

Qurbani as a Global Food
Security Intervention:
Scale, Impact, and the
Path to Sustainability

Precision, Scale, and
Innovation: Insights
for Strengthening
Agri-Tech and Food
Security across OIC
Member States

Strengthening Legume
Breeding Capacity
Through International
Scientific Cooperation



المنظمة الإسلامية للأمن الغذائي
Islamic Organisation for Food Security
l'Organisation Islamique pour la Sécurité Alimentaire



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SOLIDARITY, INNOVATION, AND SHARED KNOWLEDGE: SHAPING THE FUTURE OF OIC FOOD SYSTEMS

Dear Readers,

Reflecting on my tenure leading the Islamic Organisation for Food Security (IOFS), I am continuously reminded that while food security is frequently quantified through agricultural yields and market dynamics, its true foundation lies in less visible pillars: our people, our shared knowledge, and our multilateral solidarity.

This spirit of collective action has profoundly shaped the strategic trajectory of the IOFS throughout 2026. Under the distinguished chairmanship of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the 7th IOFS General Assembly marked a watershed moment for intra-OIC agrarian cooperation. To operationalize our collective mandate, Member States adopted pivotal resolutions, including the establishment of the Food Security and Innovation Knowledge Hub, the inauguration of the Forum of National Agrarian Institutes, and a renewed commitment to advancing the IOFS International Gene Bank to safeguard regional agrobiodiversity. Furthermore, our systemic capacity has been significantly augmented by officially welcoming the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Republic of Uzbekistan as our newest Member States, expanding our alliance to 43 Member States.

This 23rd edition of the Food Security Hub serves as an analytical reflection of these high-level institutional milestones.

The field reports and technical briefs featured within demonstrate how scientific diplomacy, capacity building, and regional traditions translate directly into localized resilience. From exploring optimized supply chains within the global Qurbani ecosystem to analyzing cross-border capacity-building frameworks and climate-adaptive genetic research, this issue highlights the cross-cutting partnerships required to protect our territories.

As these diverse narratives reinforce, sustainable food security cannot be engineered in isolation. It demands a seamless bridge between high-level policy and field-level practice. True resilience is advanced not merely through higher production, but through the deliberate integration of technology, institutional capacity, and shared human expertise.

As we look toward future horizons, including the inspired designation of 2027 as the IOFS Year of Women Agrileaders and Youth Agripreneurs (WAYA), and embrace a revitalized institutional identity under our modernized logo and flag, the IOFS remains anchored in this core mission. I invite our readers, partners, and Member States to engage deeply with the insights in this issue, translating these shared lessons into collective, impactful action for a self-reliant and food-secure OIC community.

Ambassador Berik Aryn

*Director General,
Islamic Organisation
for Food Security (IOFS)*



FROM THE DESK OF THE CHIEF EDITOR

As we unveil the 23rd edition of the Food Security Hub, our core editorial objective shifts from merely summarizing institutional achievements to systematically decomposing the functional mechanisms that stabilize food networks. High-level diplomacy shapes our organizational mandates, but it is empirical science, cross-border technology transfers, and optimized regional supply chains that secure food systems on the ground. This volume provides an exhaustive, multi-layered blueprint of those actionable layers.

Our research section begins with an analytical look at the global Qurbani ecosystem, detailing pre-season allocation frameworks to target animal protein deficits across fragile OIC territories. Shifting focus to human capital, our second piece examines Pakistan's capacity-building initiative at Northwest A&F University in China, which serves as a replication matrix for AI-driven precision agriculture. We anchor these discussions in laboratory science via a technical brief tracking the KazRIAPG scientific mission to ICARDA in Morocco, focusing on automated seed sorting and genebank management systems vital to mitigating climate-induced aridification.

Complementing these studies, the Q2 2026 Food Security Update from our Programs Department tracks escalating trade pressures and climate vulnerabilities. We critically break down the compounding effects of the Near East conflict and shipping disruptions through the Strait of Hormuz, mapping out a direct 15-20% spike in global urea and ammonia pricing. This analysis exposes how high input stickiness depresses smallholder margins and directly shapes the 2026-2027 global wheat and maize harvest projections.

Next, this issue documents our transition from policy dialogue into operational partnerships on the ground. We proudly celebrate the accession of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Republic of Uzbekistan as full Member States, elevating our active alliance to 43 countries. This structural growth aligns with the 13 major resolutions passed by the 7th General Assembly under the chairmanship of Kazakhstan, headlined by the operational launch of the Food Security and Innovation Knowledge Hub, the IOFS International Genebank, and our first Moroccan Regional Office.

Finally, moving from dialogue to field execution, we feature our intensive multilateral engagements and high-level dip-

lomatic missions across the OIC geography. This volume details our core policy advocacy at the 5th Antalya Diplomacy Forum and the Regional Ecological Summit, alongside strategic inter-institutional accords including a financing MoU with the Islamic Development Bank and a data-driven farm governance alliance with Astana IT University. These frameworks power tangible on-the-ground deliverables, led by our joint initiative with TİKA distributing certified drought-resistant seeds to 400 smallholder families in Northern Afghanistan, and IFPA business roundtables optimizing the Kazakhstan-UAE Halal meat trade corridor. We also honor our collaborative host-country ties, documenting water security briefings to the Kazakh Parliament, grain reserve sessions with the Food Contract Corporation, and our staff's civic mobilization for the nationwide "Taza Kazakhstan" campaign.

We extend our gratitude to the scientists, agribusiness specialists, and policy practitioners whose empirical field reports made this rigorous edition possible. It is our sincere hope that the data frameworks, supply chain logic, and institutional metrics mapped out across these pages serve as highly actionable tools as we collectively build a self-reliant OIC agrarian community.

Dr. Muhammad Yousuf Khan

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QURBANI AS A GLOBAL FOOD SECURITY INTERVENTION: SCALE, IMPACT, AND THE PATH TO SUSTAINABILITY

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EN SUMMARY

Qurbani represents one of the world's largest annual humanitarian food-distribution systems, providing millions of vulnerable people with access to animal protein during Eid al-Adha. Despite its remarkable scale, the global impact of Qurbani has remained largely undocumented due to fragmented data and the absence of a coordinated international framework. This report presents the first consolidated assessment of organized Qurbani operations, highlighting their contribution to food security, humanitarian assistance, and local economies across OIC Member States. It demonstrates that organized Qurbani reaches tens of millions of beneficiaries annually while identifying key challenges related to coordination, data collection, and supply chain efficiency. The report further proposes a strategic role for the Islamic Organisation for Food Security (IOFS) in establishing a unified OIC Qurbani data framework and promoting a more coordinated, sustainable, and impactful global Qurbani system.

المخلص

AR

يمثل الأضحي أحد أكبر أنظمة توزيع الغذاء الإنساني السنوية في العالم، إذ يوفر اللحوم لملايين الأسر المحتاجة خلال عيد الأضحي المبارك، مساهماً في تعزيز الأمن الغذائي وتحسين الحصول على البروتين الحيواني. ورغم هذا الحجم الكبير، ظل الأثر العالمي للأضحي غير موثق بصورة شاملة بسبب تشتت البيانات وغياب إطار دولي موحد للتنسيق. يقدم هذا التقرير أول تقييم موحد لعمليات الأضحي المنظمة، مبرزاً إسهامها في الأمن الغذائي والعمل الإنساني والاقتصادات المحلية في الدول الأعضاء بمنظمة التعاون الإسلامي. كما يستعرض أبرز التحديات المتعلقة بجمع البيانات، والتنسيق، وكفاءة سلاسل الإمداد، ويقترح دوراً ريادياً للمنظمة الإسلامية للأمن الغذائي في إنشاء إطار موحد لبيانات الأضحي على مستوى الدول الأعضاء، بما يساهم في بناء منظومة أضحي أكثر تنسيقاً واستدامة وتأثيراً.

FR RÉSUMÉ

Le Qurbani constitue l'un des plus grands systèmes annuels de distribution alimentaire humanitaire au monde, fournissant des protéines animales à des millions de personnes vulnérables durant l'Aïd al-Adha. Malgré son ampleur exceptionnelle, son impact mondial est longtemps resté insuffisamment documenté en raison de données fragmentées et de l'absence d'un cadre international coordonné. Ce rapport présente la première évaluation consolidée des opérations de Qurbani organisées, mettant en évidence leur contribution à la sécurité alimentaire, à l'action humanitaire et aux économies locales dans les États membres de l'OIC. Il souligne également les principaux défis liés à la collecte des données, à la coordination et à l'efficacité des chaînes d'approvisionnement, tout en proposant un rôle stratégique pour l'Organisation islamique pour la sécurité alimentaire (IOFS) dans la mise en place d'un cadre unifié de données sur le Qurbani au sein de l'OIC, afin de renforcer la coordination, la durabilité et l'impact de ce système humanitaire mondial.

THE DIVINE IMPERATIVE THAT FEEDS MILLIONS

لَنْ يَنَالَ اللَّهَ لُحُومُهَا وَلَا دِمَاؤُهَا وَلَكِنْ يَنَالُهُ تَتَقَوُّي مِنْكُمْ

"Neither their meat nor their blood reaches Allah.
Rather, it is your piety that reaches Him."

Al-Hajj, 22:37

The Quranic verse above, revealed in the context of sacrifice and worship, carries a profound and often overlooked implication: the act of Qurbani, the ritual slaughter performed during Eid al-Adha, is not validated by the physical offering itself, but by what flows from it. That which reaches Allah is taqwa, sincere devotion expressed through sharing, solidarity, and care for those in need. And what reaches

the poor is something equally real: protein, dignity, and inclusion in the Ummah's most celebrated gathering.

This dual nature, spiritual obligation and material intervention, positions Qurbani as arguably the single largest annual food distribution event in the Muslim world. Yet it remains almost entirely unmeasured, under-coordinated, and underappreciated as a food security instrument. IOFS, as the OIC's dedicated food security institution, is uniquely positioned to change that.

THE PROTEIN GAP ACROSS OIC MEMBER STATES

Food security in much of the Muslim world is not simply a question of caloric availability. It is a structural deficit in the quality and diversity of nutrition, and animal-source protein sits at the

heart of that deficit. Across many OIC member states, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia, and conflict-affected regions of the Middle East, per capita meat consumption remains far below global averages.

The OECD-FAO Agricultural Outlook 2024 documents this pattern clearly. In low-income countries, where a large share of the OIC’s 57 member states are concentrated, income constraints continue to block the transition to protein-rich diets based on animal products, resulting in a persistent and heavy reliance on staples alone.

In Yemen, where years of war have produced chronic malnutrition across entire regions, fresh meat is a luxury unavailable to millions of families for most of the year. In Niger, Sudan, Somalia, Bangladesh, and Gaza, humanitarian organizations consistently report that Qurbani meat represents the only animal protein many beneficiary families will consume in an entire calendar year. This is not hyperbole, it is a documented nutritional reality that underscores Qurbani’s significance far beyond its ritual dimension.

In this context, Eid al-Adha is not supplemental charity. It is a critical seasonal nutrition intervention that arrives once a year, at scale, through a mechanism rooted in religious obligation rather than donor fatigue or bureaucratic contingency.

THE SCALE: A GLOBAL FOOD SYSTEM HIDING IN PLAIN SIGHT

The numbers, when assembled from available national and organizational data for 2025, are striking even if a consolidated global estimate does not yet formally exist.

ANIMALS SLAUGHTERED: COUNTRY-LEVEL DATA (2025)

Across OIC member states and Muslim-majority communities worldwide, tens of millions of animals were slaughtered during Eid al-Adha 2025. Country-level data from official and industry sources paints the following picture:

Country	Animals Slaughtered (2025)	Economic Value (2025)
Türkiye	3.3 million	\$4.3 billion USD
Pakistan	7.0 million	\$1.8 billion USD
Bangladesh	10.4 million	\$5.7 billion USD
Indonesia	1.8 million	\$1.1 billion USD
Saudi Arabia	0.8–1.0 million (est., IDB ADAHI)	Not disaggregated

Note: Economic values are not directly comparable across countries, reflecting differences in animal composition, local price levels, and scope of measurement. Türkiye’s figure covers the broader Eid al-Adha economic footprint including animal purchase, slaughter services, transport, and related activity not livestock value alone which accounts for its comparatively high implied unit value (\$1,300 per animal). Bangladesh and Indonesia figures cover livestock purchase value only, with Bangladesh’s higher average unit value (\$548) reflecting a cattle-heavy sacrifice pattern and elevated local prices. Pakistan’s lower average (\$258) reflects a small ruminant-dominant composition. Bangladesh figures refer to Eid al-Adha 2024, the latest available official data from the Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock (MFL); the 2025 sacrifice count declined to approximately 9.1 million due to economic pressures (Daily Star, 2026). Indonesia economic value is based on Ministry of Religious Affairs

(MoRA) estimates for sacrificial animals only; broader sectoral estimates cited elsewhere are not comparable. All other figures refer to Eid al-Adha 2025. No consolidated global dataset exists; this five-country total of approximately 23 million animals represents a fraction of the estimated global total across 57 OIC member states and diaspora communities.

These five countries alone account for approximately 23 million animals in a single Eid season. Adding the remaining OIC member states, diaspora communities in Europe and North America, and household-level sacrifices not captured in official data, total global Qurbani-linked economic activity substantially exceeds the \$12.9 billion documented across these five countries alone a figure that already approaches the entire annual operational budget of the world’s largest food assistance organizations. Yet this system remains almost entirely unmeasured and receives no corresponding institutional attention.

TÜRKİYE AS A GLOBAL QURBANI POWER: ORGANIZED AID FLOWS

One of the most striking and least-documented features of global Qurbani is Türkiye’s outsized role not just as a domestic sacrificing country, but as the world’s largest organized exporter of Qurbani-linked humanitarian aid. Turkish NGOs collectively channel hundreds of millions of dollars worth of sacrificial meat to beneficiaries across four continents every year.

The 2025 data from Turkish Organisations, when assembled for the first time in a single table, reveals a picture of extraordinary reach:

Organisation	Shares	Beneficiaries	Countries
Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı (TDV)	898,450	37,285,675	81
Türk Kızılay	168,584	4,529,644	25
İHH İnsani Yardım Vakfı	112,207	~4,500,000	60
HAYDER	93,715	4,200,000	16
İDDEF	~80,000 (est.)	~4,000,000	47
Hayrat Yardım Vakfı	~70,500	~3,200,000	28
Cansuyu Derneği	~43,000	~2,000,000+	19
Deniz Feneri Derneği	~32,000	~500,000+ (target)	20
Beşir Derneği	~36,400	~625,000	Multi
Other mid-size NGOs (est.)	~200,000	~6,000,000	Various
Local orgs / municipalities	~150,000	~4,000,000	Domestic
Full Türkiye Estimate (2025)	~1,800,000+	~65–70 million	80+ countries

Sources: TDV Annual Report 2025; Turkish Red Crescent (Kızılay) press release June 2025; İHH official statement, June 2025 (Anadolu Agency); HAYDER 2025 impact report; İDDEF, Cansuyu, Besir and Deniz Feneri from Yeni Safak field reporting, June 2025. Mid-size and local organization figures are IOFS estimates based on sector-wide hisse growth trends and known organizational capacity. All figures refer to Eid al-Adha 2025.

The aggregate figure is striking: Turkish-based organizations alone are estimated to have reached 65–70 million beneficiaries through organized Qurbani distributions in 2025 a number that dwarfs the combined output of all major international Islamic NGOs operating globally. To put this in perspective, Islamic Relief Worldwide, Alkhidmat, Muslim Charity, and Embrace Relief together reached approximately 6 million people in 2025.

TDV's dominant position within the Turkish ecosystem deserves particular note. With 898,450 shares distributed across 81 countries and 37.3 million beneficiaries, TDV alone accounts for more than half of all Turkish-organized Qurbani aid and represents one of the largest single-organization food distribution operations anywhere in the world.

Türkiye's Strategic Weight in Global Qurbani

Turkish NGOs (2025):

1.8 million shares and 65-70 million beneficiaries across more than 80 countries

All international Islamic NGOs combined (2025):

6 million beneficiaries

Türkiye's organized aid alone is more than 10 times larger than all other international Qurbani NGOs combined.

Yet there is no OIC-level coordination framework that leverages this capacity systematically.

UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES: WHAT COORDINATION FAILURE COSTS

A practice of this scale, conducted with minimal systemic coordination, inevitably generates unintended consequences. Acknowledging these risks is not a critique of Qurbani, it is a prerequisite for strengthening it.

- **Localized livestock depletion:** Uncoordinated demand concentrated in specific localities, particularly fragile pastoral economies across the Sahel and the Horn of Africa can temporarily deplete local herds. Communities that depend on these animals for year-round livelihoods, not only nutrition, bear the cost of demand shocks that were never planned for.
- **Significant meat waste:** The three-day window of Eid al-Adha causes mass slaughter without proportional cold-chain infrastructure across much of the Muslim world. Pakistan's tanneries association estimates that in hot climates, up to 40% of hides can be damaged or destroyed — a signal of broader post-slaughter handling failures that affect meat quality as well.
- **Pre-Eid market exclusion:** Livestock prices in many markets rise 15–20% in the weeks before Eid (up to 50% in some places). This price surge, driven by diaspora remittances and donor-funded demand from wealthier communities, can paradoxically price the poorest local families out of purchasing their own animal, defeating one of the practice's core social objectives.
- **Absorption capacity constraints:** When multiple Turkish and international organizations simultaneously channel Qurbani donations to the same localities without advance coordination, local distribution systems become overwhelmed. Beneficiary targeting turns ad hoc, duplication occurs, and logistical failures undermine the quality and dignity of distribution.
- **Public health and sanitation risks:** Unregulated slaughter in non-dedicated spaces poses hygiene risks for both meat safety and community sanitation risks that disproportionately affect the very communities Qurbani is meant to serve.

The overarching irony: a practice mandated to benefit the needy can, without coordination, inadvertently strain the fragile food systems upon which those same communities depend. Given the scale of Turkish organizations alone operating in 80+ countries simultaneously the absence of a coordination mechanism is not a minor gap. It is a systemic vulnerability.

TOWARD A SUSTAINABLE QURBANI SYSTEM: THE IOFS OPPORTUNITY

The solution is not to manage or restrict Qurbani; it is to coordinate and strengthen it. IOFS already has a Qurbani Meat Initiative concept note developed by its Secretariat, drawing on the precedent of the Islamic Development Bank's ADAHI program in Makkah, which has managed over 20 million animals since 1983. The architecture for action exists. What is needed is political will and institutional investment across four areas:

1. ESTABLISH A CONSOLIDATED OIC QURBANI DATA FRAMEWORK

IOFS should lead the development of a standardized, annual data collection mechanism covering animals slaughtered, meat distributed, beneficiaries reached, and economic value generated disaggregated by OIC member state and region. This framework should integrate with the existing IOFS Food Balance Database to include Eid al-Adha as a distinct seasonal variable in global livestock reporting. Türkiye's experience, where multiple large organizations already produce detailed annual impact reports, provides a ready template for what country-level data collection can look like.

2. BUILD A PRE-SEASON COORDINATION LAYER

IOFS should facilitate a voluntary pre-Eid declaration mechanism among major Islamic charity organizations and national zakat and awqaf bodies covering intended country allocations, target volumes, and beneficiary criteria. Even a basic coordination layer would prevent dangerous concentration of donations in the same localities, reduce duplication, and allow absorption capacity to be assessed in advance. Türkiye's TDV, operating in 81 countries with institutional presence in each, could serve as both a model and a co-anchor for such a system.

3. CONNECT QURBANI DEMAND TO OIC LIVESTOCK SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT

Qurbani demand is one of the most predictable annual signals in any Muslim-majority economy. IOFS should work with member states to treat this signal as a planning tool — supporting small and medium farmers across OIC pastoral economies to prepare for Qurbani demand as a stable revenue stream rather than experiencing it as an unpredictable shock. Investments in certified halal slaughterhouses, cold-chain infrastructure, and value-chain integration for hides and by-products would simultaneously reduce waste, generate employment, and raise the quality of meat distributed to beneficiaries.

4. ACTIVATE THE IOFS QURBANI MEAT PLATFORM

The IOFS Secretariat's existing concept note proposes an international online platform connecting donors worldwide to vetted, Halal-certified livestock operators across OIC member states enabling Muslims in Western countries where sacrifice is restricted to fulfil their obligation through trusted partners, while channelling economic benefit directly to pastoral and agricultural communities within the OIC geography. This platform would include verifiable tracking of slaughter and distribution, a centralized beneficiary database, and integration with national humanitarian authorities. Given Türkiye's existing institutional

infrastructure across 80+ countries, a partnership with TDV and other Turkish organizations as platform anchor partners would be a logical starting point.

PIETY THAT ALSO REACHES THE HUNGRY

“Neither their meat nor their blood reaches Allah. Rather, it is your piety that reaches Him.” This verse does not diminish the importance of the sacrifice it defines what gives it meaning. Piety is not expressed in the act alone, but in the quality, equity, and sustainability of what flows from it.

The 2025 data assembled in this paper tells a story of extraordinary scale. Turkish-based organizations alone reached an estimated 65–70 million beneficiaries across more than 80 countries more than ten times the combined output of all major international Islamic NGOs. When domestic household-level distributions across all OIC member states are included, Qurbani is plausibly the world’s largest single annual food distribution event, rivalling in reach the most ambitious multilateral humanitarian operations.

Yet this system operates without a shared data framework, without pre-season coordination, and without any institutional mechanism to match supply to need at the country level. The result is a pattern of simultaneous over-concentration in some localities and total absence in others — an outcome that wastes resources and fails beneficiaries.

IOFS, as the OIC’s dedicated food security institution headquartered at the intersection of Muslim-majority economies, holds a unique mandate. No other body is better placed to measure this phenomenon, coordinate its actors, connect its supply chains, and advocate for the institutional investment that would transform Qurbani from an annual event into a durable pillar of food security across the Muslim world.

The meat reaches the hungry. The piety reaches Allah. Our task as the institution mandated to serve both is to ensure that what reaches the hungry is as much as it can possibly be, and that the system delivering it grows stronger every year.



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PRECISION, SCALE, AND INNOVATION: INSIGHTS FOR STRENGTHENING AGRI-TECH AND FOOD SECURITY ACROSS OIC MEMBER STATES

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EN SUMMARY

Pakistan's agricultural training programme in China showcased smart farming, precision meteorology, drone operations, AI sensing, arid-zone water management, and postharvest technologies. Field visits demonstrated that targeted investment and value-chain development can revitalize rural economies. Key lessons for OIC states include tech-driven mechanization, climate-resilient weather services, waste reduction, and Agri-tourism. Food security hinges on integrating technology, institutional capacity, and South-South knowledge transfer a model well-suited to the OIC region.

AR الملخص

برنامج التدريب الزراعي الباكستاني في الصين استعرض الزراعة الذكية، والأرصاء الجوية الدقيقة، وتشغيل الطائرات المسيّرة، والاستشعار بالذكاء الاصطناعي، وإدارة المياه في المناطق الجافة، وتقنيات ما بعد الحصاد. وأظهرت الزيارات الميدانية أن الاستثمار الموجه وتطوير سلاسل القيمة يمكن أن يُنعش الاقتصادات الريفية. تشمل الدروس الرئيسية للدول الأعضاء في منظمة التعاون الإسلامي الميكنة التكنولوجية، والخدمات الجوية المرنة مناخياً، والحد من الهدر، والسياحة الزراعية. ويعتمد الأمن الغذائي على دمج التكنولوجيا والقدرة المؤسسية ونقل المعرفة بين دول الجنوب، وهو نموذج ملائم لمنطقة منظمة التعاون الإسلامي.

FR RÉSUMÉ

Le programme de formation agricole pakistanaise en Chine a présenté l'agriculture intelligente, la météorologie de précision, l'utilisation de drones, la détection par IA, la gestion de l'eau en zones arides et les technologies post-récolte. Les visites de terrain ont montré que l'investissement ciblé et le développement des chaînes de valeur peuvent revitaliser les économies rurales. Les principales leçons pour les États de l'OCI incluent la mécanisation technologique, les services météorologiques résilients face au climat, la réduction des déchets et l'agrotourisme. La sécurité alimentaire repose sur l'intégration de la technologie, des capacités institutionnelles et du transfert de connaissances Sud-Sud, un modèle bien adapté à la région de l'OCI.

INTRODUCTION:

As global food systems face mounting pressures from climate change, demographic growth, and supply chain fragility, the capacity of agricultural professionals to adopt new technologies and transfer knowledge across borders has become a strategic priority. In this context, Pakistan's Prime Minister's Initiative for Capacity Building of Agriculture Professionals in China provided a unique opportunity to engage with one of the world's most rapidly advancing agricultural systems.

Over three months at Northwest A&F University in Yangling, China, participants from Pakistan engaged intensively with cutting-edge agricultural engineering, smart farming systems, climate-resilient practices, and rural development models. The cohort comprised agriculture professionals nominated under Pakistan's Prime Minister's Initiative, drawn from public agricultural research, extension, and development institutions. The programme combined classroom instruction and laboratory demonstration with field-based modules and hands-on internship placements across precision meteorology, smart machinery and mechanization, water management, and postharvest

technology, hosted primarily at Northwest A&F University with site visits to affiliated research and demonstration facilities.



FIELD VISIT: RURAL REVITALIZATION IN PRACTICE

FUPING VILLAGE: A MODEL OF AGRI-TOURISM

The visit to Fuping Village offered a compelling example of how targeted government investment and value chain development can transform rural communities within a single decade. The village has evolved into a prosperous community anchored by a strong persimmon-based agricultural economy, blending traditional architecture with modern infrastructure and supplementing farm income through agri-tourism. Local products including honey, tea, sesame confections, and dried fruits illustrated the potential of diversified rural enterprises.

AGRICULTURAL METEOROLOGY AND CLIMATE TECHNOLOGIES

PRECISION METEOROLOGY AT THE FIELD LEVEL

Yangling Meteorological Bureau and the Meixian Kiwi Industry demonstrated how local weather forecasting can be directly integrated with farm management. Meteorological data were shown to support improved irrigation scheduling, pest and disease forecasting, crop planning, reducing input waste and boosting yield reliability. Understanding production stages from pruning and flowering through harvest alongside meteorological inputs, gave participants a practical appreciation of precision horticulture.

WEATHER AND SATELLITE SYSTEMS

The Fengyun meteorological satellite network, supporting multi-hazard early warning and disaster prevention, provided a broader perspective on how space-based technology can serve agricultural and food security objectives. For OIC Member States contending with drought, erratic rainfall, and climate-driven agricultural shocks, these technologies represent a frontier of climate resilience worth exploring through South-South knowledge transfer frameworks.

SMART AGRICULTURE AND MECHANIZATION

ENGINEERING EXPOSURE AND HANDS-ON LEARNING

A core component of the programme was immersion in modern agricultural engineering and mechanization. Training encompassed 3D machinery design using industry-standard software, agricultural drone operation, unmanned tractor systems, orchard robotics, and AI-based smart sensing platforms. Participants also explored conservation tillage techniques and rainwater harvesting systems applicable to rainfed farming conditions. Hands-on internship sessions in tractor disassembly and assembly provided practical mechanization skills directly transferable to farm advisory services, particularly relevant in Pakistan's context, where mechanization adoption remains uneven across small and medium landholdings.

WATER MANAGEMENT AND DRYLAND AGRICULTURE

Dedicated coursework on water allocation strategies for arid and semi-arid environments addressed sprinkler irrigation technologies, climate-smart soil conservation, and field applications in dryland farming systems. These lessons are directly applicable to Pakistan's Pothohar region and other water-stressed agricultural zones common across OIC Member States.

POSTHARVEST TECHNOLOGY AND QUALITY ASSURANCE

Training in postharvest technology addressed micro-nano processing techniques, pasteurization, drying and disinfestation methods for fruits and vegetables, and nondestructive quality testing instruments for grading and shelf-life extension. These innovations address a critical gap: postharvest losses and export quality challenges that limit the competitiveness of agricultural products in OIC markets.

LESSONS FOR OIC MEMBER STATES

China's agricultural transformation offers a set of scalable lessons for OIC Member States at varying stages of agricultural development:

- Technology-driven mechanization reduces labour dependence and enhances productivity at scale — a priority for South Asian and Sub-Saharan African states where mechanization adoption remains uneven across small and medium landholdings
- Advanced meteorological services, integrated with farm management, materially strengthen climate resilience that is particularly valuable for drought-prone OIC sub-regions such as the Sahel and Central Asia
- Nondestructive postharvest quality testing and grading systems underpin reliable, export-grade quality assurance — a gap that limits competitiveness for many MENA and South Asian agricultural exporters
- Postharvest innovation reduces waste, extends shelf life, and increases the export value of agricultural commodities, with particular relevance for high-loss supply chains in the Sahel and South Asia
- Dryland conservation tillage and sprinkler-based irrigation directly address water scarcity in the Sahel and the Middle East, where rainwater harvesting and efficient on-farm water use remain the binding constraint on yield growth
- Agri-tourism provides a sustainable supplementary income stream for rural communities, particularly when linked to local cultural identity — a diversification model with strong potential across Central Asian and MENA rural economies

The Chinese model, adapted thoughtfully to local contexts and implemented through coordinated public-private investment, offers a credible pathway to accelerating productivity, sustainability, and farmer income. For the OIC region more broadly, capacity building of this kind enabling professionals to observe, engage, and apply innovations from peer developing economies represents a high-value investment in long-term food system resilience.

CONCLUSION

The three-month Agricultural Intelligent Equipment training programme at Northwest A&F University, China, offered comprehensive and practical exposure to modern agricultural science, engineering innovation, climate-adaptive technologies, and rural development models. It demonstrated that food security is advanced not only through production increases, but through the

integration of technology, institutional capacity, and knowledge transfer. The skills and insights gained will directly support efforts toward climate-resilient and technology-driven agriculture, improved mechanization and smart farming adoption, reduced postharvest losses and enhanced value addition, and sustainable rural economic development within the OIC framework.



LEGUME INNOVATION: CLIMATE RESILIENT BREEDING THROUGH INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

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EN SUMMARY

This article highlights the role of international scientific cooperation in strengthening climate-resilient grain legume breeding and advancing sustainable food systems across Central Asia and OIC member states. It presents the outcomes of the scientific mission of the Kazakh Research Institute of Agriculture and Plant Growing (KazRIAPG) to ICARDA in Morocco, showcasing modern hybridization techniques, digital seed phenotyping, rapid physiological and biochemical analyses, and long-term conservation of plant genetic resources. The mission established a foundation for future germplasm exchange and technology transfer, supporting the development of climate-resilient crop varieties adapted to arid and semi-arid environments. The experience demonstrates that expanding scientific collaboration and integrating innovative breeding technologies are essential for strengthening breeding capacity, enhancing agricultural resilience, and improving long-term food and nutritional security throughout Central Asia and the wider OIC region.

المخلص

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تسلط هذه المقالة الضوء على دور التعاون العلمي الدولي في تعزيز برامج تربية البقوليات المقاومة لتغير المناخ ودعم النظم الغذائية المستدامة في آسيا الوسطى والدول الأعضاء في منظمة التعاون الإسلامي. وتعرض نتائج البعثة العلمية التي نفذها المعهد الكازاخي للبحوث الزراعية والإنتاج النباتي (KazRIAPG) إلى **المركز الدولي للبحوث الزراعية في المناطق الجافة (ICARDA) بالمغرب، مستعرضة تقنيات التهجين الحديثة، والتنميط الظاهري الرقمي للبذور، والتحليلات الفسيولوجية والكيميائية الحيوية السريعة، والحفظ طويل الأجل للموارد الوراثية النباتية. كما أرست البعثة الأساس لتبادل الموارد الوراثية ونقل التكنولوجيا مستقبلاً، بما يدعم تطوير أصناف زراعية قادرة على التكيف مع تغير المناخ في البيئات الجافة وشبه الجافة. وتؤكد هذه التجربة أن توسيع نطاق التعاون العلمي ودمج تقنيات التربية المبتكرة يمثلان عنصرين أساسيين لتعزيز قدرات برامج التربية، وزيادة مرونة القطاع الزراعي، وتحقيق الأمن الغذائي والتغذوي المستدام في آسيا الوسطى وفي مختلف أنحاء منطقة منظمة التعاون الإسلامي.

FR RÉSUMÉ

Cet article met en évidence le rôle de la coopération scientifique internationale dans le renforcement de la sélection des légumineuses à graines résilientes au changement climatique et dans la promotion de systèmes alimentaires durables en Asie centrale et dans les États membres de l'OIC. Il présente les résultats de la mission scientifique menée par l'Institut kazakh de recherche sur l'agriculture et la production végétale (KazRIAPG) à l'ICARDA, au Maroc, en mettant en valeur les techniques modernes d'hybridation, le phénotypage numérique des semences, les analyses physiologiques et biochimiques rapides, ainsi que la conservation à long terme des ressources phylogénétiques. Cette mission a établi les bases d'un futur échange de ressources génétiques et d'un transfert de technologies, favorisant le développement de variétés végétales résilientes au changement climatique adaptées aux environnements arides et semi-arides. L'expérience démontre que le renforcement de la coopération scientifique et l'intégration de technologies innovantes de sélection sont essentiels pour accroître les capacités de sélection, renforcer la résilience agricole et améliorer durablement la sécurité alimentaire et nutritionnelle en Asie centrale et dans l'ensemble de la région de l'OIC.

INTRODUCTION: BUILDING RESILIENT FOOD SYSTEMS THROUGH SCIENTIFIC COOPERATION

The Laboratory of Grain Legumes of the Kazakh Research Institute of Agriculture and Plant Growing (KazRIAPG) carries out comprehensive scientific breeding and technological activities aimed at the sustainable development of grain legume production in Kazakhstan. The laboratory provides scientific and consultative support for cultivation technologies of grain legume crops, produces and commercializes

original and elite seeds of all grain legume varieties developed by KazRIAPG and approved for agricultural use, and actively participates in the dissemination of agricultural knowledge among farming communities. The main research directions of the laboratory include germplasm conservation and evaluation, breeding, seed production, and the development of varietal cultivation technologies.



Figure 1. Manual sowing of chickpea accessions

The implementation of these activities is closely connected with the laboratory's participation in research programmes focused on strengthening sustainable agriculture and food security. In this context, the scientific mission to the International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA), Morocco, was funded and supported by the Islamic Organisation for Food Security (IOFS), reflecting the organization's continued commitment to strengthening scientific cooperation, agricultural innovation, and food security capacities across OIC member states. The work of the Laboratory of Grain Legumes at KazRIAPG is funded and supported by the Ministry of Science and Higher Education and the Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

The relevance of these scientific programmes is increasing under modern global climatic and agricultural challenges. Climate change, increasing aridity, degradation of agricultural lands, and instability of agricultural production continue to pose serious challenges to sustainable food systems across Central Asia and many countries of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). Under these conditions, grain legumes are becoming increasingly important due to their high nutritional value, nitrogen-fixing ability, adaptability to drought-prone environments, and contributions to sustainable agriculture.

Accordingly, for Kazakhstan and other OIC member states, the development of highly productive and stress-tolerant grain legume varieties represents a strategic direction for food security and agricultural resilience. Achieving these goals requires not only the preservation of valuable genetic resources, but also the implementation of advanced breeding technologies, physiological assessment systems, and international scientific cooperation.

As part of these international scientific initiatives and collaborative efforts, from 1 to 10 April 2026, researchers of the Laboratory of Grain Legumes and Maize of KazRIAPG, G. S. Saken and Zhuldyz Abildaeva, conducted a scientific mission to ICARDA in Morocco aimed at strengthening scientific competencies in grain legume breeding, studying modern methodological approaches, and expanding international cooperation in the field of genetic resource utilization and adaptation of agriculture to arid conditions.

ICARDA AS A GLOBAL PLATFORM FOR AGRICULTURAL INNOVATION

ICARDA is recognized as one of the leading international research centers specializing in agriculture under dryland and drought-prone conditions. The center integrates breeding innovation, climate adaptation, physiological analysis, and conservation of plant genetic resources into a comprehensive scientific

system aimed at improving the sustainability of agricultural production.

During this intensive ten-day technical exchange, KazRIAPG researchers became familiar with ICARDA's grain legume breeding system through focused practical training, technical demonstrations, and discussions with ICARDA scientists. Particular attention was devoted to: structured selection systems, organization of breeding nurseries, phenological observations, evaluation of economically valuable traits and adaptation of breeding material to diverse agroecological conditions.

The experience demonstrated that effective breeding programmes require systematic organization, continuous monitoring of plant development, and integration of physiological and morphological analyses into breeding strategies. Significant emphasis was placed on evaluating yield components and assessing plant adaptation under field conditions.

Researchers also became familiar with agricultural machinery and technological operations used during sowing, crop management, and field evaluation activities, providing a comprehensive understanding of the practical implementation of modern breeding systems.

MODERN HYBRIDIZATION TECHNIQUES FOR STRESS-TOLERANT BREEDING

One of the most important components of the scientific mission involved practical training in modern hybridization methodologies for grain legume crops. Researchers studied approaches related to controlled pollination, selection and preparation of parental forms, prevention of self-pollination, labeling systems for hybrid combinations and traceability of breeding material.

The practical part of the intensive technical exchange was conducted under protected greenhouse conditions where environmental factors could be carefully controlled to ensure successful hybridization. Special attention was devoted to flower selection during the optimal budding stage, emasculation techniques, and precise manual pollination procedures.

The experience highlighted the importance of combining classical breeding approaches with methodological precision and detailed documentation systems. Such technologies significantly improve the efficiency of developing new breeding material adapted to drought, heat stress, and unstable climatic conditions.

DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES AND RAPID PHYSIOLOGICAL ANALYSIS

Modern breeding increasingly depends on digital technologies capable of accelerating evaluation processes while improving analytical precision and objectivity. During the scientific mission, researchers studied advanced rapid-assessment methods for breeding material using automated high-precision equipment (Figure 3).

Additionally, researchers became familiar with rapid protein analysis systems that allow rapid evaluation of grain quality parameters. These technologies are particularly important for grain legumes, where protein content remains one of the key indicators determining nutritional and market value.

The integration of automated phenotyping and analytical technologies considerably enhances the efficiency and accuracy of breeding material evaluation compared with conventional assessment methods. Traditional evaluation of breeding lines is

based on sequential measurements of physical, biochemical, and morphological characteristics, requiring multiple laboratory procedures and substantial manual input. In contrast, the combined application of these automated platforms enables the comprehensive characterization of approximately 300-500 breeding lines per day. Opto Machines provide rapid assessment of seed physical characteristics, including size, shape, thousand-seed weight, and uniformity; the FOSS NIRS DS2500 simultaneously determines protein, moisture, oil, fibre, and starch content; the Hitachi X-Supreme XRF analyzer quantifies essential mineral elements, including iron, zinc, calcium, potassium, and phosphorus; while the Opto Machines Seed Analyzer objectively evaluates seed coat colour and surface appearance. Compared with conventional manual evaluation, the integrated use of these technologies increases analytical throughput by approximately 8-10 fold, reduces the time required for comprehensive seed characterization by 70-80%, and improves the reproducibility and objectivity of phenotypic assessment. Consequently, these technologies facilitate the more rapid identification of breeding material combining desirable agronomic performance with superior nutritional and technological quality.

GENETIC RESOURCES AND LONG-TERM CONSERVATION SYSTEMS

Another important component of the mission involved studying ICARDA's genebank infrastructure and dry seed storage systems. Researchers examined long-term conservation principles for plant genetic resources, including specialized storage facilities, temperature and humidity management systems, and organizational approaches for maintaining seed viability over extended periods (Figure 2a,b,c,d).

Particular interest was devoted to grain legume accessions possessing tolerance to abiotic stresses, especially drought resistance. Under conditions of increasing climate instability and water scarcity in Central Asia, such genetic resources represent an essential foundation for future breeding programmes.

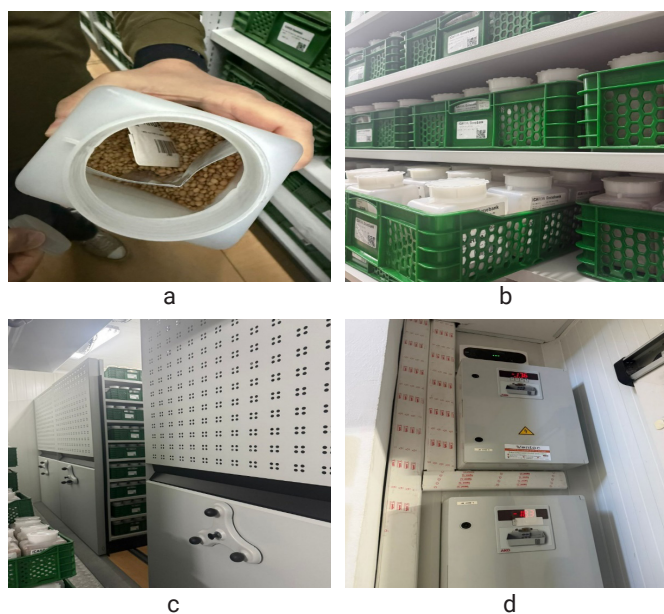


Figure 2. Genebank storage system and dry seed storage facility (a - vacuum-sealed seed storage package; b - genebank seed storage shelves; c - long-term cold storage chamber; d - temperature and humidity control system)

The mission also included discussions on promising research directions involving “*Lathyrus sativus*” (grass pea), an underuti-

lized grain legume with considerable potential for enhancing food and nutritional security in arid and semi-arid regions. Grass pea is recognized for its exceptional tolerance to drought, poor soils, and other abiotic stresses, allowing it to produce stable yields under environmental conditions where many other food crops fail. In addition to its resilience, the crop is characterized by a high protein content (approximately 25-30%) and contributes to sustainable agricultural systems through biological nitrogen fixation, thereby improving soil fertility and reducing dependence on mineral nitrogen fertilizers. These characteristics make “*Lathyrus sativus*” a valuable genetic resource for breeding climate-resilient cultivars and for diversifying cropping systems in water-limited environments. For many OIC member states, particularly those in North Africa, the Sahel, Central Asia, and the Middle East, where drought frequency and water scarcity continue to increase, the development and utilization of improved grass pea varieties could contribute to greater agricultural resilience, enhanced nutritional security, and more sustainable food production systems.

The experience gained during the intensive technical exchange allowed researchers to develop preliminary approaches for organizing similar systems for genetic resource conservation and seed storage within Kazakhstan.

INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIP AS A STRATEGIC TOOL FOR FOOD SECURITY

One of the important outcomes of the mission was the achievement of agreements regarding the future transfer of grain legume accessions, including chickpea, lentil, and faba bean, as well as the wheat variety “Jawahir”, to Kazakhstan after completion of ICARDA evaluation procedures.

Although the scientific mission primarily focused on grain legumes, the inclusion of the drought-tolerant wheat variety “Jawahir” reflects ICARDA's integrated approach to dryland agricultural systems. Wheat is Kazakhstan's principal cereal crop and the cornerstone of the country's agricultural production and food security. Therefore, improving wheat adaptation to drought and other abiotic stresses remains a national breeding priority. Within sustainable cropping systems, wheat and grain legumes complement one another through crop rotation, where grain legumes enhance soil fertility by biological nitrogen fixation, improve soil structure, and reduce the need for nitrogen fertilizers, while wheat contributes to stable grain production and efficient utilization of available soil resources. The integration of drought-tolerant wheat varieties with improved grain legume cultivars strengthens the resilience, productivity, and sustainability of agricultural systems under water-limited conditions. Consequently, the transfer of Jawahir alongside chickpea, lentil, and faba bean supports the broader objective of developing climate-resilient cropping systems for Kazakhstan and other arid OIC member states.

This cooperation reflects the growing importance of international scientific partnerships for strengthening regional food security and agricultural sustainability. The exchange of germplasm, methodologies, and technological expertise enables national institutions to accelerate breeding progress while improving adaptation to changing environmental conditions.

For OIC member states, cooperation between institutions such as IOFS, ICARDA, and national agricultural research centers creates important opportunities for developing sustainable agricultural systems based on innovation, scientific collaboration, and shared genetic resources.

CONCLUSION: TOWARD A MORE RESILIENT AGRICULTURAL FUTURE

The scientific mission to ICARDA demonstrated that modern breeding systems increasingly depend on interdisciplinary approaches integrating genetics, physiology, digital technologies, and international scientific cooperation. Advanced hybridization techniques, automated seed analysis systems, rapid quality assessment technologies, and effective genebank management collectively form the foundation of climate-resilient agriculture.

The acquired scientific knowledge and practical experience gained during the mission will contribute to the implementation of breeding programs in Kazakhstan aimed at developing highly productive and stress-tolerant grain legume varieties adapted to local environmental conditions.

More broadly, the experience highlights the strategic importance of international scientific cooperation for strengthening research capacity, improving food security, and supporting sustainable agricultural development across Kazakhstan and the

wider OIC region. The knowledge and technologies acquired through collaboration with ICARDA have direct relevance for many OIC member states, particularly those in North Africa, the Sahel, Central Asia, and the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, where agricultural production is increasingly constrained by drought, heat stress, land degradation, and limited water resources. The adoption of modern breeding methodologies, digital phenotyping technologies, rapid physiological and biochemical assessment systems, and efficient genebank management can accelerate the development of climate-resilient crop varieties while ensuring the long-term conservation and effective utilization of plant genetic resources.

Furthermore, the international exchange of germplasm, scientific expertise, and innovative breeding technologies strengthens national breeding programmes, enhances regional collaboration, and contributes to the development of more productive, resilient, and sustainable agricultural systems. These collaborative efforts ultimately support the long-term objectives of food security, climate change adaptation, and sustainable agricultural development throughout the OIC region.



IOFS FOOD SECURITY UPDATE (2026 Q2)

PROGRAMS DEPARTMENT

GLOBAL FOOD SECURITY SITUATION

Global food security remains fragile in early 2026, despite some modest progress in chronic hunger indicators in recent years. An estimated 673 million people faced hunger in 2024 (around 8.2-8.3% of the global population), a slight decline from 2023 levels but still well above pre-pandemic figures. Regional disparities persist, with hunger continuing to rise in Africa (over one in five people affected) and parts of western Asia, while improvements occurred in parts of Asia and South America. Projections indicate that, without accelerated action, around 512 million people could still face hunger by 2030, with nearly 60% in Africa.

Acute food insecurity, however, remains alarmingly high and is worsening in many hotspots. WFP's estimates that 318 million people face crisis-level acute hunger (IPC Phase 3+) more than double pre-pandemic (2019) levels, with 41.1 million in Emergency or worse (IPC Phase 4+), a 20% increase since late 2020. This includes confirmed famines in parts of Palestine (Gaza Strip) and Sudan, the first simultaneous famines in two countries this century. The GRFC 2025 and its September update reported over 295 million people facing high levels of acute food insecurity in 2024 (sixth consecutive annual increase), with famine unfolding in Gaza and Sudan, and catastrophic (Phase 5) risks affecting nearly 1.4 million people across six countries/territories (primarily Gaza, Sudan, followed by South Sudan, Yemen, Haiti, and Mali). FAO-WFP hunger hotspots outlook (November 2025–May 2026) flags 16 countries/territories for deteriorating conditions, including high-concern areas like Mali, Palestine, Sudan, Yemen, Afghanistan, Myanmar, Nigeria, Somalia, and Syria.

GLOBAL PRICE TRENDS (FAO FOOD PRICE INDEX)

The FAO Food Price Index (FFPI) averaged 130.8 points in May 2026, broadly stable from its revised April level (130.7), but 2.9 percent higher than its year-earlier level. The index has risen for three consecutive months since February, driven primarily by rising vegetable oil, meat, and cereal prices linked to escalating conflict-related disruptions in the Near East and the Strait of Hormuz. The FFPI remains approximately 21.8 percent below the all-time peak of March 2022, yet the upward trend signals growing market stress.

BREAKING DOWN:

- The Cereal Price Index averaged 111.3 points in April 2026 (up 0.8 percent from March), rising for a third consecutive month. International wheat prices rose 4.3 percent in March alone, reflecting drought concerns in the United States, reduced plantings in Australia driven by elevated fertilizer costs, and the broader market uncertainty introduced by Near East conflict disruptions. Rice prices edged up slightly, supported by steady global demand.
- The Vegetable Oil Price Index jumped 5.9 percent in April 2026, reaching its highest level since June 2022, driven by supply disruptions linked to the Near East conflict. Palm, soybean, sunflower, and rapeseed oil prices all rose sharply amid shipping disruptions through the Strait of Hormuz and sustained biofuel demand.
- The Meat Price Index rose 1.2 percent in April 2026, reaching a record high, reflecting strong global demand and tight exportable supplies particularly for bovine and ovine meats. Elevated transport and energy costs are contributing to price stickiness across supply chains.
- The Dairy Price Index declined by 1.2 percent, largely due to falling cheese prices amid improved milk availability and weaker demand in some export markets.
- The Sugar Price Index fell by 4.1 percent, reaching its lowest level since late 2020, as expectations of ample global supplies continued to weigh on prices.

These developments indicate that global food commodity markets remain under growing pressure in Q2 2026. The compounding effects of Near East conflict, Strait of Hormuz disruptions, and elevated energy and fertilizer costs are driving a broad-based upward trend across cereal, vegetable oil, and meat price indices. OIC countries that are heavily import-dependent face particular exposure to this inflationary environment.

STAPLES SUPPLY & DEMAND OUTLOOK (FAO CEREAL BRIEF)

According to the latest FAO Cereal Supply and Demand Brief (Q2 2026), global cereal production in 2025 has been revised upward to a record high of 3,036 million tonnes, up 5.8% from the previous year. This further reinforces the record level, with upward revisions mainly to wheat in Central Asia and maize in India.

Improvements in coarse grain production (especially maize) remain a major contributor, alongside upward revisions to rice. For rice production estimate for Indonesia (to a decade high due to pronounced area expansion) and for Thailand increased. Combined with smaller adjustments for various other countries, these raised forecast of world rice production in 2025/26 by 1.7 million tonnes to 563.4 million tonnes (milled basis), up 2.1% year-on-year and a record high. Bangladesh, Indonesia, Brazil, China, and India remain forecast to spearhead the season's annual production growth, outweighing contractions in Pakistan, Madagascar, Thailand, and USA.

Wheat output prospects for 2025 are not detailed in the latest adjustments as the focus has shifted to rice and maize revisions, but overall cereal gains are strong despite any regional variations. These positive production forecasts for cereals, combined with record utilization at 2,943 million tonnes in 2025/26 (up 0.2% from the previous projection) and raised stocks to 940.5 million tonnes by the close of 2026 seasons (stocks-to-use ratio at a comfortable 31.9%), could significantly

ease pressures in OIC countries that rely on imports, provided supply chains hold, trade policies are supportive, and access (finance, transport, tariffs) is maintained. World trade in cereals for 2025/26 is forecast at 501.7 million tonnes (up 3.5% from 2024/25, the second highest on record).

In the Near East Asia region, wheat crops in Iran are facing a varied yield perspective due to dry conditions early in the season, followed by helpful rainfall. Additionally, the planted area is anticipated to shrink because of higher production costs. In contrast, Türkiye is expected to see a modest rise in 2026 wheat production, driven by an increase in the sown area combined with a forecasted rebound in yields, which had been reduced by adverse weather in the previous season.

However, an early outlook for 2026 indicates global wheat production is anticipated to decline by nearly 3% to 810 million tonnes (still above the five-year average), reflecting moderate area cutbacks in response to softer crop prices and an expected return to average yields after the previous year's highs. Localized production risks (droughts, weather shocks, conflict) may still undermine food security in some member states. For maize south of the equator in 2026, prospects are above-average in Latin America, with South Africa expecting a second consecutive bumper crop.

DEVELOPMENTS IN OIC MEMBER STATES

Food security trends across OIC countries remain highly heterogeneous. Several members continue to grapple with acute humanitarian emergencies driven by conflict, famine risks, displacement, and climate shocks, while others face challenges from production volatility, high inflation, drought, or trade disruptions. Recent updates highlight deepening crises in key hotspots, with persistent or worsening conditions into 2026.

MIDDLE EAST & NORTH AFRICA (MENA)

- **Gaza Strip:** The entire population faces Crisis-level food insecurity (IPC Phase 3+), with confirmed famine-like conditions (Phase 5) in some areas. Humanitarian deliveries face severe looting, blockages, and access constraints, exacerbating the crisis amid ongoing conflict.
- **Yemen:** Economic collapse, declining aid flows, climate shocks, and conflict continue to leave millions in IPC Phase 3+, with elevated risks of further deterioration into 2026, including pockets at risk of catastrophic hunger.
- **Tunisia:** Improved rainfall conditions have boosted cereal harvests in 2024/25, though regional disparities remain.
- **Iran:** Wheat crops face a mixed yield outlook due to early-season dry conditions followed by beneficial rains. However, persistent multi-year drought (fifth consecutive year in 2025) has severely hampered winter wheat plantings for 2026, depleted irrigation reserves, and reduced production significantly (e.g., 2025 output below average, with government procurement down sharply). Planted area is expected to contract further owing to increased production costs, high input prices, and water stress, raising import reliance and food security concerns.
- **Syria:** Prolonged dry conditions have severely impacted crop production, estimated more than 60% below average in affected areas.

SOUTH AND SOUTH-EAST ASIA

- **Afghanistan:** Four consecutive years of drought, economic distress, the return of over 2.5 million migrants (mainly from Iran and Pakistan) in 2025, with similar influxes expected in 2026, have driven severe food insecurity. The August 2025 earthquakes further disrupted markets and livelihoods, compounding vulnerabilities in rainfed areas. Acute hunger persists, with millions facing Crisis or worse levels and high malnutrition risks.
- **Pakistan and neighbors:** Regional fluctuations in rice and maize production underscore vulnerabilities in import-dependent areas. Ongoing drought, floods, and economic pressures affect affordability and access, with potential downstream impacts from neighbor dynamics.

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

- **Sudan, Somalia, Mali, Nigeria:** Millions face acute food insecurity due to conflict, displacement, and climate shocks. Sudan experiences famine-like conditions in several regions, with widespread risks amid restricted access. Somalia faces deteriorating conditions from ongoing drought and below-average rainfall forecasts. Mali and Nigeria see high acute needs, with tens of millions in IPC Phase 3+; funding shortages severely limit interventions. These remain among the highest-concern hunger hotspots globally for 2026.

EURASIA (TÜRKIYE & CENTRAL ASIA)

- **Türkiye:** As a key regional food supplier, production remains significant despite occasional export restrictions on staples (e.g., onions, potatoes, sunflower oil) to address domestic concerns. Early 2026 wheat prospects indicate a modest increase, supported by expanded planted area and projected yield recovery from prior weather-reduced levels, though broader regional dryness poses risks.
- **Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan:** Recent harvests show positive production signals, but local price controls, export measures, and import restrictions continue to shape market access and affordability.

Overall, many OIC countries align with identified hunger hotspots (e.g., Palestine, Sudan, Yemen, Mali, Afghanistan, Somalia, Nigeria, Syria), where conflict drives most acute needs, compounded by extreme weather (droughts in Iran/Afghanistan, floods elsewhere) and funding shortfalls. Urgent, scaled-up assistance, innovation, and conflict resolution remain critical to mitigate risks and build resilience.

TRADE & PRICE PRESSURES

As of Q2 2026, trade measures and export restrictions on key staples persist or have intensified among several OIC members, often in response to domestic supply concerns, economic pressures, or geopolitical tensions. These policies, while intended to safeguard local availability, frequently contribute to heightened food price volatility, reduced regional trade flows, and amplified affordability challenges particularly amid the ongoing conflict involving Iran, which has escalated regional disruptions.

Several OIC countries, including Pakistan, Türkiye, Uzbekistan, and Nigeria, continue to implement export restrictions or trade controls on staples such as grains, onions, potatoes, or other commodities to protect domestic markets. These measures risk

distorting regional supply chains and increasing price pressures for import-dependent neighbors.

In Iran, the government imposed a comprehensive ban on all food and agricultural product exports (announced in early March 2026), prioritizing domestic supply amid soaring internal prices and strategic reserve needs. This halt following earlier localized restrictions on items like eggs, tomatoes, potatoes, and dates has deepened food crises in neighboring countries reliant on Iranian supplies, such as Afghanistan, where prices for staples have risen sharply due to reduced cross-border flows. The ban, combined with broader conflict-related disruptions including the near-total shutdown of the Strait of Hormuz, has driven up regional and global food prices through constrained fertilizer exports (Iran is a key urea/ammonia supplier), elevated energy and transport costs, and shipping uncertainties exacerbating inflation for staples like wheat, rice, and other grains in OIC markets.

Broader conflict impacts include halted fertilizer shipments through critical routes, raising input costs for farmers worldwide and threatening yields in import-reliant OIC regions. While global cereal trade forecasts remain robust, localized restrictions and war-induced volatility heighten risks for vulnerable OIC populations, underscoring the need for coordinated policies to balance domestic protection with regional stability and access.

THE CONFLICT IN GULF AREA AND IMPACTS ON FOOD SECURITY

The escalation of conflict in the Near East starting in late February 2026, and the effective closure of the Strait of Hormuz to commercial shipping, has delivered one of the most severe shocks to global agricultural input markets in recent years. The Strait which normally carries approximately one-third of globally traded urea and up to 40 percent of nitrogen fertilizer shipments saw maritime traffic volumes collapse by nearly 97 percent in the first week of March 2026. Persian Gulf facilities operated by Qatar (QAFCO, the world's largest single-site urea exporter), Saudi Arabia, Iran, and the UAE were simultaneously hit by gas supply cuts, plant shutdowns, and paralyzed shipping logistics.

The fertilizer price shock has been immediate and severe. In the first week of March, Middle East granular urea prices climbed to over USD 590 per tonne, a 19 percent increase from late February. U.S. Gulf benchmark urea at NOLA rose 30 percent to approximately USD 550 per tonne, with some spot transactions reported as high as USD 680 per metric tonne. Anhydrous ammonia crossed the USD 900 per tonne mark a psychologically significant threshold for global grain producers. In regional markets, the impact was even sharper: Egypt recorded a 28 percent spike in urea prices within days, reaching USD 625 per tonne. Projected that global fertilizer prices will average roughly 15–20 percent higher in the first half of 2026 than a year prior if current disruptions persist. Futures markets for fertilizers and their inputs initially surged by 10 percent or more, and a number of previously negotiated contracts were cancelled for “force majeure,” forcing buyers onto the spot market and amplifying price pressure.

The energy dimension of this crisis is equally consequential. The Strait of Hormuz carries approximately 20 percent of global petroleum and one-fifth of liquefied natural gas (LNG) trade daily. Since natural gas is the primary feedstock for nitrogen fertilizers, disruptions to Gulf gas flows cascade directly into nitrogen fertilizer production costs worldwide. China responded by ramping up export controls and customs inspections on urea and fertilizers from March 2026 onward to protect domestic stocks, effectively removing a major swing supplier from global markets. Russia, while continuing some deliveries, faces addi-

tional friction from broader sanctions and policy constraints. The combined effect of the Hormuz blockade, Chinese restrictions, and Gulf production halts has tightened the global urea balance far more quickly than anticipated.

For OIC member states, the implications are multifaceted. GCC countries which import up to 85 percent of their food according to the World Economic Forum face heightened vulnerability to both energy price inflation and supply chain disruption. Agricultural producers across OIC countries, particularly in South Asia, the Sahel, and Central Asia, are confronting sharply higher input costs that threaten to compress farm margins and reduce fertilizer application rates in the 2026 growing season. Warned that if fertilizer shortages persist, medium-term yield impacts will become apparent in 2026–2027 harvests, particularly for nitrogen-intensive crops such as wheat and maize. Elevated transport and freight costs compound these pressures, increasing the landed cost of all food imports. Diplomatic efforts to de-escalate tensions and ensure freedom of navigation in the Strait of Hormuz remain, in the assessments, the single most effective lever for stabilizing global energy and food markets.

FORECASTS

Global cereal stocks at the close of the 2026 seasons are now projected at a record 951.5 million tonnes, 9.2 percent higher than the prior year—a comfortable buffer that provides some insulation against localized supply shocks. However, early forecasts for the 2026/27 season introduce a note of caution. FAO's latest assessment (May 2026) points to likely declining global cereal harvests and trade in the year ahead.

For wheat, global output in 2026 is forecast at 820 million tonnes a 1.7 percent decline from the previous year's record levels, though still above the five-year average. Lower prices and elevated fertilizer and energy costs are expected to compress planted areas in the European Union, the Russian Federation, and the United States. India is a notable exception, projected to achieve record wheat production driven by favorable weather and sustained government support. Improved rainfall forecasts are also expected to support yields in Iran, Türkiye, and across North Africa. The escalation of the Near East conflict introduces additional downside risk to these projections, as higher energy and input costs may prompt a further shift toward less fertilizer-intensive crops, potentially affecting both wheat and maize acreage.

For rice, world rice utilization is anticipated to reach a fresh peak of 555.6 million tonnes in 2025/26, up 2.7 percent year-on-year, with global wheat inventories projected to expand by 3.6 percent to reach their highest-ever level by end of the 2026 season. World rice stocks are similarly forecast to increase by 2.2 percent to a new record. Production expansions in Bangladesh, Brazil, China, India, and Indonesia are expected to drive growth, with Indonesia reaching a decade-high output. In the Near East Asia region, Iran's wheat crop for 2026 is expected to benefit from improved rainfall following multi-year drought stress, though planted area contraction due to high input costs remains a concern. Türkiye is forecast to see a modest production increase driven by expanded sown area and yield recovery. In Central Asia, Kazakhstan and neighboring states recorded positive production signals in recent harvests, though local price controls and export measures continue to shape domestic market dynamics.

The key risk to these broadly positive production forecasts lies in the fertilizer and energy price transmission. Farmers facing urea prices 30–50 percent above prior-year levels may reduce application rates in the 2026 main planting season, with yield consequences materializing primarily in late 2026 and into

2027. Cautioned that if fertilizer constraints persist, the seasonal production rebound in palm and other fertilizer-intensive crops will flatten, implying more pronounced supply tightness in second half of 2026.

IOFS POLICY OUTLOOK

Food security challenges in OIC countries remain diverse and acute in Q2 2026: persistent humanitarian crises in hotspots like Gaza (Palestine), Yemen, Sudan, and Somalia marked by confirmed famines, conflict, displacement, restricted aid access, and catastrophic risks coexist with structural issues in South Asia (e.g., Afghanistan's ongoing drought, over 2.5 million migrant returns, and earthquake disruptions) and the Sahel (e.g., Mali, Nigeria). These are worsened by extreme weather (multi-year droughts in Iran/Afghanistan, potential La Niña dryness), trade distortions (including Iran's Q1 2026 full food/agricultural export ban amid conflict, spiking regional prices and fertilizer shortages, compounded by Strait of Hormuz disruptions driving global energy and input cost inflation), and humanitarian funding shortfalls that constrain responses.

As the OIC's specialized institution for sustainable food security through agriculture, science/technology, humanitarian aid, trade, and cooperation, IOFS recommends these key priorities:

- **Prioritize humanitarian coordination and access** in crises like Gaza, Yemen, and Sudan, including support for programs such as "Flour for Humanity" to overcome blockages.
- **Strengthen regional food reserves and sharing**, advancing the OIC Food Security Reserves program via pilots and multilateral efforts for stability amid shortages/volatility.

- **Expand social protection** to protect vulnerable households from inflation and ensure access to safe, nutritious, halal food.
- **Adopt balanced trade policies** to curb spillovers from export restrictions (e.g., Iran's ban, others in Pakistan, Türkiye, Uzbekistan, Nigeria), while boosting intra-OIC trade and urgently addressing the fertilizer supply crisis stemming from Strait of Hormuz disruptions. Member states should prioritize collective procurement of fertilizers, explore alternative supply routes, and engage diplomatically to restore freedom of navigation.
- **Promote resilient, climate-smart agriculture** through improved irrigation/water management, cold chains, drought-resistant crops, and fertilizer access, per IOFS programs and partnerships.
- **Enhance nutrition interventions** for children, women, and malnourished groups to combat acute and hidden hunger.

Long-term resilience requires deepened regional solidarity, increased financial commitments, and accelerated IOFS frameworks for sustainable, affordable halal food systems. Recent IOFS actions highlight collaborative momentum to bridge crises with development.

*This update has been prepared based on the **World Bank Food Security Update**, **FAO World Food Situation data**, **FAO Global Agri-food Implications of the 2026 Conflict in the Middle East**, **S&P Global Commodity Insights**, and **IOFS analysis**.*



IOFS NEWS AND ORGANISATIONAL UPDATES

GOVERNANCE & STATUTORY MILESTONES

The following institutional updates highlight the high-level legal, financial, and strategic assemblies that govern the mandate of the Islamic Organisation for Food Security (IOFS) across its 43 Member States.

REGIONAL RESOLUTIONS

IOFS 7th General Assembly Approves Major Initiatives on Innovation, Biodiversity, and Regional Cooperation

ASTANA, KAZAKHSTAN — MAY 14, 2026

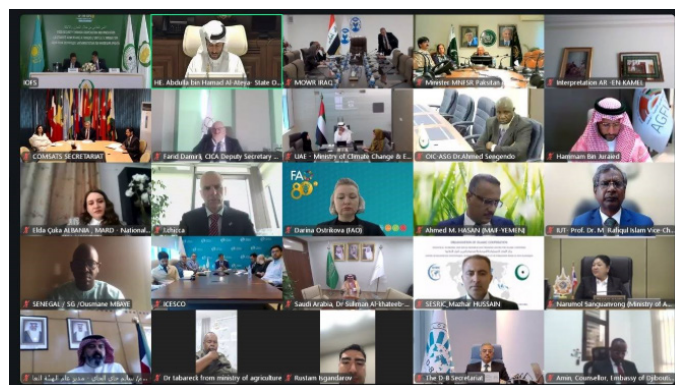
The Member States of the Islamic Organisation for Food Security (IOFS) successfully convened the ministerial segment of the **7th Session of the IOFS General Assembly**, held virtually under the chairmanship of the Republic of Kazakhstan. Operating under the central theme *“Food Security through Cooperation and Innovation,”* the Assembly gathered representatives from over 40 OIC Member States and more than 15 international organisations to deliberate on the long-term strategic trajectory of regional food security through 2031.

During the session, the Member States reviewed the Organisation’s institutional, programmatic, and financial progress. To drive forward the next phase of institutional development, the Assembly officially approved 13 resolutions aimed at advancing agricultural resilience, technology transfer, and sustainable food chains across the OIC Member States.

Key statutory decisions endorsed by the Assembly included the landmark establishment of the **IOFS International Genebank** in Kazakhstan, the operational launch of the **IOFS Food Security and Innovation Knowledge Hub**, and the opening of the Organisation’s first regional office in the Kingdom of Morocco. Furthermore, member countries endorsed the designation of 2027 as the *IOFS Year of Women Agrileaders and Youth Agripreneurs (WAYA)*, approved to convene a *Global Islamic Food Security Expo* to serve as a platform for OIC Member States and international stakeholders to showcase innovations and build partnerships in agriculture and food security fields, and supported the transition of the General Assembly from an annual to a biennial format to optimize operational workflows. The session concluded with the formal endorsement of an updated IOFS corporate branding package, including a refreshed logo and flag.

The General Assembly underscored that the modern landscape of food security requires an immediate shift from isolated national strategies to deeply integrated regional networks. Ministers from across Africa, the Middle East, and Asia

emphasized that the newly approved assets, specifically the International Genebank and the Knowledge Hub, will serve the Member States. These entities will provide smallholders and national agricultural research centres with direct access to advanced biotechnology, seed science, and climate-modeling tools, creating a unified front against accelerating global environmental pressures.



- **40+** OIC Member States Participated
- **13** Strategic Resolutions Adopted
- **2027** Named the IOFS Year of Women Agrileaders & Youth Agripreneurs (WAYA)
- **3** New Infrastructure Assets Approved: International Genebank (Kazakhstan), First Regional Office (Morocco), and Knowledge Hub

PREPARATORY SESSION

7th IOFS Senior Officials Meeting Convenes Ahead of General Assembly

ASTANA, KAZAKHSTAN — MAY 13, 2026

To establish the technical groundwork for the ministerial segment, the Senior Officials Meeting (SOM) of the 7th General Assembly commenced its sessions in an online format. Bringing together senior technocrats, directors-general of agricultural ministries, and permanent representatives to the OIC from Member States across Africa, Asia, and the Middle East, the meeting focused on reviewing the executive progress reports submitted by the IOFS Executive Board. Delegates engaged in extensive line-by-line reviews of the 13 draft resolutions and strategic documents, ensuring political and technical alignment ahead of their formal adoption by the assembled Ministers.

The SOM sessions highlighted the complex nature of harmonising agricultural policies across diverse geographical regions. Technical working groups spent significant time debating the operational architecture of the proposed regional office in Morocco, mapping out its administrative jurisdictions to ensure efficient service delivery for the North and West African sub-regions. Additionally, the senior officials examined the budget allocations required for the pilot phase of the IOFS Food Security and Innovation Knowledge Hub, establishing a transparent resource-sharing framework that leverages the existing technical capacities of advanced Member States to support nations experiencing acute systemic deficits.



incoming chairmanship provides a unique opportunity to strengthen ties between Central Asian agricultural producers and net food-importing Member States in the MENA and Sub-Saharan regions. The session concluded with the approval of the internal audit guidelines and the final scheduling of the ministerial segment, establishing a clear roadmap for institutional continuity.



ORGANISATIONAL OVERSIGHT

Financial Control Committee Wraps Up Comprehensive Audit and Institutional Review

ASTANA, KAZAKHSTAN — JUNE 1-6, 2026

The Financial Control Committee of the IOFS concluded an intense, six-day series of analytical review sessions in Astana, finalizing a thorough audit of the organisation's financial management, administrative spending, and overall operational efficiency. The independent auditing committee, comprised of institutional financial experts representing the Federal Republic of Nigeria, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and the Republic of Tajikistan, closely evaluated the financial accounts of all IOFS departments. Each department presented detailed operational reports, providing full transparency regarding the allocation of capital toward field projects, capacity development, and strategic initiatives.

The committee conducted rigorous, line-by-line verification of expenditure records, procurement logs, and project-specific disbursements made over the past financial cycle. Particular attention was paid to the financial mechanisms governing cross-border technology transfers and emergency seed shipments, verifying that all processes adhered to strict international accounting and governance benchmarks. The final report issued by the committee commended the Secretariat for its disciplined fiscal management and high compliance rates. The document offered strategic recommendations to optimize resource mobilization, suggesting the deployment of diversified funding models to sustain the upcoming expansion of IOFS regional offices and field infrastructures.



EXECUTIVE BOARD

16th Session Vets General Assembly Resolutions and Backs Incoming Chair

VIRTUAL FORUM — APRIL 6, 2026

The Islamic Organisation for Food Security (IOFS) virtually convened the **16th Session of its Executive Board** to finalize statutory preparations for the upcoming 7th General Assembly. The Board conducted a comprehensive review of the programmatic progress reports and evaluated the draft resolutions prepared by the Secretariat. Board Members formally expressed their complete support for the Republic of Kazakhstan in assuming the role of incoming Chair of the General Assembly, expressing absolute confidence that Kazakhstan's leadership will drive tangible, practical outcomes across the Organisation's key priority sectors.

The Executive Board's deliberations focused on transitioning the organisation toward a project-based execution model. Members scrutinized the progress of ongoing strategic initiatives, ensuring that resource allocations directly align with the core pillars of the IOFS strategy. The Board emphasized that Kazakhstan's

HIGH-LEVEL DIPLOMACY, VISITS & ACCORDS

Documenting the expansion of the IOFS membership, official high-level missions, and the signing of strategic inter-institutional agreements across the OIC region.

SOVEREIGN EXPANSION

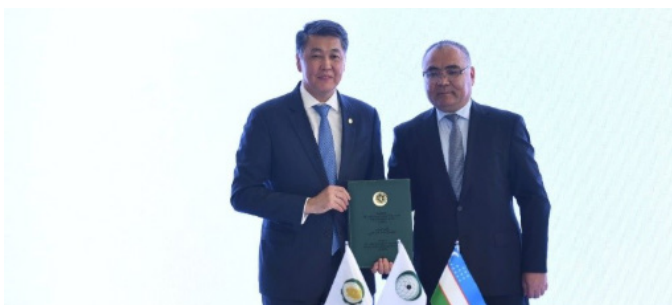
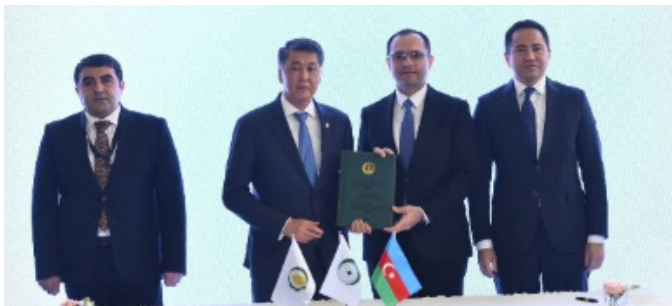
IOFS Welcomes Azerbaijan and Uzbekistan as New Member States

BAKU, AZERBAIJAN — MAY 6, 2026

In a historic moment for regional intergovernmental cooperation, the IOFS officially welcomed the accession of the **Republic of Azerbaijan** and the **Republic of Uzbekistan** as full Member States. The formal signing ceremony of the IOFS Statute took place in Baku on the sidelines of the 19th Azerbaijan International Agriculture Exhibition. The Statute was signed by H.E. Mr. Majnun Mammadov, Minister of Agriculture of the Republic of Azerbaijan, and H.E. Mr. Ibrokhim Abdurakhmonov, Minister of Agriculture of the Republic of Uzbekistan respectively.

The double accession expands total IOFS sovereign membership to 43 countries, reflecting growing confidence from major Central Asian and Caucasian agricultural economies in the Organisation's mandate. The expansion reflects the Organisation's continued institutional growth, transitioning the body from an agency of high-level policy dialogue into an engine of operational partnerships that yield concrete, measurable impacts on the ground.

The accession of Azerbaijan and Uzbekistan introduces significant agricultural production capacity, rich germplasm diversity, and advanced irrigation expertise into the collective IOFS pool. During the signing ceremony, representatives from both nations expressed their commitment to actively contributing to the IOFS Food Security Reserves system and participating in regional technology exchange programs. These two nations create a contiguous economic corridor for agricultural trade and research stretching across Central Asia and the Caucasus, greatly enhancing the organisation's capacity to facilitate South-South cooperation and stabilize regional food networks during macro-level market disruptions.



LANDMARK ACCORD

IOFS and Islamic Development Bank Sign Strategic MoU to Mitigate Regional Food Crises

BAKU, AZERBAIJAN — JUNE 19, 2026

On the concluding day of the 2026 Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) Group Annual Meetings, the IOFS and the IsDB signed a **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)** designed to fundamentally strengthen agricultural development and rural livelihoods across shared member nations. The treaty was signed in a formal ceremony by H.E. Ambassador Berik Aryn, Director General of IOFS, and Dr. Rami Ahmad, Vice President of Operations for the IsDB.

The accord builds a structured framework for cooperation between the technical expertise of the IOFS and the financial capacity of the IsDB. Under the explicit terms of the agreement, the two organisations will co-design and execute field-level development initiatives, technical assistance training programs, and technology-driven crop interventions. Crucially, the MoU introduces a highly responsive emergency framework for joint crisis coordination. This allows both institutions to rapidly share food security data, perform urgent needs assessments in conflict or climate-hit zones, and deploy synchronized humanitarian food reserves. To operationalize the treaty immediately, both secretariats have commenced drafting a comprehensive **Joint Action Plan for 2026-2028** to establish priority funding mechanisms.



MINISTERIAL MISSION

Director General Executes High-Level Bilateral Diplomacy in the State of Libya

TRIPOLI, LIBYA — MAY 17-18, 2026

H.E. Ambassador Berik Aryn led a specialized official delegation on an extensive, two-day official diplomatic mission to the State of Libya to forge solid ties with the country's economic and agricultural leadership. The mission reflected the high strategic value IOFS places on Mediterranean food network resilience.

The Director General conducted intensive bilateral working sessions with the Libyan Ministers of Economy and Trade,

Environment, and Water Resources, alongside senior executives from the National Council for Economic and Social Development and the Libyan Export Development Authority. The programmatic discussions focused on the practical implementation of Libya's revised National Food Security Strategy. Key outcomes included concrete agreements to expand cross-border agricultural trade, build institutional capacity in arid livestock management, and introduce climate-adaptive water technologies designed to elevate national resilience against supply shocks.



CONSULTATION

IOFS and OIC Consult on Advancing Science, Technology and Innovation Cooperation for Food Security

ASTANA, KAZAKHSTAN — APRIL 24, 2026

H.E. Ambassador Berik Aryn received H.E. Ambassador Aftab Ahmad Khokher, OIC Assistant Secretary General for Science and Technology, to realign the OIC STI Agenda. The meeting focused on strengthening cooperation under the OIC Science, Technology and Innovation Agenda, with particular emphasis on advancing food security through innovation, sustainable water management, and modern agricultural solutions.

The Director General reaffirmed IOFS's strong commitment to supporting science-driven approaches and underscored the importance of placing sustainable agriculture, climate-smart technologies, and resilient agri-food systems at the core of future STI priorities.



DIGITAL AGRI-TECH

IOFS and Astana IT University Sign MoU to Deploy Artificial Intelligence in Farm Governance

ASTANA, KAZAKHSTAN — APRIL 28, 2026

Recognizing that modern food security relies heavily on digital innovation, IOFS Director General H.E. Ambassador Berik Aryn visited the campus of Astana IT University to sign a strategic Memorandum of Understanding with University Rector Mr. Altair Akhmetov. The agreement establishes a long-term academic-institutional partnership centered on data-driven agricultural governance.

The joint framework will focus on developing applied Artificial Intelligence (AI) solutions, smart farming systems, and cloud-based livestock traceability systems. The partnership aims to accelerate South-South knowledge transfer by utilizing the university's technical research capabilities to solve immediate crop advisory challenges across vulnerable OIC farming zones.



BILATERAL DIALOGUE

Kyrgyz Republic and IOFS Outline Regional Wheat and Water Projects

ASTANA, KAZAKHSTAN — MAY 4, 2026

H.E. Ambassador Berik Aryn received H.E. Mr. Kudaibergen Bazarbaev, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Kyrgyz Republic, at the IOFS Headquarters. The high-level working session focused on strengthening the participation of Kyrgyz agricultural scientists in incoming sub-regional operational frameworks.

The leaders reviewed the implementation mechanics of the **Central Asian Wheat Development** Project, discussed water allocations within the *Regional Food Security Reserves System*, planned training programmes for Kyrgyz experts in digital irrigation management.



STRATEGIC GLOBAL PLATFORMS & MULTILATERAL ADVISORY

Highlighting the IOFS's policy engagement, diplomatic outreach, and participation in major international forums.

THE REGIONAL ECOLOGICAL SUMMIT (RES 2026)

ASTANA, KAZAKHSTAN — APRIL 22-24, 2026

Plenary Address: Aligning Food Security with National Environmental Priorities

IOFS Director General H.E. Ambassador Berik Aryn participated alongside regional heads of state in the plenary session of the **Regional Ecological Summit (RES 2026)** at the EXPO International Exhibition Centre. In his keynote address, H.E. Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, underscored that regional environmental cooperation must serve as a unifying force grounded in shared responsibility, warning that land degradation directly compromises economic survival. H.E. Ambassador Berik Aryn aligned the core IOFS mandate with the President's vision, demonstrating that building climate-adaptive food systems is the primary defense against water stress and regional instability.



Co-Hosted High-Level Forum: The Turkic-IOFS Push for Climate Resilient Land Restoration

To turn dialogue into action, the IOFS, the Ministry of Environment, Urbanization and Climate Change of the Republic of Türkiye, and the Organisation of Turkic States (OTS) successfully co-hosted a high-level ministerial side event at RES 2026. The multi-lateral panel focused on land restoration as a direct, scalable solution for stabilizing food systems. The delegates established a shared diplomatic pathway ahead of upcoming major global environmental conventions, including UNFCCC COP31 in Antalya, UNCCD COP17 in Ulaanbaatar, and CBD COP17 in Yerevan. Participants stressed the urgency of strengthening synergies across the Rio Conventions, including climate, land, and biodiversity, positioning land restoration as a key cross-cutting solution to enhance resilience, protect ecosystems, and sustain food systems.



Water Governance & The Climate Nexus: FAO and CICA Side Events

H.E. Ambassador Berik Aryn brought focused remarks to specialized summit panels. At the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) side event on Central Asian food security, he noted that water is the absolute defining factor for the region's agricultural future, calling for rapid technology adoption in transboundary water management. Concurrently, at the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia (CICA) Climate Dialogue, organized under the Chairmanship of Azerbaijan, the Director General advocated for a strict **Water-Energy-Food Nexus Approach**. He advanced institutional support for establishing a formal CICA Environmental Council to streamline capacity building and tech-transfer across member states. The summit engagements concluded with a bilateral session with H.E. Ambassador Balázs Hendrich, Chair of the Drought Prevention Institute, focused on expanding drought-resilience frameworks into hyper-arid agricultural zones.



PANELS & SIDE MEETINGS

THE ANTALYA DIPLOMACY FORUM (ADF 2026)

ANTALYA, TÜRKİYE — APRIL 17-19, 2026

Panel Contribution: A Strategic Reset for Global Food Systems

Representing the IOFS on a premier global diplomatic stage, H.E. Ambassador Berik Aryn participated as a featured speaker in the 5th Antalya Diplomacy Forum, operating under the theme *"Mapping Tomorrow, Managing Uncertainties."* The Forum was officially inaugurated by **H.E. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan**, the President of the Republic of Türkiye, and brought together Heads of State and high-level dignitaries, including **H.E. Kassym-Jomart Tokayev**, President of the Republic of Kazakhstan. Addressing an audience of global leaders during the high-level panel, *"Overproduced, Underfed: A Strategic Reset for Global Food Security,"* the Director General delivered a compelling critique of current market structures. He emphasized that systemic hunger is not rooted in a failure of production, but in stark disparities related to logistical access, unfair distribution networks, and a lack of baseline resilience in fragile states. He urged global institutions to abandon simple efficiency-driven paradigms in favor of adaptive, inclusive food systems.



Concentrated Bilateral Network:

The Secretariat of the Islamic Organisation for Food Security (IOFS) successfully capitalized on the Antalya Diplomacy Forum 2026 to conduct an intensive marathon of bilateral diplomacy on the sidelines of the summit. H.E. Berik Aryn held a succession of high-level meetings with key ministers and officials from across the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) region. These crucial dialogues featured consultations with **H.E. Dr. Shaya Mohsin Zindani**, Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates of Yemen; **H.E. Mr. Rashid Meredov**, Deputy Chairman of the Cabinet of Ministers and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan; and **H.E. Mr. Jeyhun Bayramov**, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan. The diplomatic outreach extended to Central Asia and the host nation, with targeted sessions alongside **H.E. Mr. Zheenbek Kulubaev**, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kyrgyz Republic; **H.E. Mr. Bakhtiyor Saidov**, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Uzbekistan; and **H.E. Mr. Musa Kulaklikaya**, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Türkiye.



H.E. Mr. Rashid Meredov
(Deputy PM and Foreign Minister, Turkmenistan)



H.E. Mr. Bakhtiyor Saidov
(Foreign Minister, Uzbekistan)

In tandem with these state-level engagements, the Director General met with representatives from key international and regional organisations to deepen institutional partnerships and advance cross-border initiatives. The IOFS delegation held productive talks with **H.E. Mr. Jasem AlBudaiwi**, Secretary-General of the Gulf Cooperation Council, and **H.E. Mr. Baghdad Amreyev**, President of the Turkic Investment Fund. To further bridge regional efforts, conversations were also conducted with **Mr. Abdullah Eren**, President of the Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency, and **Ms. Andrea Meza Murillo**, Deputy Executive Secretary of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification.



H.E. Mr. Baghdad Amreyev
(President, Turkic Investment Fund)



Mr. Abdullah Eren
(President, Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency)



Ms. Andrea Meza Murillo
(Deputy Executive Secretary, UNCCD)

MULTILATERAL CONVENINGS

Dushanbe, Ankara, and the IsDB High-Level Roundtables, EEF, Astana

GLOBAL NETWORK — MAY-JUNE 2026

Water for Sustainable Development (Tajikistan): H.E. Ambassador Berik Aryn traveled to Dushanbe for the Fourth High-Level International Conference on the Water Action Decade. Speaking during the main plenary session, he connected water management directly to regional food security and formally reaffirmed IOFS's institutional support for the initiative to establish a dedicated *United Nations International Water Organization*.



42nd COMCEC Committee Meeting (Ankara): Under the explicit direction of the DG, Chief Multilateral Relations Officer Mr. Abdula Manafi Mutualo represented the IOFS at the 42nd Follow-up Committee Meeting of the COMCEC. He presented the organisation's achievements under Agenda Item 9 (*Sustaining Food Security*) to the assembled regional trade bodies.



5th Eurasian Economic Forum (Astana): The Director General brought the IOFS's digital portfolio to the forefront of the Eurasian economic integration dialogue. He presented the mechanics of the *Integrated Digital Food Trade Platform* and the *AI-Driven Agri-Food Governance Protocol*. The session concluded with the signing of a formal protocol alongside EEC Minister Gohar Barseghyan, legally extending the EEC-IOFS cooperation framework.



IsDB Annual Meetings (Baku): In tandem with signing the institutional MoU, the IOFS delegation carried out an extensive track of sideline diplomacy. High-level programmatic reviews were conducted with the Economic Ministers of Cameroon, Burkina Faso, Senegal, Côte d'Ivoire, and Mauritania, alongside technical scoping sessions with the leadership of the International Center for Biosaline Agriculture (ICBA) and the IsDB Rabat Regional Hub.



OPERATIONAL INITIATIVES & FIELD CAPACITY BUILDING

Showcasing field activities, smallholder support projects, agricultural workshops, and value chain trade developments across the OIC region.

FIELD DELIVERY

Joint Project Launches Drought-Resistant Seed Distribution in Northern Afghanistan

MAZAR-I-SHARIF, AFGHANISTAN — MAY 6, 2026

Demonstrating immediate, on-the-ground operational deployment, the IOFS, in close financial and logistical collaboration with the Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TİKA) and Afghanistan's Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock, officially launched a major input project in Mazar-i-Sharif.

Titled “Enhancing Maize and Soybean Cultivation for Sustainable Development in Northern Afghanistan,” the field initiative is explicitly designed to safeguard rural livelihoods against persistent climate disruptions. The project is directly supporting 400 smallholder farming families across the highly vulnerable Balkh and Jawzjan provinces. Under the strict division of project labor, the IOFS successfully procured and delivered high-quality, certified drought-resistant maize and soybean seeds. Concurrently, TİKA deployed essential mineral fertilizers to immediately restore degraded soil fertility. The project includes an ongoing field-training school managed by agronomy experts to ensure the rapid adoption of climate-smart farming techniques and maximize seasonal crop yields.



Operational delivery: Certified seed and fertilizer distributions underway in Mazar-i-Sharif, directly empowering 400 smallholder farming families.

SCIENTIFIC CAPACITY

IOFS Launches Five-Day Functional Genomics Spring School for Staple Crops

PETROPAVLOVSK, KAZAKHSTAN — MAY 18-22, 2026

Operating under the institutional umbrella of the OIC Strategic Commodities Programme, the IOFS, in close technical partnership with the Center of Agrocompetence of Kozybayev University and the University of Arizona, successfully organized a high-level **Spring School on Functional Genomics and Bioinformatics**.

The five-day advanced training program gathered leading plant scientists and molecular researchers from across the OIC geography. The curriculum focused intensively on wheat and rice, the two primary staple crops critical to ensuring food security and import independence across the Muslim world. The training

equipped national agricultural institutes with advanced scientific competencies in genomic mapping. This directly enhances regional self-sufficiency by accelerating the localized breeding of climate-resilient, heat-tolerant, and disease-resistant crop varieties.



VALUE CHAIN

High-Level Roundtables Standardize Halal Meat Supply Chains and Trade Routes

ALMATY, KAZAKHSTAN — JUNE 10-11, 2026

To optimize downstream market integration, the International Islamic Food Processing Association (IFPA), in close coordination with the IOFS, convened a specialized business roundtable focused on boosting the **Kazakhstan-United Arab Emirates (UAE) Meat Trade Corridor**. Opening the session, H.E. Ambassador Berik Aryn noted that Kazakhstan possesses vast pasture resources and a rapidly modernizing livestock sector capable of generating premium halal meat exports.

The roundtable brought together logistics experts and corporate food buyers to position the UAE as a strategic trade, customs, and distribution hub for channeling Kazakh agricultural products into markets across the Gulf, East Africa, and South Asia. The discussions resulted in concrete steps to unify cross-border Halal auditing standards, implement blockchain-based cold-chain traceability, and eliminate non-tariff logistical bottlenecks. This session was paired with a secondary high-level strategic roundtable on June 10, focused on mobilizing Kazakhstan's national agrarian academies to operationalize joint food security pilots across the wider OIC framework.



Technical Workshops & International Exhibitions

Caspian Agri-Trade (Baku): The Director General traveled to Baku for the 19th Azerbaijan International Agriculture Exhibition. Addressing the Ministerial Conference, he spoke on the panel “*The Role of Logistics in the Interaction of Agri-Food Systems*,” providing a blueprint for securing regional trade corridors and safeguarding transit routes during geopolitical shocks.



SIAM 2026 Exhibition (Morocco): An expert IOFS delegation, led by Projects Director Dr. Ismail Abdelhamid, participated in the *International Agricultural Exhibition in Morocco (SIAM)* in Meknes. The team engaged directly in the Adaptation of African Agriculture (AAA) Initiative and held strategy sessions with the Agricultural Ministers of Morocco and The Gambia to map out future agronomy partnerships.



Digital Governance & AI Workshop: IOFS successfully concluded a two-day regional technical workshop in Astana focused on *AI Application in Agricultural Governance*. Technocrats from across the region analyzed applied digital solutions, including satellite monitoring of crop lands, automated digital subsidy management software, and livestock identification systems.



HOST COUNTRY PARTNERSHIPS & CIVIC IMPACT

Honoring strategic institutional relations, governmental hearings, and localized civic solidarity initiatives within the headquarters host nation of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

WATER SECURITY

IOFS Addresses Kazakh Senate Parliamentary Hearing on Digital Resource Management

ASTANA, KAZAKHSTAN — APRIL 03, 2026

Underscoring its deep collaboration with its host nation, an official IOFS delegation, led by Assistant Director General H.E. Ambassador Khusrav Noziri and Program Manager Dr. Abdelaziz Hajjaji, participated in a formal **Parliamentary Hearing** organized by the the Republic of Kazakhstan. The high-level hearing focused entirely on *Digital Transformation in the Agro-Industrial and Water Sectors*.

Addressing the assembled lawmakers and ministers, the IOFS delegation emphasized that water security is the irreplaceable

baseline for national food security. The delegation presented the joint programs executed alongside the Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation of Kazakhstan, showcasing how data-driven modern irrigation, satellite soil modeling, and regional institutional capacity building are actively protecting agricultural margins across Central Asia.

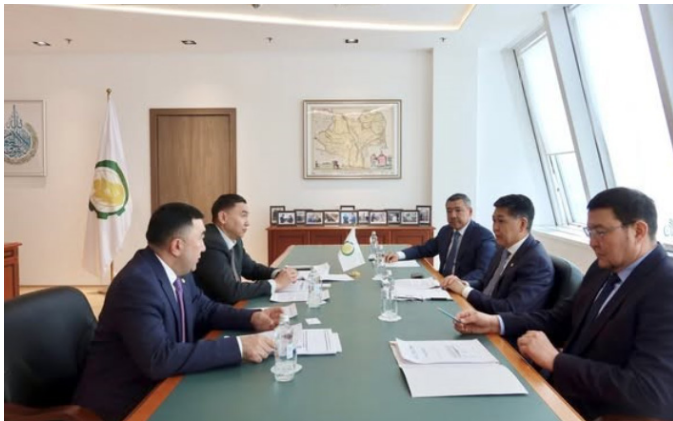


GRAIN RESERVES

Working Session with Kazakhstan's National Food Contract Corporation

ASTANA, KAZAKHSTAN — MARCH 31, 2026

Director General H.E. Ambassador Berik Aryn held a productive working session with Mr. Asylkhan Dzhuvashev, Chairman of the Management Board of the National Company Food Contract Corporation of Kazakhstan, alongside senior foreign affairs advisors. The strategic dialogue centered on operationalizing advanced mechanisms to enhance corporate grain reserves. The entities designed shared pathways to boost intra-OIC trade, utilizing Kazakhstan's robust wheat production capacity as a primary stabilizing cushion for net food-importing Member States during international supply shocks.



FOLLOW-UP

Joint Water Management Framework

ASTANA, KAZAKHSTAN — MARCH 31, 2026

An expert delegation visited the Executive Committee of the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea (IFAS) to finalize operational steps for the joint water management framework signed earlier in the year, focusing on land restoration across the Aral Sea basin.



CIVIC SOLIDARITY

IOFS Secretariat Executes Tree-Planting and Cultural Diplomacy Campaigns

ASTANA, KAZAKHSTAN — APRIL 25-26, 2026

Environmental Subbotnik Campaign: Demonstrating concrete civic responsibility and alignment with host-country environmental initiatives, H.E. Ambassador Berik Aryn and the entire international staff of the IOFS Secretariat actively participated in the nationwide “Taza Kazakhstan” (Clean Kazakhstan) campaign. Gathering at School No. 99 in Astana, the IOFS delegation planted birch and pine saplings, contributing to the green spaces and urban ecology of the capital city.



CICA Spring Charity Bazaar: The Secretariat mobilized an extensive cultural and culinary installation at the CICA Headquarters Spring Charity Bazaar. Led by the Director General, staff members and their families prepared traditional national dishes and displayed cultural souvenirs representing the diverse geographic footprint of the Ummah, including specialized displays for Türkiye, Mozambique, Tunisia, Kazakhstan, Egypt, Tajikistan, and Morocco, with all proceeds channeled to local humanitarian children's funds.



A WORD TO OUR READERS: CALL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Dear Readers,

As we navigate the landscape of 2026, we look back at a year of steady growth in both the scope and depth of the knowledge shared through these pages. We sincerely thank you for engaging with the articles featured in this latest edition, and we look forward to sustaining this vital momentum through the months ahead.

This growth, however, depends entirely on you. The Islamic Organisation for Food Security (IOFS) invites leading researchers, policymakers, agricultural practitioners, and industry experts to contribute original research and scientific insights to our upcoming editions. As a premier platform for driving sustainable agricultural transformation and food sovereignty across OIC Member States, the Food Security Hub bridges the gap between scientific innovation, strategic governance, and field implementation. Whether your work addresses climate-resilient farming, agrotech integration, national policy frameworks, or regional value-chain optimization, we welcome high-impact research papers, policy briefs, and practical case studies that advance our collective understanding.

Food security is not built in isolation; it is the direct product of shared knowledge, sustained dialogue, and the willingness of experts like you to contribute to a common body of work. By sharing your evidence-based solutions and proven success stories, you will directly inform policy frameworks and empower communities working toward a zero-hunger future. We hope you will join our collaborative network of global changemakers and consider being a part of this vital effort.

To submit your manuscript, share editorial inquiries, or learn more about our publication guidelines, please contact us at fsh@iofs.org or visit our official website.



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