

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

Dr. Nishtar champions women in business at launch of US-Pakistan Women's Council mentoring campaign



23 September 2019- New York, USA – Accelerating women's economic empowerment is good for business and good for Pakistan, this is the message behind the launch of a new mentoring campaign by the US-Pakistan Women's Council today. Attending the launch was honoured guest Dr. Sania Nishtar, Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Poverty Alleviation and Social Protection. Dr. Nishtar elaborated on the myriad ways in which Ehsaas, Pakistan's new equality centered initiative is mainstreaming the role of women in the economic sphere, through financial inclusion amongst other measures, creating livelihoods and jobs.

The programme is called the Pakistan Million Women Mentors Initiative and it aims to connect a million women and girls in Pakistan with mentors over the next three years.

"Women's empowerment is absolutely critical to ending poverty and is a key principle of the Ehsaas. When women join the work force it benefits everyone in the country, and I am glad to support the US-Pakistan Women's Council and the Pakistan Million Women Mentors Initiative," said Dr. Nishtar following the event. "By connecting young women and girls from Pakistan with leaders in industry we can give them many more opportunities to thrive as the businesswomen and leaders of tomorrow."

Attending the event were dozens of talented Pakistani exchange students, who took part in a speed-mentoring event to launch the mentoring initiative.

“The U.S.-Pakistan Women’s Council, which I am thrilled to co-chair with Michael Young, President of Texas A&M University, is a unique public-private partnership that catalyzes initiatives, policies and dialogue, to foster women’s employment, entrepreneurship and access to educational opportunity in Pakistan,” said Alice G. Wells, Acting Assistant Secretary of the Bureau of South Asia and Central Asian Affairs at the US Department of State in a speech to participants.

A number of global companies have already agreed to sign up to the mentoring scheme, including S&P Global, Citi, the Resource Group, Zafa Pharmaceuticals, Kentucky Fried Chicken, and Pepsico, which together have already pledged to mentor more than 24,000 women and girls and are the first in Pakistan to join the movement.