

PRESS INFORMATION DEPARTMENT
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[PRESS RELEASE]

KARACHI: February 17, 2023- Federal Minister for Poverty Alleviation & Social Safety and Chairperson Benazir Income Support Programme - Ma'am Shazia Marri attended Growth for Rural Advancement and Sustainable Progress (GRASP)- matching grant cheque distribution ceremony, at Movenpick Hotel Karachi.

Federal Minister, Mrs. Shazia Marri stated how Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund (PPAF) distributed matching grants worth RS 269 million amongst 128 beneficiaries to promote agri-business in Sindh. The initiative is aimed at contributing to the overall economic development of the province by supporting small and medium enterprises from 6 districts of the province, namely; Hyderabad, Khairpur, Sajawal, Tando Muhammad Khan, Tharparkar and Maitiari. The Matching Grants were distributed under Growth for Rural Advancement and Sustainable Progress which is a European Union (EU) funded project implemented by International Trade Centre (ITC) in collaboration with Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund (PPAF) and Food & Agriculture Organization (FAO).

Federal Minister Mrs. Shazia Marri, during her speech stated that she is grateful to EU and ITC for investing in Pakistan's agricultural sector to improve the business environment and strengthen agricultural value chains in the targeted districts. "This initiative has improved access to finance for agricultural based small and medium enterprises and boost the trend of entrepreneurship in the communities belonging to remote areas. Five Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) have been worked upon through this project. First no poverty. Second zero hunger. Third gender equality. Fourth work and economic growth and fifth Climate change. This project in one way or the other contributed in fulfilling these five SDGs. Women especially should be motivated and encouraged to participate in the work force. Likewise, financial and digital literacy is need of the hour for masses", said the Federal Minister.

Federal Minister and Chairperson BISP Shazia Marri while addressing the media mentioned that different organisations should work hand in hand to help people affected by the floods in Pakistan. "Inaction is no longer an option. Pakistan's people, and the economic system that has to drive the quality and pace of recovery from a flood that destroyed 33 million lives has sustained a huge exogenous shock. We are not big emitters rather quite the opposite. Long-term climate financing instruments are needed to plug severe capacity deficits in the developing countries. What has happened in Pakistan will certainly not only stay in Pakistan, we are seeing climate change impacts crossing borders." said the Federal Minister.

Concluding the address, the Federal Minister thanked all the international agencies for their work in Pakistan and distributed cheques among the winners.