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Government of Pakisan

Benazir Income Support Programme

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<u>Press Release</u>

01st November 2019

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<u>Visit of David Malpass, President of the World Bank Group to BISP Headquarters – 1st November 2019.</u>

Mr. David Malpass, President of the World Bank Group visited Headquarters of BISP on 1st November 2019. The President was leading a delegation consisting of two Regional Vice Presidents and other high ranking officials from the Bank.

Islamabad: Special Assistant to PM on Poverty Alleviation and Social Protection Dr. Sania Nishtar in a meeting with President World Bank Group, David Malpass and the accompanying delegation during their visit to BISP Headquarters on November 1, 2019.

Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Poverty Alleviation / Chairperson BISP Dr. Sania Nishtar welcomed the World Bank's President and his delegation and briefed them on the importance attached by the government to the uplift of the marginalized segments of the society and the positive contribution Ehsaas is making to address poverty and inequality in Pakistan. The Chairperson informed the delegation on government's multisectoral Ehsaas Program and stated that despite limited fiscal space, social protection has been placed high on the government's

agenda and significantly increased resources have been allocated for social protection. She said that fragmented social protection programs are being integrated at one platform to avoid duplication.

The Chairperson also informed Mr. Malpass about on new payment model of Kifalat programme, which will promote financial inclusion of women through one woman one bank account. During the briefing, Mr. Malpass was also apprised on the governance reforms undertaken at BISP to bring transparency and efficiency in operations. Dr. Sania Nishtar also described the mother and child health and nutrition initiative of BISP, recently approved by the BISP Board. She said that the intervention would be piloted in eight districts during the current fiscal year. . Mr. Malpass expressed keen interest in the initiative and appreciated that government of Pakistan is taking steps to address the stunting and wasting problems of the poorest section of the society.

Islamabad: Special Assistant to PM on Poverty Alleviation and Social Protection Dr. Sania Nishtar presenting a souvenir to President World Bank Group, David Malpass upon his visit to BISP Headquarters on November 1, 2019.

Mr. David Malpass also had an interactive session with BISP beneficiaries who, as a part of BISP's collaboration efforts with the private sector had improved their livelihood potential and had started their small businesses. Mr. Malpass heard the stories of the beneficiaries and asked them questions about the use they made of the cash transfers from the government and the ways in which they embarked on the journey of self reliance. He noted with great interest that these poor women spend their quarterly stipend primarily on food and education needs of their children. He also asked the beneficiaries about their access to banking services and whether they used their stipends for savings or to meet their immediate expenditure needs. Dr. Sania Nishtar explained that under Ehsaas, one of the main themes is to encourage collaboration with the

private sector and to create synergies in the public and private efforts to bring people out of the vicious cycle of poverty. She explained that these beneficiaries were from among the beneficiaries identified by BISP and then helped by private sector partners to establish their small businesses.

He was briefed that education CCT was successfully operational in 50 districts across the country and BISP was operationally ready to upscale it in 50 more districts. The President was apprised that educational stipend for girls has been enhanced to PKR 1000/ - which is paid on a quarterly basis.

Dr. Sania Nishtar appreciated the partnership between BISP and the World Bank and expressed hope that the technical assistance of the World Bank will help the Ehsaas programme to further improve the quality of its social protection operations.