

Government of Pakistan  
Benazir Income Support Programme  
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Press Release  
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**PRESIDENT LAUNCHES BISP's THIRD IMPACT EVALUATION REPORT**

**POVERTY RATE DECLINES BY 7%, SCHOOL ENROLLMENT UP BY 10%:  
BISP IMPACT STUDIES**

Islamabad ( ): The President of Pakistan, Mr. Mamnoon Hussain launched the BISP's third impact evaluation report conducted by Oxford Policy Management (OPM) today in Islamabad. After first and second round of impact evaluation, this is the third impact evaluation study of Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) completed by OPM in 2016. The launch ceremony was attended by Federal Ministers, parliamentarians, ambassadors, academia, civil society and media.

Speaking on the occasion, the BISP Patron-In-Chief, President Mamnoon Hussain stated that BISP has a key role in reforming social protection system in Pakistan. Being the flagship social safety net, BISP's contributions for the socio-economic welfare of the most vulnerable are commendable. The President appreciated the BISP management for their endeavors for the uplift of the poorest of the poor.

Minister of State and Chairperson BISP MNA Marvi Memon speaking on the launch ceremony stated that since the incumbent government took charge in 2013 the budgets for BISP have increased from Rs 40 billion to Rs 115 billion, number of beneficiaries has increased from 1.7 million to 5.4 million and the quarterly stipend increased from Rs 3000 to Rs 4834. BISP was conceived by the then and current Finance Minister Senator Ishaq Dar, so the PMLN not only owned the programme but broadened its scope and improved its productivity and ensured timely release of quarterly payments.

The Chairperson further added that the entire PML N leadership believes in strengthening of social safety net in line with PMLN's commitment to Islamic welfare state. BISP is sharing its impact assessment reports for the last two years as we are accountable for the usage of funds to the public and parliament. Moreover as the lead social safety net BISP has the responsibility to share data with UN countries for success transfer.

Mr. Sean O'Leary, Country Representative OPM presented the key findings of the evaluation report. The report states that BISP has induced a net increase of Rs 187 in per adult monthly consumption expenditure whereas the per adult equivalent monthly food consumption increased by Rs 69 driven by high quality protein. In terms of child nutrition, the report indicates a reduction in proportion of wasted girls and decrease in malnutrition among girls.

The report indicates a 7% drop in poverty when using FEI poverty line and 3% decline in poverty gap according to CBN poverty line. Proportion of beneficiary households who were multi-dimensional poor in 2013 categorized as severely MPI poor was 31% whereas in 2016 this has reduced to 23%. The report appreciates the good targeting mechanism of BISP as 91% of BISP beneficiaries were either ultra poor, poor or vulnerable to being poor in 2016 as defined by PBS with low literacy rate of only 9%.

Waseela-e-Taleem initiative under BISP has a positive and significant impact on primary school enrollment. School attendance deprivation on MPI indicator has reduced from 56% in 2013 to 49% in 2016 due to BISP. Waseela-e-Taleem a conditional cash transfer of Rs 750 per quarter for a child enrolled in school with at least 70% attendance has enrolled 1.3 million primary school children till date. This has led to an increase in enrollment of children between ages of 5-12 by 10% points higher than the international average.

As per the evaluation report, women empowerment indicators have highly improved because of BISP. The evaluation report indicates a positive impact of BISP on status of women and their mobility as more women were allowed to travel freely to various localities alone. Proportion of beneficiary women who can visit market alone has gone up from 25% in 2011 to 37% in 2016. Due to collection of cash transfer this mobility has increased and is also having an effect on independence of women other than the beneficiaries. The constitution of 55,000 beneficiary committees has contributed much towards women empowerment through BISP.

BISP brought 5.4 million women voters on electoral list by providing them CNICs. In 2011 just 40% of women in beneficiary households reported that they were likely to vote whilst in 2016 this number has risen to 70% showing massive change in implementation of democratic rights. Financial inclusion of 5.4 million women has improved country indicators since beneficiaries have Level 0 branchless accounts which enable them to not only withdraw but make deposits too. 76% of women retain full control on their stipend in 2016 versus 64% in 2014.

The report indicates that BISP has resulted in a decrease in the deprivations against indicators of living standards in terms of quality of flooring and cooking fuel used in their households. A positive impact has been recorded on asset retention and accumulation. There has been an increase in proportion of beneficiary households that

own small livestock. This is significant because livestock is a productive investment and also valuable for those families with low financial access. BISP also had a positive and statistically significant effect on the proportion of households that own TV (14%), bike (7%), cooking stove (12%), washing machine (13%) and heater (4%).

The regular and on time cash transfers as compared to earlier years of program has increased predictability and credibility of the program which has enabled beneficiaries to plan their expenditures and manage savings. The report indicates an overall reduction in dependence of beneficiary households on casual labor as main source of income, increased household investment in health and education. Financial savings has increased over the period 2011-2016 from 9% to 13%. 80% of the beneficiaries spend the fund on food. Child immunization deprivation on MPI indicator has reduced from 17% in 2013 to 13% in 2016 due to BISP. Drinking water deprivation on MPI indicator has reduced from 27% in 2013 to 19% in 2016.

Proportion of beneficiaries who paid a 'fee' to collect last cash transfer was 40% in 2013 and in 2016 it has been reduced to 22% showing crackdown on beneficiary voluntarily created agent mafia. Direct costs of travel to the collection point are relatively low amounting to 2% of the total value of the cash transfer. Average time nationwide taken to reach payment point was 48 minutes in 2013 which has now been reduced to 35 minutes in 2016. Overall 96% of beneficiaries are very satisfied or somewhat satisfied with their experience in how they collected the cash transfer. 33% beneficiaries collect the cash themselves, 32% get it collected by household member and 35% by some other individual.

Secretary BISP Ms Yasmeen Masood, in her welcome note, thanked the President and distinguished guests for gracing the occasion. She stated that the evaluation report outlines the effectiveness of programme, informs the stake holders of its performance and provides guidelines to improve future practice and policy.