

Media Update-3

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ITC

PRESS RELEASE

Recognizing female farmers on International Women's Day

A panel discussion was held in Karachi to celebrate International Women's Day 2021 in Karachi. Growth for Rural Advancement and Sustainable Progress (GRASP) with Sindh Research and Development Foundation organized the event. Agriculture Minister Sindh Mr. Ismail Rahoo, Minister Women Development Ms. Shehla Raza, and women's rights activist Ms. Nazo Dharejo were some of the attendees along with rural women, and representatives from government, development sector, academia, and think tanks.

GRASP, funded by the European Union and implemented by the International Trade Centre, is working to improve the business environment of small and medium enterprises, and small holder farmers in Sindh and Balochistan.

Rural women in Sindh have been a particular focus of GRASP for its COVID-19 emergency response, with trainings aiming to furnish their skills in agriculture, horticulture and livestock, enterprise development, and e-commerce. Their linkages with local markets are being developed through trainings, connecting them to buyers for value added products of milk, dates, and tomatoes.

Female farmers presented the by-products they developed, and received cell phones from GRASP project during the event, which will be used to connect them to wholesale buyers, markets, and enable them to sell their produce online.

The three panels discussed government focus on enterprise development of women and the development of grants for them. The role of men in supporting women was highlighted, where they can be allies and create spaces for women at workplaces. Making up 67 percent of the labor force, women farmer's skills

need to be enhanced. Currently, women in agriculture are in labor only, their representation in policy making and at decisions is needed.

GRASP is working to create gender-inclusive employment and income opportunities in the rural areas through targeted support to both the public and private sectors. Gender inclusiveness in value chain development will foster economic opportunities for women in horticulture and livestock.
