESSION 4 and ROUNDTABLE						
09:45- 11:15	SESSION 4: Youth and Food Security	 Fellowship Nomination Announcement COMSTECH-IOFS; Discussion and presentations of post-graduate and young researchers on education and research in food security. Increasing awareness of food security among young people Role of youth and their engagement in ensuring sustainable food systems 	- COMSTECH - IOFS - ICBA - ICYF - Agriculture Science Academy of Abu Dhabi - RUFORUM			
11:15-11:30 COFFEE-BREAK						
11:30- 12:40	VISIT to KazNARU	 Visiting KazNARU premises: Agrotechnology Hub Water Hub University Cooperation Centers and Research Laboratories 	- KazNARU			
12:40- 13:00	CLOSING SESSION	Closing remarks	Heads of Organizers / Partners			
13:00-1	13:00-14:00 LUNCH BREAK					
14:00- 18:00	EXCURSION	- TOUR to ALMATY SIGHTSEEING	ALL PARTICIPANTS			
18:00 OFFICIAL GALA-DINNER (for all participants)						



PARTNERSHIP

The Forum will be organized by the Islamic Organization for Food Security in partnership with the Kazakh National Agrarian Research University (KazNARU), as well as in cooperation with UAE Government, National Agrarian Science Educational Center of Kazakhstan (NASEC), OIC Institutions, namely ICESCO, FUIW, COMSTECH, WDO, ICYF, and leading international organizations, ICBA, ICARDA and agricultural universities/institutions, research entities in OIC member countries.

The following list provides the information on partners that are to support the Forum, including in the content of the event. The list is not limited, but rather provides overview of partnership.

#	Name of organization	Details
1.	Kazakhstan	Kazakh National Agrarian Research University (KazNARU)
		National Agrarian Science Educational Center of Kazakhstan (NASEC)
2.	United Arab Emirates	Ministry of Climate Change and Environment (MOCCAE)
		Abu Dhabi Agriculture and Food Safety Authority
		Agricultural Science Academy in Abu Dhabi
3.	ICESCO/FUIW	Islamic World Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
		Federation of the Universities of the Islamic World
4.	COMSTECH	Standing Committee on Scientific and Technological Cooperation of the OIC
5.	WDO	Women Development Organization of the OIC
6.	ICYF	Islamic Cooperation Youth Forum
7.	ICBA	International Center for Biosaline Agriculture
8.	ICARDA	International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas
9.	Lebanon	American University in Beirut
10.	RUFORUM	Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM)
11.	IFPA	International Islamic Food Processing Association (IOFS subsidiary)

FUNDING

The organization of the Forum will be mainly funded by the IOFS Secretariat and KazNARU, that will seek the funding assistance from donor organizations. The organizers do not place any charge for participation at the Forum and attendance will be free of charge.

The IOFS Secretariat and KazNARU will provide the venue, all technical facilities (video conferencing system, projection screen, wi-fi, audio equipment, microphones, headsets, equipment for simultaneous equipment, video-recording, water, stationery) and interpretation services, catering (coffee-breaks, lunches, dinners) and local transportation in Almaty.

Considering the limited budget of the organizers, travel expenses, including airline tickets, meals other than during the event, accommodation, other miscellaneous expenses, will be maintained independently by each organization or individual that is to attend the Forum. As such, the funding of travel expenses will be dependent to availability of sponsorship from donor organizations. At the same time, participants are encouraged to apply for sponsorship from their national entities or other non-governmental and international organizations.

Meanwhile, all Forum sessions will be streamlined in the Zoom video-conferencing, therefore speakers and participants are able to attend the Forum online.

PARTICIPANTS

Participants will include representatives of government authorities, academia and universities, research and science entities of OIC member states, international and regional organizations.

Participants will represent the following OIC Member States:

ASIA: Afghanistan, Albania, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Malaysia, Maldives, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan. MIDDLE EAST: Bahrain, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, UAE, Yemen.

The government authorities will be represented by the Ministries responsible for food security and agricultural development; as well as Ministries on science and education of the mentioned OIC Member States.

The international and regional organizations, working or interested in the topics of food security, agriculture, education and other development projects, will be also welcomed to attend the Forum.

Considering that the main theme of the Forum will be related to education on food security and agriculture, most of participants will include representatives of agricultural universities and research institutions.

Therefore, the below list of universities (not limited to other educational organizations) is to be suggested to attend the Forum.

- Afghanistan
- National Agriculture Education College
- Kabul University
- Ghazni University

- Albania
- University of Agriculture, Tirana
- Azerbaijan
- Azerbaijan State Agricultural University
- Bangladesh
- Bangladesh Agricultural University
- Brunei Darussalam
- University of Brunei Darussalam
- Indonesia
- Bogor Agricultural University, Bogor
- Iran
- University of Tehran
- Iraq
- Faculty of Agriculture, University of Baghdad
- Jordan
- University of Jordan
- Kazakhstan
- Kazakh National Agrarian Research University
- Saken Seifullin Kazakh Agrotechnical University
- West Kazakhstan Agrarian-Technical University Named After Zhangir Khan
- Kyrgyzstan
- Kyrgyz National Agrarian University named after K. Skryabina
- Lebanon
- Lebanese University
- Malaysia
- University College of Agroscience Malaysia
- Oman
- Sultan Qaboos University
- Pakistan
- University of Agriculture, Faisalabad (UAF)
- University of Agriculture, Peshawar
- Pakistan Agricultural Research Council
- Qatar
- Hamad Bin Khalifa University

- Saudi Arabia
- King Saud University
- Agricultural and Food Sciences-King Faisal University
- Qassim University
- College of Food and Environment Technology in Buraydah
- Tajikistan
- Tajik Agrarian University named after Shirinsho Shotemura
- Academy of Agricultural Sciences of the Tajikistan
- Turkey
- Konya Food and Agriculture University
- Turkmenistan
- Turkmen Agricultural Institute
- United Arab Emirates
- College of Food and Agriculture, United Arab Emirates University
- Agricultural Science Academy
- Yemen
- Sanaa University
- University of Aden

MORE INFORMATION & CONTACT DETAILS

More information: https://iofs.org.kz/ru/post/iofs-high-level-forum-on-food-security

Focal point: For more information about the **Forum**, **pleas**e contact:

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