

Government of Pakistan
Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety Division
Press Release

**Branchless banking retailers incentivised by the Cabinet;
Ehsaas Emergency Cash SMS registration will continue till April 19: Dr. Sania**

April 14, 2020: The Ehsaas Emergency Cash program has been ongoing for the last 6 days. More than 2.739 million people have received cash assistance of Rs. 12,000 each that sums up roughly to Rs. 32.87 billion until now. The registration process to receive the emergency cash of Rs. 12,000 per family distributed under this scheme is SMS driven, and this has been ongoing for the last two weeks. To-date, 78.44 million SMS requests have been received. “It is possible that several people from one family apply, hence the number of families applying may be less than this number”, said Dr. Sania.

Ehsaas has announced that the SMS campaign will be opened till 19th of this month. Ehsaas has also released an instructional video to explain to people what they should expect.

Dr. Sania also explained that, “In order to incentivize branchless banking operations from operating in the current difficult environment, the Cabinet has approved waiver of advance withholding tax on commission collected under section 233 of the Income Tax Ordinance, 2001 from branchless banking agents”. “We are striving to do all we can to make sure that bonafide branchless banking operators keep their operations open so that maximum number of people are facilitated” she said.

“However, there will no tolerance for corruption”, she further added. To-date, more than 177 looters have been arrested from the payment points against 140-First Investigation Reports filed in various parts of Sindh, Punjab, KP and Balochistan.