

Government of Pakistan
Benazir Income Support Programme

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BISP beneficiaries are females of the poorest strata of society

A woman is a full circle. Within her is the power to create, nurture and to transform.” Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) is the flagship social safety net of the government; catering for 5.7 million beneficiaries across the country with an aim to nurture women empowerment. The outreach of the programme is matchless. This International Women’s Day (8th March 2019) I feel obliged to share what wonderful services BISP is extending for empowerment of women to actualize the aim of poverty alleviation.



BISP beneficiaries are females belonging to the poorest of the poorest strata of the society. We at BISP believe that women empowerment can only be nurtured through economic inclusivity of women, the precise reason that BISP identifies the beneficiary household through its female member and transfers the income support in her name. Similarly, we at BISP are especially sensitive on educating the child, specially the girl child. BISP conducts social mobilization of its beneficiaries convincing them to send the child(ren) of the beneficiary family to school, specially the girl child. BISP remains with the child and beneficiary mother throughout the process of enrollment of the child into school and also monitors attendance, ensuring retention. Hence, playing its small but crucial role in long term plan of enabling the beneficiaries to graduate out of poverty. At this point in time, BISP Punjab has enrolled 100,000 plus children in its Waseela-e-Taleem- Programme. Reminds me of the famous Chinese proverb “If you are planning for a year sow rice, if you are planning for a decade, plant trees, if you are planning for a lifetime educate children.”

BISP is also taking keen measures to make its beneficiaries self-sufficient and hence focus has been on vocational trainings and small businesses, in collaboration of our partner organizations, for our female beneficiaries to bring about economic inclusivity and economic empowerment.

Similarly, BISP is mindful of the fact that disease contributes to poverty in one way or another hence, initiatives regarding mother and child health is also another way of breaking out of poverty nexus. In past few months, for instance, BISP Punjab had organized 11 free medical, nutrition and hygiene seminars for its beneficiaries wherein I would like to pertinently mention the breast cancer awareness Seminar in collaboration with GINUM where in free state of art scanning (mammography) was extended to BISP beneficiaries.

The BISP has formed clusters of its beneficiaries and have nominated mother leaders. Meetings o these clusters are held regularly and they are trained on various aspects and skills the prime aim being aware to empower and to unite them to attach strength. BISP is primarily focused on women empowerment and plans a lot more for its beneficiaries. This women’s day I deemed it appropriate to share what amazing things are being done for women at our end and high

significance is attached to women empowerment. I will conclude wishing a very Happy Women Day to all great women I know, specially the BISP beneficiaries for which we as a nation have to go an extra mile. Here's to more strength, more power.

— *The writer is Director
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