

## **"Driving Change: IFAD VP Dr. Gerardine Mukeshimana's Inspiring Visit to PROVAT<sup>3</sup>-LGED Vocational Training for Youth"**

In a country where the labour force comprises 2.68 crore individuals aged 15-29, a significant 2.15 million, constituting 8%, are contending with unemployment—a striking deviation from the national average of 3.53%. This disparity underscores the formidable hurdles young people encounter in securing employment opportunities.

Of particular note is the educational profile of these unemployed youths. A noteworthy 27.8% possess tertiary degrees, with secondary school completions at 23.8% and higher secondary graduates at 19.7%.

Further complicating matters, a substantial 70.9% of these unemployed youths hail from rural areas, with the rest residing in urban regions.

Efforts are underway to address this challenge. PROVAT<sup>3</sup> – LGED, supported by IFAD, is diligently working to create employment opportunities for 30,000 youths from impoverished rural households, with a commendable aim to allocate 30% of these opportunities to young women. Particularly challenging is the task of encouraging women to venture into non-traditional yet marketable trades—a goal the project is actively pursuing.

During a recent visit on 30 April 2024 by Vice President Dr Girardin Mukeshimana of IFAD, the progress of these efforts was evident. Dr Mukeshimana witnessed first-hand accompanying with Reehana Rifat Raza, Regional Director for the Asia and the Pacific Division at IFAD the initiatives at the Technical Training Centre in Nilphamari, where young women are receiving skills training in operating heavy vehicles such as road rollers, cranes, and forklifts. These endeavours represent crucial steps toward empowering youth, especially women, with the skills and opportunities needed for a brighter future. Dr. Mukeshimana appreciated the young women for choosing non-traditional trades, breaking the stereotyped trend.