

Telenor Pakistan set to galvanize agricultural growth in Gilgit – Baltistan through digital innovation

Islamabad – August 29, 2017: Expanding its digital footprint to the far-flung and underserved areas of the country, Pakistan's premier telecom and digital services provider, Telenor Pakistan has launched its mobile agriculture advisory service 'Khushaal Zamindaar' in Gilgit – Baltistan. Launched in collaboration with Market Development Facility (MDF), the innovative service will provide localized and customized advisory services to facilitate local farmers in increasing their agricultural yield.

The high-spirited launch event was held in a local hotel in the provincial capital, Gilgit. The honorable guests include MDF, members from Agha Khan Rural Support Program (AKRSP), Japan Inter Cooperation Agency (JICA), International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), media persons, community leaders, female farmers of Gilgit and Telenor Pakistan officials.

'Khushaal Zamindaar' is Telenor Pakistan's innovative and industry-first initiative, initially launched in Punjab to help small scale farmers into adopting modern and best practices in agriculture. It provides localized, contextualized and customized information including weather forecasts, timely agronomic & livestock advisory through SMS and robo calls to help increase crop yield, reduce post-harvest losses, safeguard nutrition and better manage adverse climatic effects and natural resources. Currently, more than 04 million small scale farmers subscribe to this free of cost service covering a range of cash crops, fruits and vegetables, fodders and livestock and 20 percent of them are women farmers.

The mobile agriculture service in Gilgit – Baltistan will provide location based weather forecast and information about value chains like Apricots, apple, potato and other crops cultivated in the region. The service shall also benefit the farmers who rear livestock, potentially transforming the domestic use to commercial benefits in the long run.

Speaking at the event, Head of Mobile Agriculture, Telenor Pakistan, Habib Saqib said: "Telenor Pakistan is bringing its innovative mobile agriculture solution to Gilgit – Baltistan to supplement the socio – economic progress of the region. Khushaal Zamindaar will enable and empower the local farmers to make calculated and informed decisions to increase their agricultural yield. They will also be able to adopt best practices used around the world to get better yields in terms of quality and quantity. The initiative comes in line with Telenor Pakistan's commitment to empower the societies and we believe that true empowerment comes with financial liberty. We will continue to contribute to the socio – economic progress and wellbeing of the region."

Sharing his thoughts, Osman Anwar, Coordinator Pakistan Country Team, MDF said, "Telenor's 7272 service is very relevant for smallholder farmers in Gilgit-Baltistan. The MDF would like to congratulate Telenor for launching a service which has been designed by including feedback from a multitude of farmers. Weather alerts, forecasts and crop advisory are core to a successful farming system particularly in Gilgit-Baltistan where providing physical extension is difficult in hard to reach valleys and accurate weather information is seldom available. We hope that Telenor builds on the exciting suite of services and

continues to add value in the lives of smallholder farmers by providing practical solutions to problems around information, market access and credit.”

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About Telenor Pakistan

Telenor Pakistan is a provider of high quality telecommunication services in Pakistan since 2005. It has over 40 million subscribers, over 2,200 employees and a nationwide network. For more information, please visit: www.telenor.com.pk