

**Statement by Memduh UNAL, Director of Agriculture and Industry (ECO),
Project Cycle Management for ECO Regional Food Security Programme
2-Day Introductory virtual Training 16-17 March 2021 | 09:00 - 14:00 (Turkey
Standard Time)**

Distinguished Participants
Ladies and Gentleman,

As We mark the end of a two-days training, I wish to commend you all for having made time out of your busy schedules to attend this programme.

As ECO Secretariat, we want to show our appreciation to ECO Regional Coordination Center for Food Security and Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations for organizing this excellent training and to Ministry of Agriculture of Republic of Turkey for funding.

Before the thanking the ECO Regional Coordination Center for Food Security and FAO, I want to give a short background.

Investment in the human resource and social capital infrastructure in agriculture is essential, because: recently, we are experiencing a different economic hardship from a decade ago global financial crisis in the world. If remembered, during the last global financial crisis, after the food prices were topped in 2008, global output decreased and food prices followed it. Now the situation is opposite, although there is a severe recession in the world, food prices are still getting larger. It means unfortunately global poverty is significantly increasing and average consumer in ECO region whose budget mostly is spent on food adversely affected.

Also, as you know in ECO Region, nearly half of the region lives in rural areas, one third of the total population is employed in agriculture, we have a great potential on agriculture.

So, we have the potential to overcome recent crisis, yet the bottleneck is lack of equipped human resources and institutions in the region.

We are thankful to the ECO Regional Coordination Center for Food Security because ECO-RCC has been organizing several workshops and training programmes to accumulate this capital and strengthen the capacity. After this excellent introductory training, it is expected from ECO-RCC to organize educational workshops continuity of this programme.

We are very grateful to all participants (over than seventy) for taking time off from your busy schedules to attend the training. So thank you for attending.

Thank you.