

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

**PM launches Ehsaas Data4Pakistan portal to steer evidence driven decision making in social welfare solutions**



March 10, 2020-Islamabad: Today, Prime Minister Imran Khan launched the Ehsaas District Development Portal titled, “Data4Pakistan” that provides open and public access to a spatial interactive portal with poverty estimates for every district in Pakistan, along with over 120 development and policy indicators. The government’s stress has been on foregoing ‘discretionary decision making’ and striving to promote, ‘data-based decision making’ by ensuring data availability at disaggregated levels. Sitting under the umbrella of Ehsaas, the portal currently has six rounds of district poverty and development data, covering the period 2004-2018.

Addressing the thinktanks at the ceremony in the federal capital, the PM said, “A civilized society is known by the standard of living of its poor. This is the first step in finding the necessary ways and means to fight poverty and will help identify the areas which are in most need of funds, besides finding other vital statistics about issues being faced by the local people. Appreciating the portal, he added, “This initiative gives us an opportunity to inform the people where exactly funds are needed. Why is there a need to spend money, what is the state of

education in that area, and why are our girls not enrolled in schools, all of these questions and more can be answered through this initiative.”

Part of Ehsaas strategy, the Data4Pakistan Portal has been developed in collaboration with the World Bank and will be hosted on the Ehsaas website of Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety Division: [pass.gov.pk](http://pass.gov.pk). This portal will be a very valuable resource for federal, provincial and district level policymakers, for decision making.

Technically, interactive maps allow the user to visualize and compare districts on poverty and two additional indicators. Mousing over a district provides information on the selected indicators as a pop-up message. The user can also select a subset of provinces or a subset of districts to focus on, using a simple drop-down list. Custom maps built by the user can be downloaded and printed.

The innovative portal uses data produced by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, as part of its Social and Living Standards Measurement Surveys as well as the Multiple indicators Custer Surveys produced by the provincial Bureaus of Statistics. The indicators currently available in the portal, include a range of demographic, health, education and employment statistics as well as access to key services like water, sanitation, electricity and gas. It also provides a number of gender parity indices at the district level.

Further, an ‘Additional Resources’ section on the website provides information on the indicators included in the portal and other background material and reports. New material as well as new data and indicators will be added frequently.

Earlier, demonstrating the features of this ground-breaking Ehsaas initiative, Dr. Sania Nishtar, Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Social Protection and Poverty Alleviation stated, “Data4Pakistan is one of the 134 programs, policies and initiatives under Ehsaas that is aimed to leverage data and technology to create solutions for welfare.” Elaborating further, she said, “Ehsaas is premised on strengthening of the data ecosystem of Pakistan to ensure transparency. With ‘Data4Pakistan portal’ in place, the accurate and timely data and interactive shape files will make it easy to precisely target many marginalized groups and individuals that would otherwise remain “invisible. Also, the data portal will provide evidence for new policies or reforms to ensure that these are well-guided.”

Illango Patchamuthu, the World Bank’s Country Director for Pakistan also spoke at the ceremony and assured full cooperation of the World Bank to the government in further strengthening the data ecosystem in Pakistan.

Ehsaas is about the creation of a ‘welfare state’ by countering elite capture and leveraging 21st century tools—such as using data and technology to create precision safety nets and promoting social welfare and poverty alleviation solutions. The opening of data4Pakistan portal is another important step of the government to foster evidence-based decision making.