



## **Tackling Food Insecurity During Economic Turbulence: Exploring Solutions for Financial Strain and Inflation Impacts on Vulnerable Families**

**Webinar**

**13 September 2024**

**16:00 – 18:00 (Beijing time, GMT + 8)**

### **1. Background**

Food security, a critical issue commanding significant attention, especially in the CAREC countries, remains a pressing concern. The persistence of food safety challenges underscores its status as a shared hurdle spanning various societal domains. Moreover, the nexus between food security and economic development establishes a closely intertwined relationship that cannot be overlooked. This intricate connection highlights the imperative for comprehensive strategies and collaborative efforts to address these intertwined challenges effectively.

Food security serves as the bedrock of economic prosperity for any nation. Without it, a country's economic growth inevitably suffers. Persistent food safety issues not only provoke consumer anxieties and diminish trust in local products but also exert a detrimental influence on both domestic and foreign investment. In the realm of international trade, food safety emerges as a critical consideration; exporting nations must adhere to importing regions' safety protocols to avoid trade barriers. Consequently, to excel in global competition, countries and regions must bolster their oversight of food safety and elevate their food security standards. Thus, ensuring robust food security management becomes imperative for achieving global prominence and sustained economic advancement.

The CAREC Institute has long focused on the critical nexus of food security, agriculture, climate change, and regional economics. In its recent publication, [“Water–Agriculture–Energy Nexus in Central Asia Through the Lens of Climate Change,”](#) the Institute underscores the profound implications of climate change on food security in the region. The report examines how shifting climate patterns, including variations in temperature and precipitation, are poised to significantly alter agricultural productivity. While some crops may benefit from warmer temperatures and increased carbon dioxide levels, others—especially those reliant on consistent water availability—are likely to experience reduced yields due to more frequent droughts and unpredictable rainfall. Moreover, the report highlights the escalating frequency and severity of extreme weather events such as floods and heatwaves, which not only pose direct threats to crops but also disrupt planting and harvesting cycles. Changes in water availability, including shifts in river flows and groundwater levels, further compound challenges by exacerbating water scarcity, thereby straining agricultural systems. The intricate interplay among water, agriculture, and energy underscores how these dynamics can create ripple effects on food security and rural economies, particularly in economically vulnerable regions heavily dependent on monoculture practices.

In 2019, the CAREC Institute collaborated with the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) on [a comprehensive study](#) examining the trends, challenges, and opportunities in agricultural development across CAREC member countries. This report details individual country profiles compiled as part of the study, offering insights into various aspects such as land and water resources, macroeconomic indicators, the agricultural sector's contribution to the economy, production cycles, food security status, nutritional intake and malnutrition issues, as well as key agricultural trends, constraints, and potential opportunities. The report emphasizes that enhancing agricultural productivity, improving access to modern technology, and investing in public infrastructure, such as irrigation and transportation, are crucial for food security in the region. Additionally, national strategies highlight the importance of linking agricultural production with food security through support for smallholder farming and implementing social safety nets.

As the issues of the climate change, agriculture development and food security are important for the CAREC region, the Asian Development Bank Institute (ADBI), as a CAREC Institute's key research partners, carried out a household survey "Food Insecurity, Inflation and Government Aid: Evidence from household surveys in Developing Asia" in 2023 in seven countries from Southeast Asia and 9 countries from Central Asia and Caucasus to better understand the conditions of food insecurity and the impacts of inflation and other drivers of it in developing Asia. Preliminary findings of this study indicate that low-income households facing financial difficulties were more prone to food insecurity. High inflation, both general and food-specific, increased food insecurity, and government aid was the only effective coping strategy to reduce food insecurity. Furthermore, according to study's findings low-income households and those with financial difficulties were more likely to face food insecurity. High general and food-price inflation correlated with higher food insecurity, and applying for government aid was the most effective coping strategy. These results underscore the need for measures to support vulnerable groups.

Understanding China's experience in addressing food insecurity and climate change holds significant importance for Central Asian countries. China, with its diverse geography and climate, faces similar challenges to many regions in Central Asia, such as water scarcity, desertification, and vulnerability to climate change impacts. China has implemented various strategies, including advanced agricultural technologies, water management systems, and policies promoting sustainable development. These experiences offer valuable insights and practical lessons that Central Asian countries can adapt to their own contexts, fostering regional cooperation and enhancing resilience against shared environmental and agricultural challenges. Learning from China's practices can contribute to collaborative efforts aimed at achieving food security and climate resilience across the broader CAREC region.

Focusing on regional food security challenges and underscoring the imperative to bridge the gap between research and practical solutions, the CAREC Institute and the ADBI are jointly organizing a policy dialogue workshop titled "Tackling Food Insecurity During Economic Turbulence: Exploring Solutions for Financial Strain and Inflation Impacts on Vulnerable Families." This initiative draws upon the comprehensive research conducted by both institutes in agriculture, food security, and climate change, emphasizing the critical need to safeguard food production in the face of evolving economic challenges.

Scheduled tentatively for September 13, 2024, from 4:00 PM to 6:00 PM Beijing Time, this webinar will harness recent research findings to delve deeper into critical aspects of regional food security. Building upon the insights gained, the session aims to achieve several key objectives:

- *Presenting Research Insights:* The webinar will unveil key findings from the “Food Insecurity, Inflation and Government Aid: Evidence from household surveys in Developing Asia” survey, shedding light on the intersection of economic factors and food security in the region.
- *Addressing Regional Perspectives:* It will provide a platform for discussing and exchanging views specifically on the food security challenges and opportunities within Central Asia, aiming to foster a nuanced understanding of the unique regional dynamics at play.
- *Formulating Policy Recommendations:* Central to the agenda is the exploration of best practices in formulating actionable policy recommendations for governments. By drawing on shared expertise and experiences, participants will collaboratively work towards enhancing food security resilience in the face of economic uncertainties.

Climate change-induced disruptions and economic turbulence present significant threats to food security, disproportionately affecting vulnerable families and communities. Recognizing these challenges, the workshop aims to gather insights from experts in adapting agricultural practices, enhancing resilience to climate impacts, and mitigating economic pressures that hinder food access and affordability.

By facilitating constructive dialogue among policymakers, researchers, and practitioners, the workshop endeavors to formulate actionable recommendations that prioritize food security amidst economic uncertainties. This collaborative effort seeks to ensure that effective measures are in place to sustainably address the complex interplay of economic factors and environmental changes impacting food production and accessibility.

Registration link:

[https://carecinstitute-org.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_YX\\_97yXSr6FQ\\_96UmDExw](https://carecinstitute-org.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_YX_97yXSr6FQ_96UmDExw)

Panelists will receive personalized Zoom link for their participation in the event.

## Agenda

September 13, 2024 (Beijing time, GMT+8)<sup>1</sup>

**15:50-16:00:** Virtual Connection to the Dialogue and Webinar Rules  
**Ms. Rose Shao**, Capacity Building Specialist, CAREC Institute  
**Group Photo**

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### Opening Remarks<sup>1</sup>

**16:00-16:10** **Mr. Kabir Jurazoda**, Director, CAREC Institute  
Dialogue MC: **Ms. Rose Shao**, Capacity Building Specialist, CAREC Institute

### Session I: **Keynote Presentations**

**16:10-16:40** Introduction and Key Findings on “Food Insecurity, Inflation and Government Aid: Evidence from household surveys in Developing Asia”  
**Dr. Peter Morgan**, Senior Consulting Economist and Advisor to the Dean, ADBI  
**Dr. Dina Azhgaliyeva**, Senior Research Fellow, ADBI

**16:40-17:00** Optimizing groundwater-food-energy nexus and its implication for China's water pricing reform: Evidence from Northern China  
**Dr. Xialin Wang**, China Center for Agricultural Policy, Peking University, CAREC Institute Visiting Fellow

**17:00-17:20** Food Systems for Healthy Diets and Nutrition in Central Asia  
**Dr. Kamiljon Akramov**, Senior Research Fellow, Development Strategies and Governance Unit, International Food Policy Research Institute

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### Session II: **Panel Discussion with Implementing Partners**

**17:20-18:00** During this session, experts from CAREC countries will draw upon pertinent research to share their insights, each allocated approximately 8-10 minutes. Additional invited experts will contribute their perspectives through presentations lasting 7-10 minutes, offering reflections and commentary based on the report. Following these presentations, an open dialogue will ensue, engaging prominent water sector experts from key implementing partner organizations.

**Distinguished Discussants:**

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<sup>1</sup> Simultaneous Interpretation will be available. Please select from the bottom panel your language of preference, English or Russian.

**Ms. Suray Charyyeva**, Leibniz Institute of Agricultural Development in Transition Economies, CAREC Institute Visiting Fellow

**Dr. Abdurasul Kayumov**, Country Manager, arche noVa, Germany

**Dr. Sahil Guliyev**, Assistant Professor, Agricultural Sciences, ADA University

**Dr. Kanat Tilekeyev**, Senior Research Fellow and Head of GSD Executive Education, Institute of Public Policy and Administration, University of Central Asia

**Moderator: Dr. Kuat Akizhanov**, Deputy Director Two, CAREC Institute

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### **Takeaways and Way Forward**

**Dr. Kuat Akizhanov**, Deputy Director Two, CAREC Institute