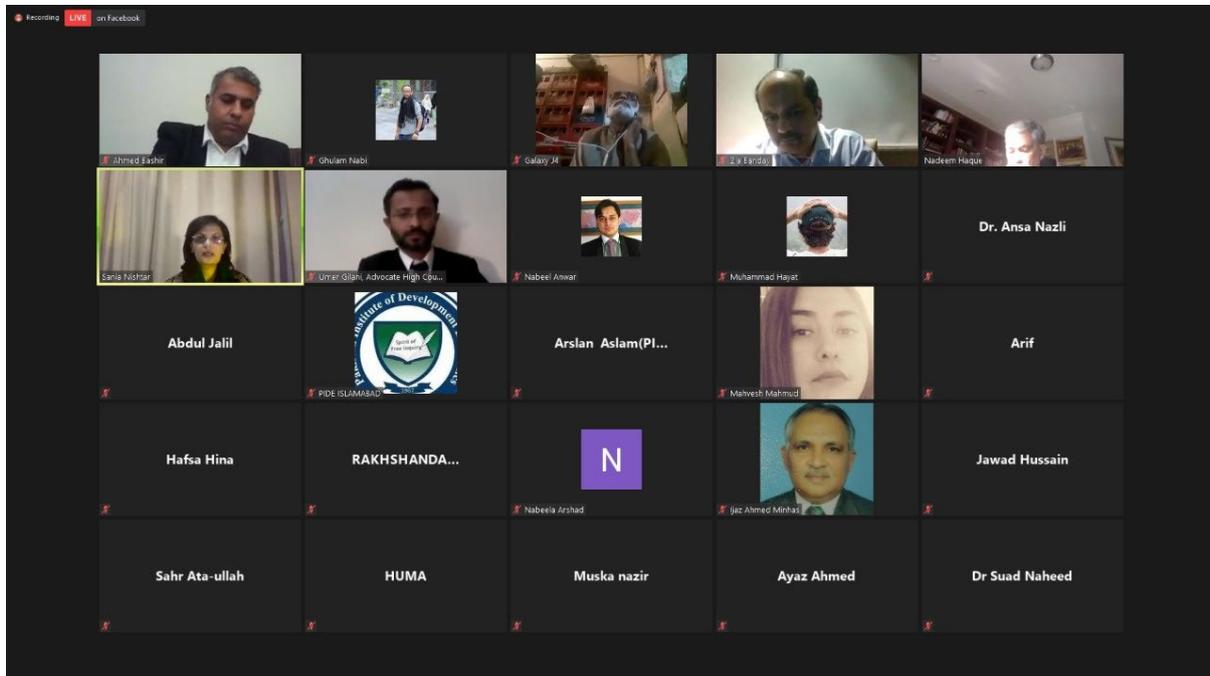


Government of Pakistan
Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety Division
Press Release

Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety Division explores options for street vending legislation



November 3, 2020 – Islamabad: Street Vendors, have remained an integral part of the urban economy around the world. They provide a range of goods and services to middle- and low-income mass segments of the society. This economic activity is also a major employment vehicle for the urban poor. However, in Pakistan, the potential of street vending has not been harnessed and despite the existence of the policy which was developed in 1986 for Islamabad Capital Territory and subsequent convening of special committee in 2015 and 2017 for the Municipal Corporation of Islamabad, significant work has not gotten underway and a comprehensive framework for street vendors has not been developed yet.

The existing street vending framework talks about responsibilities and penalties applicable due to violations but a comprehensive framework that includes rights, privileges and entitlements of street vendors has not been set out in line with the much-needed safeguards. In this regard, the Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety Division (PASSD) has been in consultation with Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE) for several months now and has encouraged PIDE to develop legislative bill for the protection of street vendors' rights.

In this context, PIDE organized a webinar yesterday in which a number of experts spoke about the context in which the draft bill is being developed. Experts included Zia Bando, Development Consultant & Initiator of Street Vendors Protection Project; Ahmed Bashir, Author of Street Vendors' Protection Bill from Ahmed Bashir & Associates Law Firm; and Umer Gilani from Law & Policy Chambers Firm. The consultation organized by Vice Chancellor PIDE also brought together Naveed Abbasi President, Khokha Association Islamabad. Experts and advocates talked about the need for comprehensive legislation.

Vice Chancellor PIDE Dr. Nadeem-ul-Haque moderated the session. SAPM Dr. Sania Nishtar had been invited to keynote the webinar. Addressing the keynote, Dr. Nishtar said, “We had an initial consultation on the subject in March 2020 following which COVID-19 overtook everything but now we are resuming this dialogue. PASSD will work very closely with PIDE to bring this legislative bill for the protection of street vendors and to channel this bill in the government system.” Further, she committed to host a government wide consultation on the bill within the next ten days. She also termed this as a very important area for empowering the urban poor.

Speaking on the occasion, Vice Chancellor PIDE Dr. Nadeem-ul-Haque said, “In Pakistan, Street Vending has remained much neglected area among government, academia, society and donors’ circles. Policy makers have aimed more on establishing car-oriented cities, while excluding the poor and especially the street vendors from the public space. Pakistan is witnessing entry of 2 million youngsters in the job market annually. Creating opportunities in street vending will resolve the government issue of job creation to a very large extent.”