

# Media Update-2

17 September 2021

**CORRIGENDUM: Please use this revised version.**

## IFAD

### PRESS RELEASE

[NRSP and IFAD Pakistan hosts webinar on “A better livelihood for Smallholders under China-Pakistan Agricultural Cooperation” in collaboration with Foreign Economic Cooperation Center \(FECC\), Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs, P.R. China](#)

[17<sup>th</sup> September 2021, Online]: A virtual validation workshop was organised jointly by the National Rural Support Programme (NRSP) and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) Pakistan in collaboration with Foreign Economic Cooperation Center (FECC), Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs, P.R. China. The webinar was part of a series of policy talks inviting discussion and debate under the project titled “**Effective South-South Cooperation in Agriculture to Unleash Transformative Power of Agriculture Sector for Inclusive Development in Pakistan**”.

During the talks, **Hubert Boirard, IFAD Country Director for Pakistan**, welcomed the participants and panelists. He appreciated that despite COVID 19 crises, the project has so far progressed well. He gave a brief overview of the project and informed participants that the project was funded by the IFAD-China South South and Triangular Cooperation Facility, a grant dedicated to mobilizing knowledge, technologies and resources from the Global South to accelerate rural poverty alleviation, enhance rural productivity, and advance rural transformation. He further said “*Over the last three decades IFAD has supported farming communities in Pakistan, especially smallholders, to improve their socioeconomic conditions through a variety of interventions. IFAD will extend its technical support through this recent initiative as it continues to support improved livelihoods in rural areas in Pakistan and China. IFAD is also initiating new projects in Gilgit Baltistan as well as in Gawadar for the smallholders.*”

**Dr. Wang Geng, Director, FECC, Ministry of Agricultural and Rural Affairs, P.R.C and Prof. Yangzhijiang, Dean of International Education, Xinjiang Agricultural University** gave a presentation on Effective South-South Cooperation in Agriculture to Unleash Transformative Power of Agriculture Sector for Inclusive Development in Pakistan. They highlighted the contributions of Xinjiang Agriculture University in promoting research projects in Pakistan. Dr. Wang elaborated the nature of the Technical Assistance being provided in this initiative to unleash the potential of agriculture, both in Pakistan and China. He said, *“Knowledge sharing through South-South and Triangular Cooperation is a very powerful tool to facilitate the exchange of lessons learnt and best practices among countries of the global south and help them end poverty and hunger. The Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs China and Xinjiang Agriculture University will continue supporting this noble cause through knowledge exchange to benefit poor farming communities in Pakistan and China”*

**Dr. Rashid Bajwa, CEO NRSP** presented Status of Agriculture Development in Pakistan and highlighted the challenges that smallholders have to endure. He appreciated this initiative which was need of the hour to fully exploit the potential of agriculture sector in Pakistan. He further emphasized that the project should establish and operate an effective knowledge generation and sharing platform to provide customized assistances in helping Pakistan to unleash the transformative power of agriculture sector for the country's inclusive development. He hoped that the project target audience, which include smallholders and farmer organizations, agribusiness and agriculture-related firms and Governmental agencies such as Irrigation Department, Agriculture Department, Commerce Department etc. will benefit from this unprecedented opportunity of knowledge sharing to add to the agriculture development in Pakistan.

Dr. Bajwa highlighted the dilapidated conditions of the smallholders due to lack of knowledge, resources and access to modern cropping practices. He emphasized on five key areas where China-Pakistan Agriculture Cooperation can support small farmers in Pakistan. These areas are land preparation, access to farming machinery, lack of information about modern cropping techniques, crop management & harvesting, and post-harvest crop losses & transportation. He stated, *“the exchange of knowledge and expertise will be instrumental for Pakistani small farmers to boost crop production and profitability in major crops including wheat, sugarcane, rice, lentils and legumes. NRSP will continue benefitting smallholders, who are the target beneficiaries of NRSP's poverty alleviation program, by working with China-*

*Pakistan Agriculture Cooperation to pass on the information, lessons learned and best practices to poor communities in Pakistan through a network of NRSP-fostered Community Organizations”*

A panel discussion was also held on ‘Fostering a better livelihood for Smallholders in Pakistan under China-Pakistan Agricultural Cooperation’. The panelists were distinguished agriculture and development experts from public and private sector of Pakistan and China, including Mr. Gu Wenliang, Agricultural Counsellor, China Embassy in Pakistan. They highlighted the best practice and good lessons from previous China-Pakistan agricultural cooperation, the roles that private sectors can play in promoting smallholder agricultural development under CPEC and ways to ensure that the benefits of China-Pakistan Agricultural Cooperation trickle down to smallholders in Pakistan. Mr. Gu Wenliang noted that transfer of agriculture skills/technology/experience from China will be more applicable for smallholders in Pakistan and the cross-sharing knowledge and experiences will benefit agriculture sector of both China and Pakistan to meet the emerging challenges, especially in the context of Climate Change.

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Note to the Editor:

### **ABOUT NRSP**

Established in 1991, NRSP is the largest Rural Support Programme in the country in terms of outreach, staff and development activities. It is a not for profit organization registered under Section 42 of Companies Act 2017 (repealed Companies Ordinance 1984).

NRSP's mandate is to alleviate poverty by harnessing people's potential and undertake development activities in Pakistan. It has a presence in 72 Districts in all the four Provinces including Azad Jammu and Kashmir through Regional Offices and Field Offices. NRSP is currently working with more than 3.71 million poor households organized into a network of 238,252 Community Organizations. With sustained incremental growth, it is emerging as Pakistan's leading engine for poverty reduction and rural development.

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Additional information about NRSP can be accessed from its website:  
[www.nrsp.org.pk](http://www.nrsp.org.pk)