

Government of Pakistan
Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety Division
Press Release

Dr. Sania Nishtar: Ehsaas Ministry to launch Strategy Paper and website this week

August 21, 2019 - Islamabad: A meeting of Ehsaas Implementation Group was held today at Prime Minister's Secretariat to drive the roll out plan of social safety and poverty alleviation projects under the Ehsaas framework. Dr. Sania Nishtar, Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Social Protection and Poverty Alleviation chaired the meeting. The primary objective of the meeting was to prioritize the implementation plan of Ehsaas Program. During the meeting, stringent timelines were set out for each of the projects in consultation with different organizations involved in the implementation of Ehsaas Program under the umbrella of PASSD.

The meeting was attended by Ali Raza Bhutta, Secretary BISP, Shahid Naeem, Chief, Ministry of Planning, Development & Reform, Capt. (R) Asadullah Khan, Additional Secretary, PASSD, Mubashir Hassan, Deputy Managing Director, Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal, (PBM) and heads and senior officials from Trust for Voluntary Organizations (TVO), Centre for Social Entrepreneurship (CSE) and Centre for Rural Economy (CRE).

Dr. Nishtar began the meeting by informing all present that, 'Ehsaas Strategy is in the final stages of peer review and will soon be out in the public domain as a living document'. Ehsaas Strategy is in final stages of development and will be shared soon in the public domain for public consultation.

She then elaborated that under the Ehsaas umbrella, BISP is currently focusing on new socio-economic registry survey for BISP beneficiaries that is currently underway, 'Kifalat' program to ensure financial and digital inclusion of around 6 million women through the one woman one bank account and mobile wallet policy. These women will also be linked to government's digital resources as a public good to create opportunities for them to graduate out of poverty. Similarly, 'Tahafuz' will be launched as a shock-oriented precision safety net for the vulnerable to protect them against shocks. This will mainly involve one-time financial assistance to protect against catastrophic events. Similarly, nutrition initiative will be launched to address the issue of malnutrition among stunted children.

Further, Dr. Nishtar shared that PBM will be responsible to roll out Food card scheme, provision of assistive devices to all disabled under 'Tahafuz' and strengthening of 150 marginalized schools for orphans and street children.

Another interesting initiative is the new policy of Solutions Innovation Challenge to develop value chains and solutions for poverty at scale by identifying private sector partners has been approved by the cabinet on Aug 20, 2019. The implementation under this initiative will be executed soon by 'Centre for Social Entrepreneurship'.

It was immediately followed by the second meeting of Ehsaas Communications Committee to strategically review the website of the Ehsaas program which the Ministry of Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety Division hopes to launch shortly. During the course of meeting,

a detailed consultation was also held on the communications plan for BISP's upcoming one-time special tranche of Rs. 1,000 to all BISP beneficiaries titled, 'Raashan Madad' to mitigate current inflationary trends.

Ehsaas implementation and communications groups are due to meet every Wednesday under the leadership of Dr. Nishtar.