

Government of Pakistan
Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety Division
Press Release

Ehsaas newsletter highlights 15-month remarkable journey of social protection in Pakistan



Newsletter on the 2 Year Anniversary

Ehsaas, The 15-month journey

The Ehsaas journey began with the establishment of the **Poverty Alleviation Coordination Council (PACC)** in **February 2019**. The Council was given the mandate to develop a poverty alleviation plan on the principles of Riyasat-e-Madina. Constituted by diverse stakeholders and chaired by Dr. Sania Nishtar, this council held 23 consultations over a period of two months to deliver Ehsaas, the government's new umbrella initiative for social protection and poverty alleviation. The Prime Minister took fortnightly briefings on progress.



August 21, 2020 – Islamabad: Celebrating its 15-month journey, Ehsaas has released a newsletter that looks back at several successful Ehsaas launches, institutional reforms and strategic partnerships. Ehsaas was launched by Prime Minister Imran Khan on March 27, 2019, as Pakistan's largest ever poverty eradication initiative. Since the official launch, several important initiatives have been rolled out across the country. The digital issue of Ehsaas Newsletter can be accessed at: <https://mailchi.mp/0fe13d3d2af0/ehsaasprogress>

Remarking the release of the newsletter, SAPM Dr. Sania Nishtar commented, "This newsletter is distinctive as it looks back at the ambitious journey of Ehsaas relationships and partnerships that focused on tackling multidimensional poverty in Pakistan. This edition also reflects the international recognitions earned by this widely praised programme." Continuing she said, "Ehsaas has prominently been profiled at many international events over the last 15 months, including events hosted by the UN, ADB, WB, UNDP, UN Women, Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative, Harvard Pakistan Forum and SUN Movement. Also, World Economic Forum, Telegraph, World Bank, World Food Programme and UNSGSA have all engaged with and deeply appreciated Ehsaas."

The throwback newsletter highlights achievements and plans of various key Ehsaas initiatives and actions. In response to COVID-19, the Government allocated Rs. 203 billion within just 10 days of shutdown to deliver one-time emergency cash assistance to 16.9 million families at risk of extreme poverty. Kafaalat is an unconditional cash-transfer programme providing monthly payments of Rs. 2,000 and bank accounts for 7 million disadvantaged households (100% women). Under the Rs. 42.65 billion interest free loans programme 80,000 loans are disbursed every month in 100 districts. Launched in 23 districts of Pakistan, the Amdan programme transfers 200,000 productive assets to deserving households (60% women). Ehsaas undergraduate scholarships support students from low-income backgrounds. Rs 20 billion were allocated for 200,000 scholarships over 4 years. As part of Mazdoor ka Ehsaas, the Ehsaas Langar scheme has been introduced under an innovative public-private partnership feeding more than 600 laborers daily. Recently launched Ehsaas Nashonuma, the nutrition conditional cash transfer programme for mothers and children aims to address stunting in children under 2 years of age across 9 districts in the first phase.

Highlighting upcoming programmes and initiatives, the newsletter discusses Pakistan's first shock-oriented precision safety net, "Tahafuz" that covers heavy medical expenditures for the deserving and "Taleemi Wazaif" to benefit 5 million primary school going children in 148 districts through conditional cash transfers. The two programmes will be launched in the coming months. To have the right poverty figures for better targeting and programming, the computer assisted survey is under way nationwide to update the database of National Socioeconomic Registry by the end of this year.