

Summary

IsDB Webinar on “MDBs as Key Partners in Promoting Regional Cooperation and Integration”

24 June 2021

On 24 June 2021, the Regional Cooperation and Integration (RCI) Department of the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) hosted a webinar on “MDBs as Key Partners in Promoting RCI”, which was the fourth event of the joint MDB webinar series on RCI.

The webinar was attended by more than 40 participants, which included partner MDBs, regional cooperation organizations, IsDB regional hubs, and IsDB’s Center of Excellence in Kuala Lumpur. The program was moderated by En’amulrahman Malkawi, Lead Youth Empowerment Specialist at IsDB, and the panel comprised Yuefen Li, Senior Advisor at the South Center; Priyanto Rohmattullah, Deputy Director at the Ministry of National Development Planning of Indonesia; and Dr. Iskandar Abdullaev, Deputy Director at the CAREC Institute.

During the discussion, the panel members highlighted the role of MDBs in recovery from the pandemic and touched upon various specific issues, including digital transformation, climate change, water cooperation, and progress with sustainable development goals. Yuefen Li discussed the macroeconomic implications of the COVID-19 crisis, including the risk of a credit crunch, and appreciated MDBs’ recent support to developing countries during the pandemic. Priyanto Rohmattullah shared brief information about Indonesia’s regional integration perspectives in Southeast Asia and highlighted the role of economic complementarities and developmental proximity/disparity in achieving RCI targets. Dr. Iskandar Abdullaev took up the issue from the perspective of Central Asian economies and mentioned MDBs’ potential roles in supporting the operationalization of ongoing RCI programs. He also referred to sustainable development goals to ensure harmony with the global development agenda.

In the event, Kadir Basboga, Senior Regional Integration and Trade Economist at IsDB, presented IsDB’s draft chapter on “MDBs as Key Partners in Promoting RCI”, which is to be included in the joint MDBs report. His presentation focused on the complementarities of MDBs, and potential areas of further RCI cooperation to leverage their unique strengths.

In the wrap-up session, Riad Ragueb, Acting Director of IsDB’s RCI Department, summarized common key messages from the panel discussion. He emphasized the need for enhancing cooperation between MDBs and regional cooperation organizations while underlining the need to support the human aspects of regional integration, focusing on women and youth.