

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

**Sania lauds trainees of Ehsaas Women Empowerment Centre; listens to voices of the least heard segment**



November 5, 2020 – Islamabad: SAPM Dr. Sania Nishtar made a visit to Ehsaas Women Empowerment Center (WEC) in Burma Town, Islamabad. The WEC operates under the supervision of Pakistan Bait ul Mal that is one of the four main executing agencies of Ehsaas. At the centre, Dr. Nishtar met with deserving yet talented girls and women who were enrolled in complimentary skills training courses- computer literacy, beautician, dress designing and making, and hand and machine embroidery etc. She listened to the voices, concerns and suggestions of the girls. During the visit, the SAPM was joined by Secretary Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety Division and Managing Director Pakistan Baitul Mal. Low-income group of girls and women are trained in two shifts, bi-annually. Local skills are also being imparted in the WEC.

Under the umbrella of Ehsaas, strengthening and expansion of WECs is one of the tangible measures being taken for the socio-economic empowerment of women. Under the supervision of Pakistan Baitul Mal, the disadvantaged women are empowered through skills development in the fields of livelihoods, education, economy, and self-reliance at 157 WECs nationwide.

“Ensuring equality, training women, and providing access to opportunities to deserving women is the core thinking behind WECs. It is heartening to see that WEC’s skills training courses enable the young girls to start their own businesses and earn livelihoods for their families”, said Dr. Nishtar while expressing happiness in interacting with women. Further,

she appreciated that the WECs are significantly contributing to reduce the women's dependence on government-led social safety nets and to bring them into the mainstream of economic development and financial inclusion.

As part of major reforms brought under Ehsaas, the training courses offered by WECs will be certified by National Technology Board by the end of this year. This will significantly enhance the credibility and acceptance of the women's livelihoods skills in local economy. Every year, as many as 250 girls are graduated from each WEC to start their business or a job.

Further, to make WEC graduates self-reliant, PBM and PPAF are exploiting synergies to link trained women with interest free loans. The size of loans ranges from Rs. 25,000 to Rs. 100,000 depending upon the viability of each business.

Irum Younas, a dress designing trainee at the centre noted that after receiving the skills training, she can earn enough money to meet her family's basic needs. "These skills will enable me to earn a decent livelihood and to support my family", shared Umme Kulsoom, trainee enrolled for basic computer course.

The key focus of Ehsaas is on closing the gender gap and women empowerment. Ehsaas seeks to link to existing and emerging livelihoods and community level programmes in ways that promote diverse income opportunities and enhance women's control of resources in the household.