



## AUSTRALIAN HIGH COMMISSION ISLAMABAD

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### Press Release

#### **Improving agricultural profitability for poor Pakistani farmers**

The Australian and Pakistani governments today signed an arrangement in support of Pakistan's efforts to deliver benefits to the rural poor through strengthening the agriculture sector.

Australian High Commissioner Margaret Adamson and Secretary Economic Affairs Division (EAD) Tariq Bajwa signed the arrangement under which the AUD12.85 million, Australian Government-funded Agriculture Value Chain Collaborative Research Program (AVCCR) will be implemented.

AVCCR will build on the successful Agriculture Sector Linkages Program (ASLP). It will target new opportunities across agriculture value chains to empower women, alleviate poverty and promote inclusive growth. The investment will initially be focused in Punjab and Sindh but will look for opportunities to apply the benefits across other regions in Pakistan.

High Commissioner Adamson welcomed the arrangement noting that Australia and Pakistan enjoyed a long-standing collaboration on agricultural development particularly in research.

"The Australian Government has supported collaborative agricultural research in Pakistan since the 1980s. Our continued support will help Pakistan to build an innovation-based agriculture sector through targeted public investment not only to boost agriculture profitability, but most importantly to ensure food security and freedom from hunger," Ms Adamson said.

The Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR) will implement the AVCCR program which will focus on collaborative research in dairy meat and milk; pulses; goat meat; and high value horticulture crops (onions, chilli and tomato). It will build on the lessons learnt and progress made under ASLP.

ACIAR will work with the National Ministry for Food Security and Research, provincial agriculture and livestock departments, Pakistan Agricultural Research Council and university research institutions to identify solutions to technical, social, economic or policy constraints that are hindering agricultural sector growth.

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