



External Relations Department

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SBP is all set to launch consultation on Banking on Equality policy for reducing the gender gap in financial inclusion

Women's access to financial and economic opportunities is essential for sustainable and inclusive economic growth. However, women in Pakistan are disproportionately under-served by the financial system. Only 18% percent of adult women in Pakistan have an active bank account compared with 51% men. In order to address the gender disparities, State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) has adopted a medium-term national target of 20 million active women bank accounts by 2023 under National Financial Inclusion Strategy. The target will be achieved through the launch of a policy to reduce the gender gap in financial inclusion, titled **Banking on Equality**, which aims to promote women financial inclusion in Pakistan.

"Banking on Equality: Reducing the Gender Gap in Financial Inclusion", is a flagship policy initiative of State Bank of Pakistan for promoting women financial inclusion. The policy will introduce a gender lens within the financial sector through specific measures to bring a shift towards gender friendly business practices.

To initiate a national dialogue on women financial inclusion, SBP has organized a webinar titled "**Consultative Launch of Banking on Equality policy: Reducing the Gender Gap in Financial Inclusion**" on Monday, December 21, 2020 at 1730 PKT (Pakistan Standard Time). The webinar, that will be shown live on State Bank's Facebook page [<https://www.facebook.com/StateBankPakistan>] aims to promote awareness of the significance of women financial inclusion and hold discussions among distinguished international thought leaders to discuss practical ways to give a boost to women financial inclusion in Pakistan.

SBP Governor, Dr. Reza Baqir will host the consultative launch of the Banking on Equality policy with introductory presentation on the policy by SBP Deputy Governor Ms. Sima Kamil, and followed by a high level panel discussion around women's financial inclusion. The panel members would include Princess Zahra Aga Khan Director Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN), Ms. Ceyla Pazarbasioglu from IMF and Dr. Reza Baqir Governor, State Bank of Pakistan while Dr. Anita Zaidi from Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF) will moderate the panel discussion.

Princess Zahra Aga Khan is a Member of the Board of Directors of the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN). Princess Zahra serves in various leadership roles within the Aga Khan Development Network, including as Trustee of the Aga Khan University and the University of Central Asia.

Ms. Ceyla Pazarbasioglu is Director of the Strategy, Policy, and Review Department (SPR) of the IMF. In this capacity, she leads the work on the IMF's strategic direction and the design, implementation, and evaluation of Fund policies. Ms. Pazarbasioglu previously served as Vice President at the World Bank Group.

The panel moderator, Dr. Anita Zaidi, is the President of Gender Equality at Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. Dr. Zaidi is overseeing a division comprised of the Foundation's Gender Equality program team and Gender Program Advocacy and Communications team.

The webinar will be livestreamed on SBP official [Facebook Page: https://www.facebook.com/StateBankPakistan/](https://www.facebook.com/StateBankPakistan/)
