

Government of Pakistan
Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety Division
Press Release

Newly released edition of ‘Ehsaas Newsletter’ underscores the journey of this ground-breaking program amid COVID times

July 27, 2020 – Islamabad: Connecting with wide-ranging stakeholders today, Ehsaas has released the second volume of the newsletter. This electronic newsletter looks back at the Ehsaas program’s progress from January 01, 2020 to June 30, 2020. The brand-new edition of newsletter marks the launch of a number of new social protection and poverty alleviation initiatives under the overarching framework of Ehsaas.

The newsletter innovatively outlines the response of the government of Pakistan during the period to address COVID-19 challenges in the country. Early in the year 2020, Pakistan administered nationwide COVID-19 emergency measures which adversely impacted the livelihoods of many laborers and daily wagers. To mitigate the economic hardships being experienced by many workers, the government introduced the Ehsaas Emergency Cash program within ten days of the lockdown to extend cash handouts of Rs. 12,000 to 16.9 million families in need. The newsletter provides a link to the recently launched report on Ehsaas Emergency Cash.

To address the need of the hour further, the federal government had also opened a range of assistance initiatives through Ehsaas Roshan Portal to empower welfare organizations to play a well-coordinated role with the government in responding to the COVID-19. The pandemic also affected the implementation of several Ehsaas programs and initiatives in the field. Striking balance between wellness, safety and social protection, Ehsaas has now positively resumed operations of interest free loans and small income generating assets countrywide to graduate the poorest households out of poverty. The newsletter gives key details about these interventions.

Since Ehsaas’ last newsletter that covered the year 2019, several new Ehsaas initiatives and programs have been rolled out. Successful launches of Ehsaas in 2020 include the Kafaalat program, which gives cash stipends and bank accounts to the 7 million poorest women and the Amdan (income) program, which grants small income-generating assets to deserving households who wish to develop small retail outlets or enterprises. The newsletter also includes the rollout of the largest ever needs-based undergraduate scholarship program and Data4Pakistan (district development portal), the first spatially interactive initiative of its kind in the country.

Noting the release of the newsletter, Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Social Protection and Poverty Alleviation, Dr. Sania Nishtar commented, “Since Ehsaas’ inception last year as the country’s largest pro-poor program, the government’s flagship program has seen incredible support from local, national and international stakeholders to deliver on the Prime Minister’s vision of creating a 21st century welfare state. The primary purpose behind the release of this newsletter is to foster transparency and share knowledge with all

stakeholders and partners about major developments related to Ehsaas initiatives and programs.”

The first issue of Ehsaas Newsletter was released electronically in January 2020. The newly released second issue of Ehsaas newsletter can be accessed at:

<https://mailchi.mp/e7815c86892c/ehsaasnewslettervol2>