

**Government of Pakistan
Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety Division
Press Release**

Oxford University professor praises Ehsaas



Dec 16, 2020 Islamabad: Dr. Sabina Alkire, Professor at the Oxford University visited Pakistan from December 12-15 on the special invitation of Dr. Sania Nishtar, Special Assistant of the Prime Minister on Poverty Alleviation and UNDP.

Dr. Alkire is the Director of Oxford Poverty & Human Development Initiative (OPHI), University of Oxford. Dr. Alkire is a global expert in poverty measurement and has developed the Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI). She was in Pakistan to assist with poverty estimations for Ehsaas.

During her visit, Dr. Alkire met with the President of Pakistan, Dr. Arif Alvi and had

a series of meetings with Dr. Sania Nishtar. She also made a presentation at a Roundtable on international experiences in the use of the Multidimensional Poverty Index for policy. Pakistan will release its Multidimensional Poverty Index in mid-2020.

Speaking to the audience of the Roundtable, Dr. Alkire quoted from the book of the late Sir Tony Atkinson which was published posthumously this year—Measuring Poverty Around the World. She quoted “Poverty statistics matter because they motivate people to tackle a key challenge. The link to action – attacking poverty and reducing inequality – is all important” she further added “this is what makes Ehsaas a powerful poverty eradication umbrella initiative, with its multicomponent strategy”.

The research centre, OPHI, in Oxford, functions as the Secretariat of a South-South network of policy makers who share lessons as they design and use MPIs to accelerate poverty alleviation. Pakistan has been a leading voice in this Multidimensional Poverty Peer Network (MPPN) for many years, with PBS sharing their insights in statistical exchanges and Planning Commission in policy dialogues.

“This year, Dr. Sania Nishtar’s presentation of the innovative Ehsaas Strategy at the MPPN’s UN General Assembly event fomented keen interest. The reason? It had a coherent, high-profile problem-focused approach to poverty using many kinds of tools across different sectors and

provinces: legal, financial, judicial, statistical, institutional. Coordination and management are the heart of the Ehsaas approach so diverse actors together could take out the thorns perpetuating poverty”, said Dr. Alkire.

Pakistan’s National Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI), is reported as SDG Indicator 1.2.2 and it complements the income measure. “As part of measurements within the framework of Ehsaas, Pakistan will measure poverty using both the monetary poverty measure that uses the Cost of Basic Needs (CBN) method as well as the Multidimensional Poverty Index, which measures non-monetary deprivations including education, health and living standards. We will be using Pakistan’s MPI as a tool for policy and resource allocations”, said Dr. Sania Nishtar.

Dr. Alkire was also a speaker at the UNDP-Ehsaas launch of the 2019 Human Development Report on 12 December where she stated “One very real face of inequality is poverty. And when lives are bettered – by improving ramshackle schools and dilapidated homes, by creating security in food and energy supply or childbirth or physical safety or jobs, by fixing dangerous water or hazardous work, and so on – the most egregious aspects of inequality decrease. The Multidimensional Poverty Index track steps to success”.