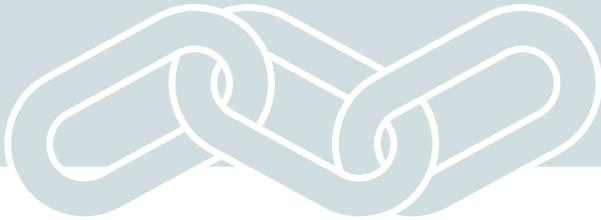




Aik Saath



ایک ساتھ
'Together'

AVCCR BRIEF

AVCCR—the Agriculture Value Chain Collaborative Research program

AVCCR is a research-for-development program in the Punjab and Sindh provinces of Pakistan, that focuses on enhancing selected agricultural value chains for the ultimate benefit of the rural poor, particularly women. The program was launched in December 2015 and is scheduled to run to September 2020. It is jointly funded by the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR) and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), with ACIAR also providing technical management. Total funding for the program is A\$12,850,000.

The strategic value chains were identified through in-depth stakeholder consultations and expert advice. They focus on four areas of key importance for rural poor and women in the Punjab and Sindh: dairy/beef, goat meat, horticulture and pulses. Projects that address critical bottlenecks in these value chains are underway or in development.

AVCCR goal

Rural poor, particularly women, living in the Punjab and Sindh significantly and equitably benefit from improvements in strategic value chains.



PROGRAM STRUCTURE

The AVCCR program comprises four projects under an umbrella 'support' program.



THE PROJECTS

The projects are driven by quality, collaborative research involving multidisciplinary teams, with a strong element of 'participative R&D', to develop solutions that are practical for smallholders. Projects take a value chain approach, that is, they consider the entire chain that links producers to markets and consumers. The projects are designed to identify and then address constraints along the chain, whether technical, social, economic or policy related.

The improved value chains will provide more opportunities for smallholders, and will promote empowerment of women. They will also encourage private sector involvement, promoting innovation for economic development.

The four projects are:

- Dairy/beef: 'Improving smallholder dairy and beef profitability by enhancing farm production and value chain management' (ACIAR project no. LPS/2016/011)
- Goat meat: 'Smallholder goat value chains in Pakistan: challenges and research opportunities' (ACIAR project no. LPS/2016/096)
- Horticulture: 'Strengthening vegetable value chains in Pakistan for greater community livelihood benefits' (HORT/2016/012; project under development)
- Pulses: 'Pulse value chain improvement' (project under development)

THE UMBRELLA PROGRAM

The overarching program provides oversight and support for the projects, for example in gender mainstreaming, monitoring and evaluation, and communications. This component also facilitates integration and collaboration, within and beyond the projects. It seeks synergies with other development partners and their relevant activities, including the Government of Pakistan. These links will provide an avenue for the research findings to be translated into development impacts.

The umbrella component also manages a fund for short-term studies on specific issues that arise during implementation. This approach instils a flexibility into the program and the projects, allowing rapid response to issues that may not have been foreseen at the start of the program.

FOUNDATIONS AND LINKAGES

AVCCR builds on partnerships, experiences and lessons learnt over the 10 years of the Agriculture Sector Linkages Program (ASLP), which ended in September 2015. Another joint initiative between DFAT and ACIAR, the ASLP established lessons for successful collaborative research between Australia and Pakistan, and these provide the guiding principles for AVCCR.

AVCCR links strategically with Australia's broader development program in Pakistan, specifically the Aid Investment Plan (AIP) for Pakistan.

AVCCR is also designed to align with the Market Development Facility (MDF). Linkages with this and other relevant programs are managed through the AVCCR umbrella program.

The Urdu phrase **Aik Saath**, meaning "Together" has been selected as the everyday name for the AVCCR program. This signifies the many linkages and partnerships encompassed in the program, including between men and women in smallholder families.



Male and female researchers from Pakistan at "Walking the Chain" training with consultant Dr Tony Dunne

GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR AVCCR

1. The projects address researchable issues that unlock the potential of value chains.
2. The program is 'research for development' rather than development per se.
3. A key outcome is pro-poor benefit flows.
4. Women's economic empowerment is paramount.
5. Smallholder needs guide a blend of technical and social science problem-solving.
6. The program seeks innovative private sector linkages within the value chains.
7. The program purposefully engages and responds to the priorities of our Pakistan partners.

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