

25th August 2010

Ms. Farzana Raja termed the post-flood challenge much bigger than Tsunami. Appraised World Bank delegation about relief efforts being done by BISP, appreciated WB's support

Islamabad: Federal Minister and Chairperson Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), Ms. Farzana Raja has said that the recent devastating flood in Pakistan has posed a bigger challenge of rescue and rehabilitation than Tsunami. Hence, she said, it requires an equally proportionate response from the world community.

She said this during a meeting with the World Bank delegation headed by their Country Director Mr. Rachid Benmessaoud at BISP Secretariat. MS. Mansoor Rashid, Sector Manager, Social Protection South Asia region was also present at the meeting. Ms. Farzana Raja appreciated Mr. Rachid for his special visit and apprised him of the adverse impact of the unprecedented floods on the people of Pakistan, especially on BISP's beneficiaries, who belongs to most vulnerable segments of the society.



Federal Minister / Chairperson BISP Ms. Farzana Raja discussing flood relief efforts with Mr. Rachid Benmessaoud, Country Director World Bank, Pakistan and Ms. Mansoor Rashid, Sector Manager, Social Protection, South Asia Region in a meeting at BISP Secretariat.

MS. Farzana Raja elaborated the situation further and said that more than six million flood affected individuals are already registered by virtue of being part of BISP's beneficiaries' family and identifying them to provide immediate relief is relatively an easy task. She informed the delegation that that BISP has announced Rs. 12000 per family Livelihood Cash Grant for flood affected beneficiaries, which will be distributed in three monthly grant of Rs 4000/ month.

The Chairperson of BISP said that the first installment of almost Rs.3.9 billion has already been dispatched and disbursement of it would start from 30th August. She further highlighted that cash grant is absolutely imperative for helping the victims to relocate themselves before any rehabilitation or recovery operation could start.

Mr. Rachid appreciated the efforts made by BISP for reaching out to its flood affected beneficiaries. He was of the view that a coordinated response is absolutely necessary to meet

the challenges posed by this extraordinary emergency. "The real challenge is what could be done quickly to start a meaningful response", said Mr. Rachid and stated that a fuller response from the Bank could only be possible after the completion of damage assessment survey.

However, Mr. Richid said that on initial basis the Bank is considering to import critical items required for the response. While appreciating the role of BISP in regard with poverty reduction and empowerment of women, Mr. Rachid said that "for Bank team BISP is not a project, it's a passion". He added further „we very much value this partnership and we are there for any kind of support required by BISP". He assured that the Bank would be very much willing to support new initiatives of BISP especially education in Pakistan.

Ms. Farzan Raja informed the delegation that BISP is working very hard to facilitate flood victims and any financial support from the bank in the emergency relief package for the flood victims would be a very welcome step.