

GOVERNMENT OF PAKISTAN
BENAZIR INCOME SUPPORT PROGRAMME

PRESS RELEASE

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**WOMEN EMPOWERMENT CHALLENGE IS ABOUT ENSURING AN ATTITUDINAL
CHANGE WHICH GUARANTEES RESPECT FOR WOMEN: MARVI**

Islamabad () : Minister of State and Chairperson BISP MNA Marvi Memon chaired the inaugural session of the National Network Meeting of the 'The Sisters' Voice' project. The Sisters' Voice project is a two year project, funded by Commonwealth Foundation and initiated by Community Appraisal and Motivation Programme (CAMP). The project aims to improve advocacy for better implementation of women protection laws, through women led 40 Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in Balochistan and Punjab. Each of Punjab and Balochistan networks comprises of 20 CSOs. Parliamentarians, researchers and representatives of CSOs attended the meeting.



Islamabad: Minister of State and Chairperson BISP, MNA Marvi Memon addressing during National Network Meeting of "The Sisters' Voice" project initiated by Community Appraisal & Motivation Program. (Dated: September 02, 2016)

Chairperson BISP, who is the author of acid throwing bill and has worked on other pro-women legislation, spoke to the audience as chief guest. During her keynote address, she appreciated the project for enhancing women's knowledge on protection laws resulting into women empowerment and for initiating dialogue among CSOs' network, policy makers and judiciary regarding better implementation of women protection laws. She said that the women empowerment challenge is about ensuring an attitudinal change which guarantees respect for women and the efforts of this project in this regard are commendable.

The Minister also talked about the contributions of BISP towards women empowerment. She reiterated that BISP is all about empowering women whether it is financial, social or political. She added that by making CNIC a pre-requisite for financial assistance, woman beneficiaries of BISP have gained voting rights. Financial literacy and inclusion have been possible by making payments to beneficiaries through electronic means. The fact that BISP treats women as heads of families and transfers them payments directly, has not only empowered them socially but has also improved the nutrition status of the children as mothers spend for children's food on priority.

Chairperson BISP also stated that different organizations are working on the issues related to women empowerment and there is need to consolidate these efforts to evaluate the overall impact on society. She offered CAMP and SCOs, present over there, to work with BISP to yield better results. She informed that BISP has 50,000 BISP Beneficiaries Committees (BBCs) in 32 districts across the country. These committees meet at least once a month for awareness purposes on every kind of issues. The Minister suggested that CAMP and SCOs may connect to 5.3 million beneficiaries of BISP by working with BBCs.

On the occasion, Founding Chief Executive of CAMP Mr. Naveed Ahmad Shinwari, President Punjab Network Ms. Samina Khushi, President Balochistan Network Ms. Mahwish Zeeshan, MPA Punjab Ms. Rahila Khadim Hussain and MPA Balochistan Dr. Shama Ishaque Baloch also addressed the audience.