Government of Pakistan
Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety Division
Press Release

31-point Ehsaas Governance and Integrity Policy released
Transparency, Accountability and Strong Governance Central to Lifting Millions out of Poverty

July 15, 2019 – Islamabad: As the rollout out of the EHSAAS programme picks up pace, the Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety Division (PASSD) released a comprehensive set of governance policy parameters that all ancillary organizations of PASSD will now be required to meet. The primary goal of the new set of policies is to limit opportunities for corruption, while promoting efficiency, transparency and accountability for results.

"Today we have released the 31-point Ehsaas Governance and Integrity Policy, a step towards ensuring transparency, accountability and strong governance in all organizations of PASSD involved in implementing Ehsaas" said Dr. Sania Nishtar, Special Advisor to the Prime Minister on Social Protection and Poverty Alleviation. We have to ensure that the funds allocated to poverty alleviation are reaching the communities that need them most, and strong governance is fundamental to ensuring that". Her tweet is pinned to her twitter page, @SaniaNishtar with the URL link to the policy.

It has been made mandatory for all ancillary organizations of PASSD to convene board meetings and board committee meetings regularly. The policy states that in order to promote transparency, each organization must publish its audited entity statements, annual progress reports, applicable policies and procedures, letters to the board and letter to the management by the Auditor on their websites. To strengthen fiduciary systems and financial management and to institutionalize risk management and assurance, the policy makes appropriate accounting systems and procurement manual mandatory.

All organizations will be required to have a board-approved whistle blowing policy and conflict of interest policy, which is applicable to members of the Board, management, employees, consultants and anyone acting on behalf of the organization.

Likewise, a gender policy will be mandatory to ensure the integration of the gender perspective into every aspect of governance, policy formulation, operational functioning and in data collection. Building on 'The Protection against Harassment of Women at the Workplace Act 2010' it will be mandatory for all organizations working with the PASSD to adopt an internal code of conduct and a complaint and appeal mechanism to ensure an environment free of intimidation and abuse.

To drive good financial practice and for risk assurance and management, each organization is required to develop strong internal audit departments reporting to the board directly, error fraud and corruption frameworks, and IT security departments (where electronic payments are being made). Furthermore, an external audit of financial statements will be required on an annual basis. This is in addition to the audit conducted by the Auditor General of Pakistan.

The policy encourages staff training in the area of prevention, detection, deterrence and monitoring of error, fraud and corruption. It states that "Human resource hiring, and deputations should be pursued through an open competitive basis without exceptions and should be rule based". In addition, it states that "Every organization should have a detailed itemized, department-wise weekly work plan with responsibilities and accountabilities clearly defined and KPIs linked to delivery. Each organization should fully convert to e-office and maintain an electronic trail of communication by the end of September and, amongst other things also draw on this tool for reporting on HR performance". The policy also stipulates that all organizations partnering with PASSD now need to be certified by Pakistan Centre for Philanthropy.

To support the implementation of this policy, PASSD has appointed a governance focal person and will facilitate regular sharing of experiences among senior management to promote best practices.