

## CONCEPT NOTE

### “OIC EDUCATION FORUM ON FOOD SECURITY”

May 2022, Dubai, UAE

*to be organized by the Islamic Organization for Food Security  
in partnership with the Government of United Arab Emirates and other stakeholders*

## **INTRODUCTION**

### ***Food Insecurity ↔ Education***

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 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.

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.

### ***Role of Universities***

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.

### ***Education for youth***

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 through 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).

### ***Existing practices in OIC region***

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.

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 is chairing the Council.

### **OIC EDUCATION FORUM on FOOD SECURITY**

Within the Fourth General Assembly meeting held 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 these Programs is “OIC Food System Talent Development”.

In the regard of above-mentioned, the Islamic Organization for Food Security (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 among member states of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation.

Therefore, the IOFS in cooperation with the Government of United Arab Emirates and various universities, research entities in OIC countries, as well as international and regional organizations will conduct the “OIC Education Forum on Food Security”, in May, 2022, in Dubai, UAE.

#### ***Conference objectives***

- To discuss the challenges and perspectives in the cross-sector of education and food security, as well as the role of universities in the domain of agriculture and food security;
- To build a platform for agricultural universities to share experience and practices of 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 review the importance children's education on food security and possibilities of its introduction to the secondary schools;
- To promote the youth engagement in agriculture and sustainable food systems.

**Format:** In-person with extending to online participation (*dependent on epidemiological situation*).

**Time:** May 2022 (TBC)

**Venue:** Dubai, UAE

**Language:** English (*interpretation into Arabic and French*)

**Partnership:**

The Conference will be organized by the Islamic Organization for Food Security in cooperation with the Government of the United Arab Emirates and in partnership with the following organizations:

- Islamic World Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (**ICESCO**);
- Islamic Cooperation Youth Forum (**ICYF**);
- Federation of the Universities of the Islamic World (**FUIW**);
- International Center for Biosaline Agriculture (**ICBA**);
- International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas (**ICARDA**);
- Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (**RUFORUM**);
- Leading **Agricultural Universities** of OIC member states.

**Responsibilities & Funding:**

The IOFS will take the main responsibility for the event arrangements with governments and agricultural universities of OIC member states, as well as for the event content development, including the agenda, list of participants and experts.

The funding for the organization of the above-mentioned Forum will be maintained as follows:

- UAE Government: 1) arrangement of venue, including conference room, technical equipment (simultaneous interpretation equipment, headphones, microphones, LCD-screen, and others); 2) one official lunch on behalf of the UAE Government; 3) fees for simultaneous interpretation into Arabic, French; 4) design and printing of promotional materials; 5) consultant fees for experts that will be involved in the facilitation, moderation and presentation in related Conference sessions.
- IOFS: 1) one official dinner on behalf of the IOFS.
- Travel expenses, including airline tickets, local transportation, meals, other expenses, will be maintained independently by each organization or individual that is attending the Forum or arranged by sponsors.

**Participants:**

Participants will include representatives of government agencies (Ministries of Education/Science/Agriculture/Food Security and others), academia and universities, research and science entities, civil society and youth of OIC member states, international and regional organizations.

The below list of universities (not limited to other educational organizations) is to be suggested to attend and get involved in the organization of the Forum. The final list will be determined in consultation with OIC member states.

- **Afghanistan**
  - Balkh University
  - Bamyan University
  - Herat University
  - Kabul University
  - Al-Beroni University
  - Kandahar University
  - Nangarhar University
  - Paktia University
  - Shaikh Zayed University
  - Takhar University
  - Shaikh Zayed University, Khost
  - Baghlan University
  
- **Algeria**
  - Higher National Agronomic School (French name: Ecole Nationale Supérieure Agronomique)
  
- **Azerbaijan**
  - Azerbaijan State Agricultural University
  
- **Bangladesh**
  - Bangladesh Agricultural University
  - Sher-e-Bangla Agricultural University
  - Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Agricultural University
  - Sylhet Agricultural University
  - Khulna Agricultural University
  - Patuakhali Science and Technology University (Faculty of Agriculture)
  - Noakhali Science and Technology University (Department of Agriculture, Department of Fisheries and Marine Science)
  - Hajee Mohammad Danesh Science and Technology University (Faculty of Agriculture)
  - Khulna University (Agrotechnology Discipline)
  - Rajshahi University (Faculty of Agriculture)
  - Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Science and Technology University (Faculty of Agriculture)
  - International University of Business, Agriculture and Technology
  - EXIM Bank Agricultural University
  - First Capital University (Faculty of Agriculture)
  - Ishakha International University (Faculty of Agriculture)
  - Atish Dipankar University of Science and Technology
  
- **Benin**
  - Agricultural University of Ketou (French name: Université Agricole de Kétou)
  - Faculty of Agronomic Sciences (French name: Faculté des Sciences Agronomiques)
  
- **Cameroon**
  - Université des Montagnes, Department of Agriculture and Veterinary Medicine (Agro-Vet)

- University of Buea, Faculty of Agriculture and Veterinary Medicine
- University of Dschang, Faculty of Agriculture and Agricultural Sciences
- University of Maroua, Higher institute of the sahel (ISS), Department of Agriculture, Livestock and Agricultural derived products

- **Egypt**

- Faculty of Agriculture, Alexandria University
- Faculty of Agriculture, Ain Shams University
- Faculty of Agriculture, Suez Canal University
- Faculty of Agriculture, Al-Azhar University
- Faculty of Agriculture, Assiut University
- Faculty of Agriculture, Aswan University
- Faculty of Agriculture, Beniswaif University
- Faculty of Agriculture, Benha University
- Faculty of Agriculture, Cairo University
- Faculty of Agriculture, Damanhour University
- Faculty of Agriculture, Damietta University
- Faculty of Agriculture, Fayoum University
- Faculty of Agriculture, Kafrelsheikh University
- Faculty of Agriculture, Mansoura University
- Faculty of Agriculture, Minia University
- Faculty of Agriculture, Monofia University
- Faculty of Agriculture, Sohag University
- Faculty of Agriculture,[3] South Valley University
- Faculty of Agriculture, Tanta University
- Faculty of Agriculture, Zagazig University
- Faculty of Organic Agriculture, Heliopolies University

- **Indonesia**

- Bogor Agricultural University, Bogor
- University of Brawijaya, Malang
- Gadjah Mada University, Yogyakarta
- Padjadjaran University, Sumedang
- University of Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta
- Udayana University, Bali
- University of Sumatera Utara, Medan
- School of Life Sciences and Technology, Bandung Institute of Technology, Bandung
- Syiah Kuala University, [Banda Aceh]
- University of Jember, Jember

- **Iran**

- Faculty of Agriculture, Bu Ali Sina University of Hamedan
- College of Agriculture, University of Jiroft
- Gorgan University of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources
- Eghlid University of Agricultural Sciences
- Islamic Azad University of Qaemshahr
- Islamic Azad University of Shabestar
- Sari Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources University
- Faculty of Agricultural Sciences & Natural Resources, Arak University,[14] Arak University
- Faculty of Agriculture, Ferdowsi University of Mashhad
- Gonbad Kavous University\* Faculty of Agriculture, Guilan University

- College of Agriculture, Isfahan University of Technology
- Islamic Azad University
- Faculty of Agriculture, Azadshahr Branch
- Faculty of Agriculture, Isfahan Branch Khorasgan
- Faculty of Agriculture, Karaj Branch
- Faculty of Agriculture, Roudehen Branch
- Faculty of Agriculture, Science and Research Branch
- Faculty of Agriculture, Varamin Branch
- Khouzesatn-Ramin Agricultural and Natural Resources University
- College of Agriculture, Shahed University
- Faculty of Agriculture, Shiraz University
- Faculty of Agriculture, University of Kurdistan
- University of Tabriz
- Faculty of Agriculture,[26] Tarbiat Modares University
- University of Tehran
- College of Abureyhan[27]
- Karaj College of Agriculture and Natural Resources\* Faculty of Agriculture, University of Zanjan
- Faculty of Agriculture, Urmia University
- Agricultural Research Institute, Iranian Research Organization for Science & Technology

- **Iraq**

- Technical College Al-Musaib, Al-furat Al-Awast Technical University
- Faculty of Agriculture, University of Babylon
- Faculty of Agriculture, University of Baghdad
- Faculty of Agriculture, University of Basra
- Faculty of Agriculture, University of Mosul
- Faculty of Agriculture, University of Kwofa
- Faculty of Agriculture, University of Thi-Gar
- Faculty of Agriculture, University of Maissan
- Faculty of Agriculture, University of Waset
- Faculty of Agriculture, University of Anbar
- Faculty of Agriculture, University of Dyalla
- Faculty of Agriculture, University of Karbala
- Faculty of Agriculture, University of Aldewania
- Faculty of Agriculture, University of Salah Aldean
- Faculty of Agriculture, University of Alswlaimania
- Faculty of Agriculture, University of Arbil
- Faculty of Agriculture, University of Dhowk
- Faculty of Agriculture, University of Tehran

- **Kazakhstan**

- Kazakh National Agrarian Research University
- Saken Seifullin Kazakh Agrotechnical University

- **Kyrgyzstan**

- Kyrgyz National Agrarian University named after K. Skryabina

- **Malaysia**

- University College of Agrosience Malaysia
- University of Malaysia Kelantan
- University of Putra Malaysia

- University of Malaysia Sabah
- University of Malaysia Terengganu
- University of Sultan Zainal Abidin
- University of Teknologi MARA Faculty of Plantation and Agrotechnology
- University of Tunku Abdul Rahman Faculty of Science
  
- **Niger**
  - Faculty of Agronomy of Niamey (French name: Faculté d'Agronomie de Niamey)
  
- **Nigeria**
  - Faculty of Agriculture, University of Abuja, Abuja.
  - Faculty of Agriculture Science, Ebonyi State University(EBSU)
  - University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Kwara State
  - Landmark University, Omu - Aran [www.lmu.edu.ng](http://www.lmu.edu.ng), Kwara state
  - Audu Bako School of Agriculture, Dambatta, Kano State
  - Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Kaduna State
  - Federal College of Animal Health and Production Technology, Moor Plantation Ibadan
  - Federal College of Agricultural Produce Technology, Kano
  - Federal College of Agriculture, Ibadan
  - Federal College of Agriculture, Akure, Ondo State
  - Federal College of Agriculture, Ishiagu
  - Federal College of Forestry, Jos, Plateau State
  - Federal College of Animal Health and Production Technology, Vom
  - Federal University of Technology Owerri
  - Kwara State University, Ilorin
  - Ladoke Akintola University of Technology, Ogbomosh
  - Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike
  - Modibbo Adama University of Technology, Yola
  - Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife
  - The Polytechnic, Ibadan
  - University of Agriculture, Abeokuta
  - University of Agriculture, Makurdi
  - University of Ibadan, Ibadan
  - University of Nigeria, Nsukka
  - Federal University of Technology, Owerri
  - Federal University of Technology, Akure
  - Federal University of Technology, Minna
  
- **Pakistan**
  - Sindh Agriculture University, Tando Jam
  - Shaheed Benazir Bhutto University of Veterinary Animal Sciences, Sakrand
  - Muhammad Nawaz Shareef University of Agriculture (MNSUA), Multan, Punjab
  - Adnan Khan Shahbazkhalil University of Agriculture, Fatehpur, (Layyah) Punjab
  - University of Agriculture, Faisalabad (UAF)
  - Faculty of Agriculture Gomal University, Dera Ismael Khan, Khyber Pakhtoon Khwa
  - Faculty of Agriculture Sciences and Technology, Bahauddin Zakariya University, Multan
  - Balochistan Agriculture College, Quetta
  - Faculty of Agriculture, Gomal University
  - Faculty of Agriculture and Environmental sciences, Islamia University, Bahawalpur
  - University of Agriculture, Peshawar
  - Lasbela University of Agriculture, Water and Marine Sciences, Othal, Lasbela District
  - Pir Mehr Ali Shah, Arid Agriculture University, Rawalpindi, Punjab



- University College of Agriculture, Rawalakot
- Dera Ghazi Khan College of Agriculture, (CADGK) University of Agriculture, Faisalabad
- Department of Agriculture and Agribusiness Management, University of Karachi, Karachi
- University of Poonch Rawalakot, Azad Kashmir
- University College of Agriculture, University of Sargodha
- Institute of Agricultural Sciences, University of the Punjab, Lahore
- Zulfikar Ali Bhutto Agriculture College, Dokri
- Department of Environmental Sciences, COMSATS Institute of Information Technology, Vehari, Pakistan
- Zawar Ameer Bux Jamali Agriculture University
- University of Haripur, Haripur, KPK.
- Balochistan Agriculture College, Quetta
- University College of Agriculture, University of Sargodha
- Department of Agriculture, Abdul Wali Khan University Mardan

- **Saudi Arabia**

- King Saud University
- Agricultural and Food Sciences-King Faisal University
- Qassim University
- College of Food and Environment Technology in Buraydah

- **Sierra Leone**

- Njala University
- University of Sierra Leone
- University of Makeni (UNIMAK)

- **Somalia**

- Zamzam University of Science and Technology, Faculty of Agriculture
- Baidoa international university
- Benadir University

- **Sudan**

- Faculty of Agriculture, University of Khartoum
- Sudan university of science and technology college of agricultural studies
- Agricultural Technology – Elneelin University
- Faculty of Agriculture, Gezira University
- faculty of agricultural, kassala university
- Faculty of Animal Production, Gazira University
- Faculty of Agriculture, University of Zalingei
- Faculty of Agriculture, Sinnar university
- Faculty of Agriculture, University of Gadarif

- **Tajikistan**

- Tajik Agrarian University named after Shirinsho Shotemura

- **Togo**

- School of Agronomy of the University of Lome ('French name: Ecole Supérieure d'Agronomie de l'Université de Lomé)

- **Tunisia**
  - Institut Supérieur Agronomique de Chott Mériem
  - Institut National Agronomique de Tunisie
  - Institut Supérieur Agronomique de Mograne
  - Ecole Supérieure d'Agriculture Mateur
  - Ecole Supérieure d'Agriculture du Kef
  
- **Turkey**
  - Konya Food and Agriculture University
  
- **Turkmenistan**
  - Turkmen Agricultural Institute
  
- **United Arab Emirates**
  - College of Food and Agriculture, United Arab Emirates University
  
- **Uganda**
  - Makerere University (Faculty of Agriculture and Forestry)
  - Bukalasa Agricultural College
  - Gulu University Faculty of Agriculture and Environment
  - Kentim University Uganda Project – Department of Agriculture