



#ADBSustainableFood Webinar Series



Fighting for Food Security: Lessons from Cross-Country Approaches

#ADBRuralDevelopment&FoodSecurity

OPENING REMARKS

Bruno Carrasco

Director General, concurrently Chief Compliance Officer
Sustainable Development and Climate Change Department
Asian Development Bank

- 1 Welcome to the distinguished Board members, panelists and all attendees. A good morning, good afternoon, and good evening.
- 2 Food insecurity is a serious issue in Asia and the Pacific. Many of our DMCs are suffering from the effects of the pandemic, rising energy, fertilizer and food prices. The frequency and severity of natural disasters, as well as the disruptions from the Russian invasion of Ukraine have further compounded this problem.
- 3 The current crisis is unique because of its effects across the agriculture supply chains. While access and affordability of food is moving towards a dire situation, high cost of critical inputs for agriculture such as fertilizer and fuel is endangering the livelihoods of farmers across the region. These risks underscore the importance of an effective and proactive policy response.

4 In a recent Op-Ed in Nikkei Asia's Feeding Asia Series, I emphasized the need for countries' swift actions to address gaps and weaknesses in the global food system. Three actions in particular, are key to reform the global food system, alleviate food shortages, and limit the spread of food crises. First, convince governments to dismantle trade barriers to promote more resilient value chains, and empower food producers and distributors. Second, support global food production transformation by empowering women farmers, using climate-resilient crops and applying digital technologies and other innovations for efficient use of resources. Third, promote access to safe and nutritious food to address nutrition deficits especially in conflict, and small island developing states. Indeed, we must work together to make bold decisions that will give everyone, especially the poor, the nutritious and affordable food they need to thrive.

5. What is ADB doing? Recognizing this, ADB has moved quickly, joining other international financing institutions (IFIs) in formulating a collaborative action plan to address food insecurity. This action plan supports five goals: supporting vulnerable people, promoting open trade, mitigating fertilizer shortage, supporting food production, and investing in climate resilience agriculture for the future.

6. In addition, ADB is strengthening its Countercyclical Support Facility (CSF) to provide fast disbursing financing to DMCs to mitigate the impact of major shocks to food security. ADB is also mitigating fertilizer shortages by supporting procurement where necessary (such as in Sri Lanka) and increasing efforts to improve fertilizer efficiency during usage.

7. ADB also sought to address long-term structural challenges by using policy-based lending to support competitive and inclusive rice sector development in the Philippines. In the medium- to long-term, ADB is supporting DMCs to create sustainable and resilient food systems through climate-smart agriculture, digitalization of agricultural value chains, and nature-based solutions.

8. However, money alone cannot solve the problem and one solution will not fit all countries given the heterogeneous nature of the problem across countries. We fully recognized the importance of south-south learning for fighting food insecurity in the region. The solutions devised by different DMCs are not just context-specific but could also have important lessons for the region as a whole in enhancing their own food security. For example, China Agricultural University launched their 2022 “China and Global Food Policy” report on 9 June. Similar work is being done in other DMCs to reform support to the agriculture sector required for improving food security. We also noted other country-specific solutions ranging from buffer stocks of grains and strengthening rural-urban linkages to e-commerce, use of digital technology and appropriate policies.

9. Today we are gathering here to bring together some of these best-in-class solutions from our selected developing member countries, and examine how they could be adapted to similar situations in other countries as well as contribute to greater resilience in food systems.

10. I am thankful for our well-respectful experts, Prof. Chen from PRC, Prof. Gulati from India, and Prof. Sudaryanto from Indonesia to share their country-specific solutions and discuss the potential for south-south learning. I am also deeply grateful for ED Liu from PRC, ED Ahmed from Pakistan, Regional Director Anthea Webb from World Food Program, and Undersecretary Adriano from the Philippines to provide their insights on how international organizations and our DMCs can work together to scale up these solutions and promote the south-south learning.

11. I look forward to a fruitful discussion. Thank you very much.

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