

SESRIC-COMCEC Project on “Enhancing Food Security through National  
Food Balance Sheets”

**Virtual Training Workshop on**

**“Compilation and Analysis of National Food Balance Sheets in OIC Countries”**

18 October 2021, 11:00 (Ankara time)

**Opening Speech of H.E. Mr. Nebil DABUR**

**Director General of SESRIC**

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

- **H.E. Mr. Fatih Ünlü**, Director General, COMCEC Coordination Office (CCO)
- **Mr. Mohsen Hajjej**, Deputy Director in Charge of Coordination and International Cooperation
- **Distinguished Participants from National Statistical Offices and Ministries of Agriculture of OIC Member Countries**
- **Distinguished Representatives of FAO, and International Organisations**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

السلام علیکم ورحمة الله وبركاته

I wish you all a very Good Day

**It is a great pleasure for me to address and welcome you all at the Virtual Training Workshop on “Compilation and Analysis of National Food Balance Sheets in OIC Countries” jointly organised by SESRIC and the Standing Committee for Economic and Commercial Cooperation of the Organization of the Islamic Cooperation (COMCEC) with the technical support of FAO.**

**I would like to extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) for providing their technical support and valuable knowledge to be extended through their distinguished experts for this virtual training.**

**My thanks and appreciation are also extended to our strategic partner, COMCEC, in co-organizing this workshop within the scope of the Project on “Enhancing Food Security through National Food Balance Sheets”, which is co-funded through the COMCEC Project Funding mechanism, and for their continuous support extended to improve the national capacities of the member countries in the field of statistics.**

## **Distinguished Participants,**

**We are still witnessing an unprecedented global crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic with startling implications for our societies and economies. In addition to the dramatic implications for the health of people, the pandemic has triggered a major global economic and financial crisis.**

**The measures taken to control the spread of the virus, such as the lockdowns and the travel restrictions, have resulted in an unprecedented slowdown of economic activities all over the world. In the last year, almost all macroeconomic indicators deteriorated significantly all over the world, and the OIC Member Countries were no exception. This year, however, projections signal for recovery in many indicators, though some of them are only partial.**

**In fact, during these difficult times, the importance and the need for reliable statistics become crucial more than ever before. The accurate analysis and diagnosis of the situation, and the formulation of prompt and prudential policies based on reliable statistics and data have been rarely as evident as in the course of such crises.**



**Dear Participants,**

**Given this state of affairs, it seems that the priority of enhancing the technical capacities of the NSOs in different fields and areas gained more and more importance. In this context, our joint efforts today during this training workshop are in line with this priority in our member countries, specifically in the field of national food balance sheets (FBS) data and analyses.**

**In this context, it is worth mentioning here that the OIC-2025 Programme of Action underlines that without enough and adequate food, it is not possible to climb the ladder of development. Therefore, effective and sustainable agricultural management and policymaking could play a vital role in enhancing the development efforts of the member countries.**

**In fact, one of the goals set under the Agriculture and Food Security section in the OIC-2025 Programme of Action is to “Promote the optimization of utilization of land and other natural resources for agricultural sector and food production”. On the other hand, the targets set under the “SDG 2: Zero hunger”, include, among others, promotion of universal access to nutritious foods, increasing productivity of food producers, and promoting resilient and sustainable practices in agriculture.**

**Monitoring and reporting the performance towards achieving these goals and targets necessitate the availability of the accurate, reliable and timely statistical data, including, among others, the accurate preparation of national food balance sheets (FBS) data and analyses; the subject of this training workshop.**

**Dear Participants,**

**Despite the economic growth and industrialisation over the last several decades, hunger unfortunately remains one of the key reasons for death globally and in the OIC member countries. Based on this year edition of SESRIC Report, which is titled “Towards the Achievement of Prioritised Sustainable Development Goals in OIC Countries”, the OIC countries have made stagnant progress over the last two decades towards reducing the proportions of people suffering from hunger.**

**The prevalence of undernourishment in the group of OIC countries fell from 15.1% in 2000 to 10.5% in 2018. Yet, this ratio was still above 10% in 15 OIC countries. Moreover, this situation is projected to be exacerbated during the last two years due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, which has posed considerable global challenges to food security, particularly in developing countries including many OIC members since a significant proportion of household expenditures in these countries goes to food.**

**In this context and according to this year UN's Sustainable Development Goals Report, 70 to 161 million additional people are likely to have experienced hunger because of the pandemic. According to the Global Information and Early Warning System on Food and Agriculture (GIEWS) of the FAO, 45 countries, of which 23 are OIC countries, are in need of external assistance for food, with conflicts and climate-related shocks continue to underpin the high levels of severe food insecurity.**

## **Distinguished Participants,**

**One of the policy instruments towards addressing the food security challenges is the national food balance sheets (FBS), which can guide the relevant governmental institutions to monitor and analyse the trends in the overall national food supply, disclose the change in the type of food consumed, and reveal whether the food supply level in the country is adequate in relation to the nutritional requirements.**



**As such, the national food balance sheets are useful in making a detailed examination and appraisal of food and agriculture situation in the country. They are also used for predicting the overall shortages and/or surpluses of food in the country.**

**Therefore, with a view to strengthening the statistical capacities of the NSOs in the OIC countries on Food Balance Sheets; SESRIC, COMCEC and FAO have jointly developed a project titled “Enhancing Food Security through National Food Balance Sheets”. The project aims to promote the importance of collection and usage of accurate, reliable and up-to-date data on food production and consumption so as to ensure sound analysis of food security situation in the OIC countries.**

**We hope that this collaboration will contribute to enhancing the knowledge and experience of the NSOs and other relevant national institutions in our member countries on the technical subjects related to Food Balance Sheets, and, thus, contribute to the harmonization and standardization of monitoring food security and promotion of sustainable agricultural development in our member countries.**

**Before concluding, I would like to thank you all once again and wish you all the success in your deliberations. I am confident that the valuable experience of FAO and the contribution of leading OIC member countries will be instrumental in ensuring the success of this training workshop.**

**و السلام عليكم و رحمة الله و بركاته. Thank you all.**