

Government of Pakistan
Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety Division
Press Release

Multisectoral collaborations under Ehsaas



Islamabad - July 29, 2019: Dr. Sania Nishtar, Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Social Protection and Poverty Alleviation, was a keynote speaker at the inaugural session of the 4-day training program, 'accelerating progress towards health related SDGs in Pakistan under the 2030 Agenda', organized by WHO in collaboration with Imperial College London and Ministry of National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination, Pakistan. Dr. Nausheen Hamid, Federal Parliamentary Secretary for Health and Dr. Shabnam Sarfraz, Member- Social Sector and Devolution were also present at the occasion along with WHO representatives.

In her keynote address, Dr. Nishtar stated that Ehsaas is the most widely ranging, multisectoral -the whole of government program with multiple end points centered at equality and equity. It has four pillars and currently embodies 115 policy actions. The four pillars include; addressing elite capture and making the government system work to create equality; safety nets for disadvantaged segments of the population; jobs and livelihoods; and human capital development. Under the Ehsaas framework, multisectoral collaboration is a

policy priority which is one of the unique illustrations of how multisectoral objectives can holistically drive the program towards equality.

Further, she continued, 'I have gone undercover in the field and sat with the marginalized women to feel what they need from the government, so that wholistic solutions can be devised accordingly. We should realize that problems don't come tagged with our mandates. People want holistic solutions and actions in an uncomplicated way and that cannot be achieved without multisectoral partnerships and totally collective division of labour.'

On the topic of health, Dr. Nishtar said, 'ghost facilities, absenteeism, stock outs, compromises on quality are key issues in health sector that we face not just in Pakistan but across South Asia and many developing countries. Solutions to the health issues do not lie in health, education and social protection sectors only. Ehsaas program, through its transformative agenda, gives us an opportunity to revive our commitment to the cause of health and collaborate across sectors to make health services easily accessible'.

To illustrate the importance of multisectoral collaborations under Ehsaas, Dr. Nishtar elaborated that Ehsaas wishes to initiate a food scheme to provide food security and social protection to marginalized women and their families by distributing flour bags (20 kgs) to them on a monthly basis. This scheme is health, nutrition, social sector and women empowerment intervention that is specifically being designed for multiple wellbeing outcomes. It involves the interplay of several agencies like program management unit, executing agency, Printing Corporation of Pakistan, Utility Stores Corporation, National Bank of Pakistan, monitoring agency, several layers of audit and call center for grievance redressal. To assist with this, Ehsaas is premised on the principle that there should be clear roles and responsibilities, along with incentives for the collaborating agencies to align the interest of different agencies. She apprised all present that the Ehsaas strategy will be in the public domain very soon for consultations.

The 2030 Agenda with its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) offers an ambitious plan of action for developing countries, the UN system and all other development actors. The 4-day training aims to enhance leadership capacities of senior leadership in health and non-health sector ministries, provincial departments and WHO staff, which are important leadership groups in national policy and implementation agenda, to understand and effectively deliver health and wellbeing approaches for 2030 Agenda.