



The second celebration of  
**WORLD RURAL  
DEVELOPMENT DAY**  
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Special Edition of CIRDAP

**APERDRI:**  
Advancing Rural Development  
Through Science:  
From Research to Rural Resilience



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Islamic Republic of Iran



RESEARCH &  
INNOVATION



INCLUSIVE RURAL  
DEVELOPMENT



SUSTAINABLE  
AGRICULTURE



PARTNERSHIP &  
COOPERATION

THEME 2026

“Towards Vibrant, Prosperous and Happy Rural Communities”

## ***APERDRI: Advancing Rural Development Through Science: From Research to Rural Resilience***

Message from the Director General of the Agricultural Planning, Economic and Rural Development Research Institute of the Islamic Republic of Iran on the International Day of Rural Development (2026); Theme: *"Towards Vibrant, Prosperous and Happy Rural Communities"*

*By Dr. Mojtaba Palouj, Director General Agricultural Planning, Economic and Rural Development Research Institute (APERDRI)*

### **In the Name of God**

Despite the profound sorrow I feel over the recent difficult circumstances in my country, and mindful of my martyred Leader's enduring emphasis on rural development and agriculture, I would like to send my message on the occasion of the International Day of Rural Development and reaffirm our shared commitment to building vibrant, prosperous, and happy rural communities.

This year's theme reflects a shared vision that resonates strongly with the priorities of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Building vibrant and prosperous rural communities requires more than economic growth; it calls for inclusive policies, evidence-based planning, innovation, social participation, environmental sustainability, and the empowerment of rural people, particularly women and youth.

Today, rural areas are confronted with unprecedented challenges arising from climate change, food insecurity, economic uncertainty, environmental degradation, and evolving social needs. These challenges reinforce the importance of knowledge-sharing, regional cooperation, and innovative approaches to rural transformation. Institutions such as CIRDAP play an indispensable role in facilitating dialogue, strengthening capacities, and promoting the exchange of successful experiences among Member States.

Drawing upon Iran's scientific capacities and extensive experience in rural development, the Agricultural Planning, Economic and Rural Development Research Institute (APERDRI) has, in its capacity as the National Focal Point for CIRDAP, played a key role in strengthening Iran's participation and contribution to rural development policies and programmes across the Asia-Pacific region.

As the National Focal Point for CIRDAP, APERDRI is responsible for coordinating and facilitating Iran's engagement in the meetings and activities of CIRDAP's Technical Committee and Executive Committee. The Institute actively promotes constructive cooperation with the CIRDAP Secretariat and its Member States through knowledge exchange, the implementation of joint initiatives, technical collaboration, and capacity

development in the field of rural development. In fulfilling this mandate, APERDRI's Department of Rural and Agricultural Development, whose mission closely aligns with the objectives of CIRDAP, works in close partnership with national institutions and organizations, particularly the Office for Rural and Nomadic Women Affairs of the Ministry of Agriculture Jihad. This collaboration has significantly strengthened opportunities for joint programmes and partnerships between APERDRI and CIRDAP. The Department's major areas of work include research and policy studies on geographical indications, rural tourism and handicrafts development, spatial planning, demographic change, the empowerment of rural women, rural and nomadic entrepreneurship, and international experiences and best practices in rural development.

On behalf of the Agricultural Planning, Economic and Rural Development Research Institute of the Islamic Republic of Iran, I would like to express our sincere appreciation to CIRDAP for its continued support and valuable cooperation in highlighting the achievements of Iran's exemplary and entrepreneurial rural women at the regional level. Showcasing these inspiring success stories has not only recognized the remarkable contributions of Iranian rural women but has also encouraged the exchange of experiences and best practices among Member States.

We also highly appreciate CIRDAP's collaboration in implementing the project on Rural Women's Empowerment in the Sericulture Value Chain. This research project has demonstrated how targeted capacity-building, skills development, entrepreneurship, and value-chain approaches can create sustainable livelihood opportunities for rural women while contributing to local economic development and social inclusion. These successful experiences reaffirm our belief that empowering rural women is not merely a social objective; it is a strategic investment in food security, poverty reduction, resilient rural economies, and sustainable development. Likewise, investing in rural youth, innovation, digital technologies, and knowledge-based agriculture will be essential for shaping the future of rural communities across our region.

As a research and policy institution, we remain committed to generating evidence-based knowledge, promoting policy innovation, supporting capacity development, and strengthening partnerships that contribute to sustainable rural development. We firmly believe that stronger collaboration among research institutions, governments, international organizations, and local communities is essential for addressing common challenges and achieving shared prosperity.

Looking ahead, we are confident that the longstanding partnership between our Institute and CIRDAP will continue to grow. We look forward to expanding our collaboration in research, policy dialogue, knowledge exchange, professional training, women's

empowerment, youth development, sustainable agriculture, and rural innovation for the mutual benefit of all Member States.

In closing, I express my sincere appreciation to the CIRDAP Secretariat for its leadership and continued dedication to advancing integrated rural development across Asia and the Pacific. I wish CIRDAP continued success in its valuable mission and extend my best wishes to all Member States for peace, prosperity, and sustainable rural development.

**With best wishes and God's blessings,**