

Government of Pakistan
Benazir Income Support Programme

Press Release
25.4.2016

Stakeholder's Workshop Discusses The Way Forward For Bisp

Murree: A two-day workshop hosted by the World Bank opened at Bhurban today to discuss the way forward for the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), the largest social safety program in Pakistan. As BISP works to further improve and deepen the application of the national safety net system for the development of human capital amongst the poor and improving their access to complementary services, the workshop brings together federal and provincial stakeholders, academia, civil society, development partners and international experts in social protection to deliberate on the key themes imperative for strengthening the safety net system.



Murree: Minister of State and Chairperson BISP, MNA Marvi Memon addressing during Stakeholders Conference: The way forward for BISP organized by World Bank. (Dated: April 25, 2015)

In her opening remarks, the Minister of State and Chairperson BISP Marvi Memon reinforced that BISP continues to serve the poor by bringing dignity, empowerment and meaning to their lives through the transparent and efficient delivery of cash transfers to the poor. She shared the vision of the Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif and Finance Minister Senator Muhammad Ishaq Dar of transforming BISP into the best social safety net program in the world. Ms. Memon stressed the need to understand the program from the perspective of the poor beneficiaries and keep them at the center of the debate in the workshop as this is the essence of the program and the agenda of the Government. She also reiterated how the World Bank support is now evolving into a Program for Results which is instrumental for supporting the government led program. This includes: updating the National Socio-economic Registry (NSER) into a dynamic registry through re-survey to harmonize pro-poor initiatives in the country, expanding the Waseela-e-Taleem - the Co-responsibility Cash Transfer program through mutually conducive federal-provincial partnerships, modernizing the delivery of payments to the poor and helping BISP to link its beneficiaries to complementary pro-poor programs being delivered by other partners for exiting out of poverty.

Mr. Iftikhar Malik, Senior Social Protection Specialist, World Bank deliberated on how the World Bank's support has evolved since 2009 to develop the national Social Safety Net System in Pakistan and reiterated continued commitment to this end through the new four year program being designed with inputs from all stakeholders. Dr. Tahir Noor, Director General, Cash Transfers discussed the progress of BISP, sharing lessons and the current vision for advancement. Secretary BISP Saleem Ranjha also shared his vision for BISP.

Currently BISP's cash transfers are being provided to nearly 5.2 million beneficiary families. BISP's targeting efficiency is comparable to some of the best such systems in the world with over 75% of these beneficiaries belong to the bottom two quintiles of population. The NSER is being used by over 30 organizations for pro-poor beneficiary targeting of various social programs. Given the changes in Pakistan's socio-economic landscape over the past 5 years as well as the



Murree: Minister of State and Chairperson BISP, MNA Marvi Memon in a group photo of participants of Stakeholders Conference: The way forward for BISP organized by World Bank. (Dated: April 25, 2015)

static nature of the existing data, BISP has planned to update the NSER. The first phase of the nationwide survey will be launched in 2016 in 15 districts across all provinces and regions as well as one FATA agency.

BISP has also rolled out the Co-responsibility Cash Transfer (CCT) program, linking cash transfers to primary school education, which is currently being implemented in 32 districts in all provinces and regions. To date over 1.3 million children have been enrolled in the program out of which over 1.15 million children have taken admission in schools.

Over two days, the participants will discuss ways and means to evolve and redefine BISP's institutional systems to ensure robust service delivery and outreach to the poor. A World Bank expert also discussed similar experiences with the update of the Philippines *Listahanan* (household registry) and shared significant steps taken by the Philippines government for enabling the *Listahanan* to serve as an anchor for social programs that are targeting public funding for poverty reduction.

The workshop marks an important milestone as BISP prepares to further engage with development partners to discuss and develop the way forward for reaching the poorest and the most vulnerable in Pakistan.
