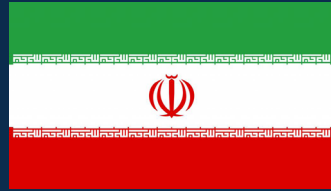


# Rural Development in Iran



**H.E. GHOLAMREZA NOURI**  
Minister of Agriculture Jihad  
Islamic Republic of Iran

**R**ural development has always occupied a pivotal position in the ideological and policy discourse of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Rooted in the principles of the Islamic Revolution, it has remained a priority for the nation's highest leadership—from the late Imam Khomeini (may peace be upon him) to Ayatollah Khamenei. This comprehensive approach integrates economic self-sufficiency, social justice, cultural preservation, and the empowerment of local rural capacities. Rural development is thus not merely an economic endeavor but a strategic pathway to achieving equitable growth, reinforcing religious and revolutionary values, and fortifying the nation's social fabric.

**Historical Commitment to Rural Progress**  
Demonstrating this commitment, just four months after the Islamic Revolution in 1979, Imam Khomeini established Jihad-e Sazandegi—a revolutionary institution dedicated to eradicating deprivation and advancing rural

and nomadic development. Through direct engagement with local communities, this organization implemented transformative projects in infrastructure, water supply, electrification, healthcare, and education, significantly improving living standards and connectivity in rural Iran. In 2000, a major institutional reform merged Jihad-e Sazandegi with the Ministry of Agriculture, forming the Ministry of Agriculture Jihad. This restructuring aimed to enhance efficiency and centralize governance for sustainable agricultural and rural development, marking a new chapter in Iran's rural policy framework.

**A Farmer and Rural-Centric Vision for Sustainable Development**

Today, the Ministry of Agriculture Jihad operates in alignment with the Islamic-Iranian Model of Progress, serving as the cornerstone of rural and agricultural advancement. Iran's national policies recognize rural development not as a secondary extension of agriculture but as a holistic strategy to elevate quality of life, ensure economic stability, and curb rural-to-urban migration. In recent years, the Ministry has shifted from an agriculture-centric to a farmer and rural-centric approach, emphasizing sustainable development, productivity, inclusivity, and food security. This paradigm seeks to empower farmers and rural stakeholders as the primary agents of progress in agriculture and rural prosperity.

**Global Collaboration for Local Impact**

Engagement with international organizations and knowledge exchange play a vital role in the Ministry's strategy. These partnerships enhance policymaking, boost productivity, and accelerate progress toward sustainable rural development. Notably, the Ministry's efforts in job creation, poverty alleviation, and human capital development earned it the prestigious Aziz-UI Haqq Rural Development Medal from the Centre on Integrated Rural Development for Asia and the Pacific (CIRDAP).

Through collaborative projects, research, and training



programs, the Ministry facilitates innovation and technology transfer in agriculture and rural development. Participation in international workshops—such as CIRDAP's training courses—supports knowledge sharing and the adaptation of successful global models to Iran's context.

Iran's membership in multilateral forums like the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and BRICS further expands opportunities for resource sharing, poverty reduction, and sustainable development. The Ministry also welcomes CIRDAP's proposal to designate July 6th as World Rural Development Day under the United Nations, believing it will foster global coordination, awareness, and accelerated action for rural communities worldwide.

**Toward a Shared Future of Prosperity**

Given Iran's positive trajectory in rural development, we are confident in realizing our goals for this vital sector. By leveraging the expertise of CIRDAP member states and other international partners, Iran is poised to contribute meaningfully to global food security and rural progress. This exchange of knowledge and multilateral cooperation not only elevates the livelihoods of Iranian rural communities but also offers a replicable model for other nations.

Through unity—both national and international—we can forge a sustainable, equitable, and prosperous future for rural societies everywhere.