

GATES FOUNDATION DELEGATION MEETS BISP CHAIRPERSON SENATOR RUBINA KHALID

Digital and Financial Literacy, maternal and child health and immunization, skills development and grievance redressal discussed

9.7 million free SIMs issued to women beneficiaries under the Digital Wallet initiative; around 2.1 million beneficiaries enrolled in Nashonuma, while 4.2 million beneficiaries have graduated so far; Chairperson stresses Digital & Financial Literacy of beneficiaries and quality skills training and internationally recognized certifications under Benazir Hunarmand Programme

A high-level delegation of the Gates Foundation, led by Dr. Anita Zaidi, President, Gender Equality Division and Interim President, Global Policy and Advocacy Division, Ms. Kalpana Kochhar met Chairperson Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) Senator Rubina Khalid at BISP Headquarters today to discuss areas of mutual collaboration for strengthening social protection interventions for women beneficiaries and their families.

The meeting focused on Digital and Financial Literacy, training sessions in different regional languages, counselling of women beneficiaries on maternal and child health and immunization through BISP Nashonuma Centres, human resource development and strengthening grievance redressal mechanisms. The delegation also proposed an initial pilot phase in 10 districts across Punjab, Sindh and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for collaborative interventions in these areas.

Briefing the delegation on BISP's digital transformation, Senator Rubina Khalid highlighted the progress made under the Digital Wallet initiative, stating that 9.7 million free SIMs have so far been issued to women beneficiaries, marking a major milestone in advancing financial inclusion and transparent delivery of BISP payments.

The Chairperson emphasized the importance of integrating different interventions to achieve sustainable and measurable outcomes. She highlighted the opportunity to leverage BISP Nashonuma Centres for timely counselling on maternal and child health and immunization. She stressed that awareness and behaviour-change messages should be developed in local languages to ensure greater outreach and impact.

Senator Rubina Khalid also highlighted the Benazir Hunarmand Programme, under which beneficiaries and their family members are being provided market-oriented skills training.

Dr. Anita Zaidi appreciated BISP's progress and congratulated the Programme on the significant achievement of issuing 9.7 million free SIMs to women beneficiaries under the Digital Wallet initiative.

She underscored the importance of interventions focused on maternal and child health, savings and customized skills development for BISP beneficiaries.

The Gates Foundation delegation comprised Mr. Syed Ali Mahmood, Senior Program Officer, Inclusive Financial Services; Ms. Aisha Salman, Program Officer, Leadership Engagement Implementation; Mr. Ammar Khan, Senior Program Officer, Development Policy & Finance; and Mr. Jamal Khan, Deputy Director and South & Southeast Asia Lead, Global Policy & Advocacy. From Karandaaz Pakistan, CEO Waqas ul Hasan, CDO Sharjeel Murtaza, Group Head DFS Taimoor Ali, Associate Director Digital Transformation Zohaib Amin and Gender Lead Samia Salik also attended the meeting. Additional Secretary BISP Dr. Asmat Nawaz and all Directors General of BISP were also present.