

# ORIC Newsletter

University of Agriculture, Faisalabad

August 16 to 31, 2025



## ADB, UAF COLLABORATE ON \$3 MILLION LOW-CARBON AGRICULTURE PROJECT

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) is developing a \$3 million project on low-carbon agriculture mechanisms in Pakistan to address pressing agricultural and environmental challenges for a sustainable future.

This was shared by Ms. Noriko Sato, ADB Senior Natural Resources Specialist, during a meeting at the University of Agriculture Faisalabad (UAF) with Punjab Higher Education Commission (PHEC) Chairperson Prof. Dr. Iqar Ahmad Khan and UAF Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Zulfiqar Ali. The project blueprint is being designed in collaboration with UAF.

Ms. Sato explained that the initiative will focus on speed breeding, greenhouse gas emission measurement, and high-tech agricultural interventions. She reaffirmed ADB's commitment to inclusive, sustainable, and climate-resilient growth in Pakistan through investments in energy, food security, institutional capacity, transportation, urban development, and social services.

Speaking on the occasion, Prof. Dr. Iqar Ahmad Khan lauded Ms. Sato's contributions to Pakistan's agriculture



## Inside NEWS

- UAF bids farewell to Ms. Noriko Sato, Senior Natural Resources Specialist, ADB
- BIC holds a Session on Sustainable SMEs Development
- Rasta-PIDE & Planning Commission Competitive Research Grants
- Secretary Agriculture Punjab reviews cotton crop situation at MNSUA
- ORIC urges PIs to assure advertisement budget prior to process new adds





sector and warned of the growing threat of environmental degradation. He emphasized that challenges such as climate change, water scarcity, and low productivity demand scientific and innovative solutions. He also noted that several ADB-UAF collaborations have already delivered tangible results.

Prof. Dr. Zulfiqar Ali, Vice Chancellor UAF, reaffirmed the university's commitment to strengthening global linkages and advancing agriculture through technology, research, and industry partnerships. He highlighted that UAF has successfully completed nearly 20 technical assistance projects and five R&D collaborations with ADB. Stressing the vital link between agriculture and poverty alleviation, he underscored the need for innovation-driven strategies to ensure food security, economic stability, and improved livelihoods for farming communities.

The meeting also reviewed other ADB initiatives in Pakistan and acknowledged the significance of continued collaboration with UAF in shaping sustainable agricultural policies.

The session was attended by Prof. Dr. Muhammad Imran Arshad, Director ORIC, alongside deans, registrar, treasurer, and UAF scientists engaged in ADB projects.

## UAF's Business Incubation Center Hosts Session on Sustainable SME Development

The Business Incubation Center (BIC) at the University of Agriculture Faisalabad (UAF) organized a session on "Sustainable SMEs Development" at the New Senate Hall, bringing together experts, faculty members, and young entrepreneurs to discuss strategies for strengthening small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in Pakistan.

Speaking on the occasion, Strategic Management Specialist Dr. Sarfraz Ahmad underlined the critical role of SMEs in generating economic activity and alleviating poverty. He stressed the need for proper planning to build sustainable business models and urged young entrepreneurs to embrace critical thinking and innovative, out-of-the-box solutions to ensure success. He added that small businesses could significantly contribute to uplifting the country's socio-economic conditions.

Director BIC reiterated the Center's commitment to nurturing innovative ideas and transforming them into successful ventures. He emphasized the importance of providing mentorship, training, and access to resources to empower young entrepreneurs and build a brighter future.

The session concluded with a call to action for collective efforts to enhance the SME sector, positioning it as a cornerstone of Pakistan's economic growth.





Ministry of Planning,  
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## RASTA - PIDE & Planning Commission Competitive Research Grants

invites research ideas under its Eighth Call for Competitive Grants Programme (CGP 8.0) on the following themes/topics:

### 1. ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION, PRODUCTIVITY, AND COMPETITIVENESS

- Structural Transformation and Growth
- Private Sector-Led Development
- Trade and Export Competitiveness
- Business Enabling Environment

### 2. HUMAN CAPITAL, DEMOGRAPHICS, AND INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT

- Demographic Trends and Opportunities
- Equitable Social Service Delivery
- Skills, Innovation, and Higher Education Reform
- Inclusive Social Protection Systems

### 3. GOVERNANCE, INSTITUTIONAL REFORMS, AND PUBLIC FINANCE

- Fiscal Sustainability and Reform
- Local Governance and Decentralisation
- Institutional Modernisation and Rule of Law
- Regulatory and Policy Coherence

### 4. CLIMATE RESILIENCE, NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT, AND SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

- Water and Agriculture Innovation
- Climate Risk Management and Resilience
- Just Climate Transition
- Environmental Sustainability and Circular Economy

### 5. TECHNOLOGY, ENERGY, AND INFRASTRUCTURE FOR FUTURE GROWTH

- Energy Security and Transition
- Technological Leapfrogging and Digital Governance
- Digital Inclusion and Social Equity
- Smart Infrastructure and Sustainable Urbanisation

**CGP 8.0**  
**CALL FOR RESEARCH IDEAS**

**Submission  
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**15th  
SEP  
2025**

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COMMONWEALTH  
SCHOLARSHIPS

## Commonwealth Scholarship for Masters and PhD 2025–2026

The Higher Education Commission (HEC) invites applications from Pakistani/AJK nationals under Commonwealth Scholarship Programme (2024–25) for Masters and PhD studies. The programme is managed by HEC, Pakistan in collaboration with Commonwealth Scholarship Commission, UK.

**For further details, please visit HEC website:**

**<https://tinyt.co/3ePq>**

Deadline to submit online application is  
**October 14, 2025**

### Learning Opportunities Abroad

HRD Division, Higher Education Commission  
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**Helpline:** 051-111-119-432 or 0334-119432

**For Queries/Complaints:** [onlinehelp.hec.gov.pk](https://onlinehelp.hec.gov.pk)

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## SECRETARY AGRICULTURE PUNJAB CHAIRS REVIEW MEETING ON COTTON AT MNSUA



Secretary Agriculture Punjab, Mr. Iftikhar Ali Sahoo, chaired a review meeting on the current cotton situation during his visit to Muhammad Nawaz Shareef University of Agriculture, Multan (MNSUA).

Speaking on the occasion, he emphasized the urgent need to revive cotton production and expedite field activities to achieve the target of 5.5 million cotton bales this season.

The meeting was attended by Prof. Dr. Zulfiqar Ali, Vice Chancellor of UAF and MNSUA, Dr. Asif Ali, Chairman of the National Seed Regulatory Authority, Mr. Sarfraz Hussain Magassi, Special Secretary Agriculture South Punjab, as well as senior officials, agricultural experts, progressive farmers, and representatives of farmers' associations.

Reviewing field reports, the Secretary expressed satisfaction over the healthy crop condition, noting that no major pest or disease outbreaks have been reported so far.



## ENSURE BUDGET BEFORE AD SUBMISSION, ORIC TELLS PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS

The Office of Research, Innovation and Commercialization (ORIC) has decided that research project advertisements will only be published in the national press if the respective Principal Investigators (PIs) provide assurance of budget availability under the relevant head and commit to processing bills promptly upon receipt of the DGPR invoice through ORIC.

The decision was taken in a meeting chaired by Prof. Dr. Muhammad Imran Arshad, Director ORIC. The meeting expressed concern over delays in timely payments to the Directorate General Public Relations (DGPR) caused by some PIs after advertisements were placed via ORIC.

Prof. Dr. Imran Arshad directed the Manager Research Management to ensure that sufficient funds are available in each project before processing any advertisement requests. He observed that delays in payments put the university in a difficult position, as DGPR halts advertisements of defaulters until outstanding dues are cleared.

He stressed that Principal Investigators must recognize the seriousness of the matter and extend full cooperation to ORIC to ensure smooth processing and timely payments.

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**Faisalabad - Pakistan**

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+92419200183, +92419200997

[oric@uaf.edu.pk](mailto:oric@uaf.edu.pk)

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