

ADB Distinguished Speaker Program: Driving food security through digitalization of food supply chains

8 November 2022 (Tuesday) | 15:45 – 16:55 (Manila)

Virtual

Join via [Zoom](#) (Meeting ID: 944 6454 3341 | Passcode: RDFSTG2022)

Background

The pandemic and subsequent shocks pertaining to Russia's invasion of Ukraine have severely disrupted global supply chains and trade networks. Entities at both ends of the supply chain have borne the brunt. Producers have seen both production as well as profits erode due to the paucity of working capital. Similarly, MSMEs that are engaged in both processing and distribution have struggled to access timely credit.

MSMEs are the backbone of Asia's economy. They stimulate demand, create jobs, innovate, and compete to drive GDP growth. Lack of financial capital among MSMEs can, thus, choke economic growth, impact income and affordability as well as adversely affect the supply of food to consumers. Even before the pandemic, ADB estimated a \$1.5 trillion funding gap in trade and supply chain, with smaller businesses most impacted.

Digitalization of both trade and financial flows can streamline access to finance enabling efficient and timely use of capital by swiftly directing it to pockets of need. Asia's recovery from the pandemic and the current shocks present opportunities for MSMEs to digitalize without compromising on their traditional strengths in agribusiness, wholesale and retail trade, and their proximity to customers.

Purpose

The session will discuss innovative digital solutions to help address capital limitations among MSMEs in food supply chains, and ways to promote financial inclusion.

Profile of Distinguished Speaker



Charles Li, Founder and Chairman of Micro Connect Group

He was most recently Chief Executive of Hong Kong Exchanges and Clearing Limited (HKEX) from January 2010 to December 2020. During this time, he orchestrated some of the most significant strategic initiatives in HKEX's history, including the acquisition of the London Metal Exchange in 2012, the launch of the Shanghai-Hong Kong Stock Connect cross-border trading scheme in 2014, Shenzhen-Hong Kong Stock Connect in 2016, Bond Connect in 2017, and the Listing Reforms in 2018.

Prior to joining HKEX in 2009, Charles served as Chairman of JP Morgan China from 2003 to 2009 and worked at Merrill Lynch from 1994 to 2003, where he served as President of Merrill Lynch China from 1999 to 2003. Earlier in his career, Charles practiced law at Brown & Wood and Davis Polk & Wardwell in New York. Charles also serves on the Board of MarketAxess Holdings Inc. and the Board of Trustees of Asia Business Council.

Charles received a BA in English Literature from Xiamen University, an MA in Journalism from the University of Alabama, and a JD from Columbia Law School

Program

15:45–15:50	Introduction and Moderation Qingfeng Zhang, Chief, Rural Development and Food Security (Agriculture) Thematic Group, concurrently OIC, Environment Thematic Group, SDCC, Asian Development Bank
15:50 –15:55	Opening Remarks M. Teresa Kho, Director General, East Asia Department, Asian Development Bank
15.55 – 16.15	Keynote Charles Li, Founder & Chairman, Micro Connect Group
16:15 – 16:35	Discussants <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mak Hussain, VP, Agriculture Solution Sales, Mastercard• Thomas E. Abell, Advisor and Chief, Digital Technology Group, SDCC, Asian Development Bank• Kevin Chen, Qiushi Chair Professor of Zhejiang University and Senior Research Fellow of IFPRI
16:35 – 16:55	Open Discussion and Next Steps