Government of Pakistan
Benazir Income Support Programme
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BISP IS THE PIONEER FOR PRO-POOR POLICY MAKING BASED ON
QUALITY DATA: MARVI MEMON

Islamabad (   ): Minister of State /Chairperson Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) MNA Marvi Memon said that BISP is the pioneer for pro-poor policy making based on quality data obtained through nationwide poverty score card survey. This survey is first of its kind in South Asia and enables BISP to identify eligible households through the application of a Proxy Means Test (PMT) that determines welfare status of the households on a scale between 0-100. She was addressing at the Data Launch Ceremony of Rural Household Panel Survey (RHPS) in the main auditorium of Planning Commission organized by Pakistan Strategy Support Program (PSSP) where she was invited to chair the event.

Rural Household Panel Survey aims to provide quantitative basis to identify and address urgent economic policy priorities. The RHPS covers 2090 households in 76 primary sampling units in the rural areas of three provinces namely Punjab, Sindh and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Islamabad: Minister of State and Chairperson BISP, MNA Marvi Memon attending the Data Launch Ceremony of Rural Household Panel Survey (RHPS) in the main auditorium of Planning Commission organized by Pakistan Strategy Support Program (PSSP). (Dated: May 7, 2015)

In her opening remarks, Chairperson BISP praised the efforts of PSSP for providing support to the government with evidence based research for policy making. She also said that panel datasets are important to observe the dynamics of socio-demographic and economic factors which cannot be captured by cross-sectional surveys. Discussion on poverty and its trends in Pakistan is primarily based on cross-sectional datasets, with very little attention being paid to its dynamics i.e. chronic and transitory poor. BISP is also conducting a panel data survey to observe the potential outcome of its interventions like Unconditional Cash Transfer (UCT) and Conditional Cash Transfer (CCT).

She said that in the current development debate, inclusive growth is a new loom to look at socio-demographic and economic progress of a nation. It refers to mass inclusion of poor and vulnerable in decision making processes so that the benefits of growth could be equitably distributed for the wellbeing of the society by reducing poverty, hunger, inequality and providing productive employment generation. To design effective policies for achieving the desired objectives of pro-poor growth and reaching the desired right holders, it is imperative to have a high quality data. In the context of Pakistan, the availability of reliable and high-quality data is crucial to design pro-poor policies and safety net measures where we have scarce resources. High quality data enables the policy makers to rightly target the poor and vulnerable masses by minimizing the inclusion and exclusion errors, thus ensuring efficient utilization of resources.

She further said that in order to address the issue of accuracy and reliability data in Pakistan, various agencies like World Bank, PSSP, PIDE and especially BISP have collected household data to properly measure the head count and design appropriate policies accordingly. BISP has taken lead in targeting the poor through scientific mechanism. Through poverty score card survey, BISP created the largest national socio- economic registry of 27 million households across the country. 7.7 million families have been identified to be living below the cut-off score of 16.17. GPS coordinates of all the households visited are also available to map the data of the entire country. BISP's data employ the 6 international standards of a model database which include accuracy, validity, reliability, timeliness, relevance and completeness.

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