

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

**Dr. Sania Nishtar: BISP implementation research platform will be established soon**



July 24, 2019 - Islamabad: Dr. Sania Nishtar chaired a research meeting at the Marriott today where findings of research conducted by Oxford Policy Management Group (OPM) were presented. DFID has contracted Oxford Policy Management (OPM) to execute the third-party beneficiary feedback, operational review and monitoring assignment for BISP cash transfer programs. This assignment is spread over a period of two years from April 2018 to March 2020 and findings were presented at the 'Stakeholder Workshop on Learning from Beneficiary Feedback and Process Review of BISP'.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Sani Nishtar said that "BISP was undergoing a multi-pronged

process of reform and that the process was heavily being guided by evidence. She said that the reforms embodied creation of a new payment system, a new national census level Socio-Economic Survey, a new communications strategy and new program windows, especially configuring BISP's operations around Kifalat and Tahafuz. The reforms also embodied deeply rooted changes at the governance, risk assurance and management and operational levels and that at every stage, they were drawing on evidence to make changes". She further added that "in addition to findings of formal process evaluations, she was relying on audit reports—internal and external—third party reports, reports from management information systems, complaint management systems and monitoring and evaluation insights to garner the evidence needed for the changes being introduced". "Integrity of operations was the foremost priority", she further added.

Dr. Sania Nishtar then continued that BISP's Kifalat is a very important social safety programme of the government of Pakistan; however, it is part of the much bigger Ehsaas initiative. Ehsaas is the flagship programme of the Prime Minister of Pakistan being implemented with 29 federal ministries, divisions, agencies and public sector departments for structurally reforming the social protection and poverty alleviation in Pakistan. BISP is responsible for execution of 7 out of the 115 policy actions of Ehsaas. BISP, however is the largest executing agency of newly established Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety Division (PASSD). Under the umbrella of Ehsaas, BISP incorporates Tahafuz and Kifalat initiatives. Kifalat will 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 refers to the launch of the 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.

Talking about the findings of the process review assignment, Dr. Nishtar reiterated that implementation research and beneficiary feedback is very important to make improvements in the running programs as it provides concrete evidence and direction to make robust changes in the systems and address the loopholes, as and when they arise.

Ali Raza Bhutta, Secretary BISP, Seema Ilahi Baloch, Team Leader DFID funded project, Oxford Policy Management, Patricia Seex, Head of Economic Growth Unit DFID Pakistan and Gul Najam Jami from The World Bank, Pakistan were also present at the occasion.

The implementation research findings are expected to improve programme performance, assess whether programme implementation is in accordance with BISP's guidelines and inform DFID on verification of selected disbursement-linked indicators.