

Media Update

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IFAD

PRESS RELEASE

IFAD-financed projects work together to boost rural development in Pakistan

Murree, 29 September 2023 – To foster rural development while striving to reduce poverty, enhance food security, and empower rural communities in Pakistan, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) organized a two-day ‘Portfolio Overview Workshop’ in Murree from 25 to 26 September 2023.

The event also marked the presence of Fernanda Thomaz Da Rocha, the newly appointed IFAD Country Director for Pakistan, and Arnoud Hameleers, IFAD Country Director for Bangladesh, along with Project Coordinators, Directors, country team members, partner organization representatives, and local experts from the Project Management Units.

The workshop brought together key stakeholders to discuss challenges and collaborative solutions for the IFAD-financed projects. Participants explored ways to connect farmers and producers, integrate high-value and climate-resilient crops, strengthen farmers' organizations, and promote private sector engagement.

Lauding the initiative of reviewing the portfolio together with the government and relevant stakeholders, Arnoud Hameleers says, “these processes are instrumental in enabling experts to identify areas of challenge within implementation. And this is where we start addressing the challenges and finding resolutions to them.”

Fernanda Thomaz Da Rocha conveyed her appreciation to the attendees at the workshop and introduced herself to both the internal and external stakeholders on this occasion. She emphasized the longstanding partnership

between IFAD and the Government of Pakistan. “Such collaborative workshops strengthen this alliance in advancing rural development and reducing poverty in the region,” she added.

Da Rocha also spoke about key challenges, including climate change, social and economic empowerment of women and youth, and the need to strengthen farmers' organizations in the journey of rural development. She stressed, "we need to step up our mission to better integrate climate change considerations into our projects and enhance the resilience of rural communities. Engaging youth in productive activities and value chains is crucial for Pakistan's future."

Commending the initiative by the IFAD Country Office, Azam Khan, Deputy Secretary, Economic Affairs Division said, “this workshop offered the project teams a platform to present their progress, performance, and future plans.” Emphasizing IFAD's core mission of supporting rural communities, Khan also commended the strong collaboration between the government and Pakistan and IFAD in the fight against rural poverty.

The workshop ended with an interactive session where the project implementors discussed the areas of improvement in implementation and the roadblocks they face. They collaboratively brainstormed and exchanged ideas to find solutions.

In Pakistan, IFAD supported a total of 29 projects with over 800 million in financing. Currently, there are five ongoing projects in the country. Together with the government, IFAD has positively impacted 2.8 million households in rural areas of the country.

Read more about IFAD’s work in [Pakistan](#).

Contact:

Sumaira Sumaira

Email: s.sumaira@ifad.org

Tel: +92 307 0953426