



Expanded Program on Immunization
Government of Pakistan



FEDERAL EPI Newsletter

FEDERAL EXPANDED PROGRAM ON IMMUNIZATION

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Pakistan Conducts Successful Nationwide Measles SIAs Inaugurated by the President of Pakistan Honourable Dr. Arif Alvi



Country's two week long nationwide Measles campaign was inaugurated by the President of Pakistan at the Federal Government Polyclinic Hospital in Islamabad by administering Measles vaccine to a child. President of Pakistan, Dr. Arif Alvi urged all parents to vaccinate their children against the deadly disease of Measles.

President of Pakistan emphasized the significance of the Immunization as the most cost effective intervention for protecting lives and termed it a collective responsibility to promote immunization to safeguard the future of children. "Immunization is a shelter against deadly diseases and it is dire need to encourage Immunization as a right of every child", stressed President of Pakistan while inaugurating the campaign. President of Pakistan Dr. Arif Alvi reiterated the commitment of the Government to improve health indicators of the country as a top most priority.

The President of Pakistan appealed the parents, caregivers, and healthcare providers to get the children immunized against vaccine-preventable diseases and urged all stakeholders to join hands with the Government in making this campaign a success.

While speaking at the occasion, Federal Minister, National Health Services, Regulation and Coordination, Minister said that it is the duty of every Pakistani to ensure that all children between 9 months and 5 years of age are vaccinated. "In line with the vision of the Prime Minister of Pakistan, we are paying focused attention to health and well-being of mothers and children", expressed the Federal Minister.

Sharing the agenda of the Government, Minister underscored the importance of health sector in improving the human development index. "The aim of the present Government is to prioritize health and education to bring improvement in the life of community," he opined. He emphasized that Measles campaign would ensure sound health for our children and improve national indicators of child health in the long run.

Dr. Syed Saqlain Ahmad Gilani, National Program Manager, Federal EPI in his opening remarks said that Pakistan experienced a massive Measles outbreak in 2011-2013 in response a nationwide Measles campaign was conducted in 2014-15 to reduce the burden of measles cases in the country.

National Program Manager also apprised upon the extensive efforts put in planning of the campaign and engagement of all stakeholders to ensure that every child receives an additional Measles vaccine dose. He also stressed that until we are not able to mobilize the communities to avail this opportunity, the aim of securing more than 95% coverage would be hard to achieve.

Dr. Syed Saqlain Ahmad Gilani also appreciated the support and technical assistance provided by development partners including United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the World Health Organization (WHO) with financial assistance from the GAVI.



Digitization of Information Management for Immunization A step in right direction



In a visit to the Situation Room established in the Federal EPI, Federal Minister for NHR&C, Mr. Aamer Mehmood Kiyani reviewed the effective utilization of latest technology and innovative approach for Immunization data collection, management and analysis. During the visit, Minister expressed the need of integration of all information at the Federal Ministry of National Health Services, Regulations & Coordination for collective analysis and evaluation. During the visit, National Program Manager, Federal EPI, Dr. Syed Saqlain Ahmad Gilani apprised Minister on the latest technologies being used by the Federal EPI for real time data collection and management.

Federal Minister highly appreciated the use of latest Information technology and digitization of data at the Federal EPI for ensuring timely data collection and analysis.



While highlighting the importance of health as a priority, Federal Minister reiterated that health and education is a prime focus in our manifesto and we are committed to raise the living standards of our people by raising the health conditions. "To translate Prime Minister's vision into reality, we will explore all opportunities, use all technologies, study and implement international best practices to improve and advance current state of affairs in health sector", expressed Federal Minister.

Federal Minister, in his remarks also appreciated Federal EPI for providing technical guidance to provinces and areas in implementation of EPI Programme.

Measles SIAs 2018 - A Success Story

The Government of Pakistan conducted two weeks National Measles campaign from October 15 – 27, 2018 in wake of increasing number of Measles cases. During this campaign 32.5 million children aged between 9-59 months were targeted for immunization against Measles. Oversight and monitoring of the campaign was given priority and team of supervisors conducted pre-campaign and intra-campaign activities. Validation of microplans along with rapid convenience assessment was conducted to identify missed children during campaign days. Daily evening meetings were carried out at DPCR at district level to address the gaps identified. In order to coordinate with Provinces and Areas, Federal EPI established a situation room for real time data collection and tracking of the program.

The National coverage of Measles SIAs recorded through MIS was 98%. The maximum coverage reported in GB (103%) while the minimum was reported from FATA (96%).

Analysis of RCA for a total of 1.5 m households revealed national coverage of 92% ranging between 87% - 98.1% for provinces and areas. During the campaign 199398 children missed vaccination.

The highest number of missed children was reported from Balochistan (53501) and lowest from AJK (109) while Gilgit Baltistan reported 100% coverage. The Government extended two supplementary days to catch up missed children. The overall wastage rate remained 9.95% with maximum wastage rate reported from Balochistan (15.51%) while the minimum wastage was reported from Punjab (8.92%). In order to do an impartial coverage assessment, a third party was hired by WHO. According to the independent assessment the coverage results lies around 94.5%.



Strengthening of EPI Program - Government's Priority Agenda Federal Minister, NHSR&C

A high powered meeting chaired by the Federal Minister of National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination, Mr. Aamer Mehmood Kiani stressed upon the need of strengthening routine immunization. Federal Minister also shared with the participants that the current Government plans to increase Health sector budget to fill the financial gaps and provinces are sensitized to expedite release of PC-1 funds. He appreciated support of all donors and partners in extending technical and financial assistance to the country.

The meeting was attended by Additional Secretary Health, Mr. Iqbal Durrani, National Program Manager Federal EPI, Dr. Syed Saqlain Ahmad Gilani, Provincial EPI Managers and officials. Dr. Syed Saqlain Ahmad Gilani in his remarks appreciated the joint team efforts to conduct successful Measles SIAs in the country. He highlighted the role of private sector and CSO's as an important partner in creating demand for immunization. He further said that Federal EPI is in process of developing SOPs to engage CSOs and Private Sector organisations as long term partners of EPI.

The Joint Supervision, Appraisal and Evaluation Mission led by GAVI, World Bank and other partners debriefed Minister on week long review of the Federal and Provincial EPI Programs. Mission members included representatives from GAVI, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, World Bank, USAID, UNICEF and WHO. Mission appreciated the Pakistan's overall performance in conducting successful national Measles SIAs and achieving 94.1 coverage.

Members appreciated the increase in immunization coverage as reflected in PDHS survey 2017/18. Members stressed upon addressing the operational bottlenecks such as expediting funds flow. Members also urged to improve synergy between EPI and PEI to sustain the momentum achieved during the latest Measles campaign. While sharing the recommendation, Mission emphasized on the need to generate credible data and ensure quality reporting for effectively projecting EPI performance in the provinces.

All policies and strategies should then be aligned accordingly by utilizing the quality data and evidence for decision making. Mission members urged the new government to promote EPI program as an integral part of regular health budget instead of its project mode and a major component of an overall primary health structure within a wider health system.

Members stressed upon the need of clear strategies, effective operational plans to reach out to the marginalized population for EPI service and improved strategies for demand creation based on data and evidence.



9th Annual Public Health Conference



The 9th Annual Public Health Conference was held on 4th and 5th December, 2018 in Health Services Academy. The theme of this year's conference was "Local to Global". In this conference National Program Manager, EPI presented the success story of Measles SIAs, lesson learnt and best practices to promote the integration of RI with other public health initiative.

Dr. Syed Saqlain Ahmad Gilani shared with audience that Federal EPI started an extensive and rigorous planning for the campaign. Steering committees were constituted. Customized WHO readiness tool was developed to monitor the preparedness level on fortnightly basis. SIA tools and guidelines were finalized following comprehensive consultative process and roles and responsibilities of EOCs were also finalized.

Micro planning workshops were conducted to develop, finalize and validate micro plans resulting in development of district level micro plans and finalization of UC micro plans. DCs were engaged. National, Provincial and Regional trainings were conducted for implementation of the campaign and communication plans were

developed. Supervisors and front line workers were trained in vaccine management, AEFI, waste management etc.

Highlighting the need to maintain the legacy, NPM shared that the momentum of the success of Measles SIA to increase equitable coverage especially among vulnerable is needed. Use of measles SIA micro plans to update RI micro plans and use same strategies to reach every child is imperative. Further the continuous monitoring and oversight at all levels for effective implementation of the program, use of the innovative technologies, continued Advocacy, Communication and Social Mobilization activities throughout the year to increase the demand and maintain the Public Private Partnership for enhancing service delivery, demand creation and VPD surveillance.

Scientific Session on Immunization at 9th Public Health Conference

The Scientific Session on Immunization was organized in the 9th Annual Public Health Conference with Dr. Iqbal Durrani, Additional Secretary MoNHSR&C in the chair. Dr. Syed Saqlain Ahmad Gilani and Dr. Nima Saeed Abid, Country Representative, WHO were co-chairs of the Session. The session highlighted the use of technology and MIS system (android based app, vLMIS And EPI – MIS) that has markedly improved program performance. Under the MNHSR&C the management of EPI is committed to reducing the childhood morbidity through provision of equitable services across the country to reach the unreached.

In a dedicated session, methodology of the quality assessment of immunization data by using WHO- Data Quality Assessment was presented by Dr. Asad Ali, Deputy Director M&E, EPI. A complete system design study approach for improving the supply chain management in the EPI was shared by Mr. Naeem Asghar, Deputy Director, Operations, EPI. Dr. Zaeem, HSA presented the mechanism and efficiency of EPI-Polio synergy in Pakistan. The session concluded with candid question/answer and discussions.



Federal EPI introduces Urban Immunization Initiative

Expanded programme on immunization has been facing number of challenges in reaching and immunizing every child. The challenge has been multiplied as a result of rapid urban growth and migration from rural to urban areas with marginalized communities residing in urban slums. The uptake of basic health services inclusive of immunization amongst these vulnerable communities is the lowest. Approximately 1.3 million missed children reside in the ten mega cities of Pakistan. The living conditions in slums are characterized as extreme population density, poor sanitation, inadequate access to safe water, poor housing conditions, have less education and lack of access to basic amenities including health services. EPI services are less than optimal in these settlements, based on the specific socio-economic factors and the urban slums profiling programme is developing focused strategy for reaching the children residing in these settlements. In such situation, where these mega cities are pivots of migration and slum settlement, services need to be prioritized here.

Therefore in the same backdrop Government of Pakistan has decided to improve the immunization status of urban slums on equity basis to provide shelter against deadly diseases to vulnerable population.

To bring marginalized population of urban slums in immunization blanket through equitable immunization service, it was agreed to undertake the initiate of urban immunization to cater the pockets of slums areas in the urban population that remain hidden from the routine immunization services and poses a constant risk to themselves and the community.

The Federal Expanded Program on Immunization conceptualized the initiative to start Urban Immunization in 10 mega metropolitan cities of Pakistan including **Islamabad, Karachi, Hyderabad, Lahore, Rawalpindi, Multan, Faisalabad, Gujranwala, Quetta, and Peshawar**. UNICEF is extending its technical assistance in the process to support in population mapping of the identified areas, micro census, stocking immunization data and in creating demand for immunization in identified population.

Technical brainstorming session held to finalize meticulous planning and thorough preparation. Dr. Syed Saqlain Ahmad Gilani, National Program Manager, EPI directed partners to ensure joint working in micro planning level.





Extension of National cMYP Pakistan to Include Year 2019 & 2020



The Comprehensive Multi Year Plan (cMYP) is a program planning document that provides five year program strategies, activities, yearly targets and program's funding needs. The last cMYPs was developed in 2014-2018 with technical assistance provided from WHO, UNICEF in consultation with all stakeholders.

Based on cMYP the Provincial and National PC-1s were developed for the year 2015 -2020. The current cMYP ended in 2018, and the PC-1s are ending in June 2020.

In order to reflect the program needs in alignment with the PC-1 period, EPI held a three days workshop (December 12-14, 2018) to update the cMYP for next two years.

The extension is needed to incorporate the developments in recent years to be incorporated e.g. NISP, CCEOP, IPV and Rota

introduction, tOPV-bOPV switch, Hep B introduction, DTP booster dose inclusion in some provinces and Typhoid conjugate vaccine.

The first two days of the workshop focused on group works to agree on the inclusions on the updated version, while the third day all groups shared its recommendations with a broader set of participants, and seeking their inputs.

The process to develop new cMYP for 2021 – 2025 will begin in 2019, based on which PC-1 will be developed reflecting the Government' funding as well as programming priorities in conformity with GAVI and multi-donors. However to cover the gap of two years in which the country will be without a documented strategy It is agreed to extend /update the National cMYP for period of 2 years (2019–2020).

Advocacy, Communication and Social Mobilization (ACSM) Coordination Unit

The strengthening of Routine Immunization (RI) is top public health priority of the country. The EPI Program is vital in achieving SDGs goal 3 that is related to reduction in under 5 years mortality rate. In line with vision of the Current Government, improvement in health and education sector is priority therefore, Immunization system strengthening is also on top agenda to enhance demand generation for RI services. Primary goal is to raise understanding of policy makers to make necessary policy reforms and awareness of primary and secondary caregivers regarding Immunization services.

In the same backdrop National Program Manager, EPI revived an EPIACSM Coordination Unit to achieve the objective of improved awareness and increased demand of RI services in the country. The Unit is comprised of the following members under the patronage of National Program Manager, EPI:

1. National Program Manager, EPI, (Chairman, Unit)
2. Representative of UNICEF (member)
3. Representative WHO (member)



4. Representatives of GAVI (member)
5. ACSM Consultant (Secretary)

The National EPI ACSM Coordination Unit is aimed to be based upon following principles to guide all communication work for Immunization.

- Development of Strategic Communications Plan;
- Departure from focused event based communication activities to a structured and long term plan to enhance awareness and create demand for the broader child health education agenda;
- Reframing of Immunization within the broader context of preventive health services for children;
- Building social networks to drive the program at community level;
- Initiation of a sustained advocacy post elections framework to appoint advocates for the cause in each legislature;
- Conceptualizing and designing of all IEC material required time to time for different campaigns and new vaccines etc;
- Initiating partnerships with relevant stakeholders including pediatricians, media, medical students, civil society activists, clerics, youth and women organisations to advocate for a social responsibility contract;
- Issuance of a monthly newsletter to showcase achievements, progress and performance of the National EPI;

Joint Supervision and Appraisal Mission Visits Pakistan

A high powered Joint Supervision and Appraisal Mission visited Pakistan from November 12, 2018 – November 19, 2018 to review the Federal and Provincial EPI program's performance in detail. A week long discussion took place in the Federal EPI where provincial counterparts also participated.

Dr. Syed Saqlain Ahmad Gilani shared the updates on program followed by in-depth discussion by the mission members. Deliberations included updates on last year's Joint Appraisal recommendations and progress, overview of Immunization program performance including vaccine doses, co-financing, planned future vaccine introductions, update on Rotavirus and Pneumococcal vaccine (PCV-10) switch from two dose to four dose vial and data improvement plan.

National Program Manager also apprised the mission on the Measles Campaign, use of technology and innovative approaches in conducting successful Measles SIAs and progress made in demand creation for Immunization program. He also reiterated to replicate the best practices & lessons learnt in strengthening of RI.

A detailed and comprehensive discussion was held on programmatic update on NISP including achievements of disbursement linked indicators. Provincial EPI representatives presented their achievements and challenges faced.

Dr. Syed Saqlain Ahmad Gilani chaired a session on the Urban Immunization project with specific focus on Karachi's roadmap. Moreover Mission also deliberated on the process of Supply chain management including, supply chain data, status of CCE OP and Non-CCE OP and next steps of system redesign.

The week long mission concluded its visit on November 19, 2018 at National Interagency Coordination Committee meeting where they presented their findings to the Federal Minister, Mr. Aamer Mehmood Kiyani, MoNHSR&C. Mission members thanked the Federal Minister for his personal oversight of the Measles SIAs and requested to continue the patronage of the program to improve the Immunization status across the country.



Public Private Partnership Initiative Engaggment of Salma Kafeel Medical Services (SKMS)

Under the initiative of the Public Private Partnership, Federal EPI has been requested by the Islamabad's leading private, Salma and Kafeel Medical Services to conduct a training session for its staff on preparation, handling, administering and reporting of vaccines.

In this connection, a day long training was conducted where officials of Federal EPI including Dr. Soofia Younis, Deputy Director, Training, EPI, Dr. Asad Ali, Deputy Director M&E, Mr Naeem Asghar, Deputy Director, operations, Dr. M. Sarbuland Khan, Dr. Hajreaswad, Assistan Director, EPI and Dr. Raafia Azhar, Assistant Director, EPI, conducted thorough technical sessions on

vaccine handling, surveillance, monitoring and evaluation, AEFI and reporting tools. A dedicated session on Interpersonal skills was also conducted by Ms. Wajiha Kanwal.

SKMS Management appreciated the Federal EPI for their efforts and contributions in building the capacity of SKMS team in establishing EPI Center in the SKMS premisses. They further expressed their commitment to work jointly for strengthening Immunization to work hand in hand in vaccinating all eligible children against vaccine preventable diseases and strengthening routine immunization.



MNTe Pre-validation Mission to Pakistan

Pakistan is among 14 countries where tetanus has not been eliminated. In the EMRO region only Pakistan and Afghanistan have not achieved MNTe goal as yet. MNTe Pre-validation Assessment Mission visited Pakistan in December for Pre-validation of Maternal and Neonatal tetanus elimination in Sindh

Province. It started its visit in Sindh from Dec. 3-14, 2018. Following the pre-validation visit in Sindh. A 2 days consultative workshop on December 17-18, 2018 in Islamabad on MNTe risk categorization and planning for planning for 2019 for Balochistan,



KP, tribal districts, AJK, GB, ICT and CDA was conducted in Islamabad. The Mission also held debriefing meeting with the Federal Secretary, NHSR&C during its visit.

Building Sustainable Immunization Financing Architecture

Federal EPI in collaboration with Agha Khan University co-hosted a workshop on Building Sustainable Immunization Financing Architecture on November 26, 2018 in Islamabad. The workshop was attended by Federal and Provincial Managers, development partners and representatives of civil society organisations.

The Teaching Vaccine Economics Everywhere (TVEE) Initiative, delivered by Dr. David Bishai, Johns Hopkins University and Agha Khan University completed a series of capacity building training in sustainable immunization financing for EPI stakeholders across Pakistan. During the workshop, Dr. Syed Saqlain Ahmad Gilani shared EPI initiative of mobilizing private sector resources for safe and effective vaccine delivery.

The concluding workshop was organised to re-cap key lessons

learnt with a wider audience and draw collective inputs for prioritization of evidence generation and capacity building needs for making immunization financing sustainable and integrated within health systems.

The event started with a presentation by Dr. David Bishai from John Hopkins University on the topic of Teaching Vaccines Economics Everywhere. Dr. Shehla Zaidi shared summary of discussions held in Pakistan and Afghanistan on TVEE.

Workshop also included group work on two thematic areas including;

- I) Evidence generation to support sustainable immunization financing
- II) Capacity building to support sustainable immunization financing



Typhoid Outbreak Looms in Sindh: A Challenge for EPI



Until December 2018, the upsurge of XDR S. Typhi has reached 5,084 cases (64%) of the total 7,909 culture-confirmed S. Typhi cases in Sindh district during. Most cases are reported from Karachi, Hyderabad and Mirpurkhas and the district with the highest proportion of XDR cases among the S. Typhi patients are Sanghar (87%) and Hyderabad (81%).

The Federal EPI under the Ministry of NHR&C in collaboration with partners including WHO and USAID is working to arrest the upsurge of XDR Typhoid and to prevent further spread of the outbreak. The specific objectives of the collaboration are to provide leadership and coordination of the health and WASH response; strengthen disease surveillance, investigation, detection capacity, to strengthen community mobilization and awareness for prevention and control of the upsurge of XDR S. Typhi.

Introduction of typhoid vaccine in Karachi and Hyderabad is also included in the planning. Vaccine will be introduced in campaign mode targeting children from 9 - 15 years followed by inclusion in RI schedule. Federal EPI is conducting rigorous planning to effectively introduce typhoid vaccine in Sindh in 2019 as a measure to address recent disease outbreak in the area.

The Government of Pakistan with support from partners is responding to the outbreak through formation of Task Force(s), Working Group(s) and Steering Committee(s) for XDR typhoid at national, provincial and districts levels with special emphases on strengthening surveillance, case management, vaccine introduction, risk communication and WASH interventions.



**HAPPY CHILDREN
WITH SMILING FACES**

Success Stories from Provinces Raising Awareness Through Arts

By Suneel Raja

In Sindh, Karachi was critically important to conduct an optimum Measles SIAs due to its huge and complex population setting. Karachi is the largest and most populous metropolitan city in Pakistan with 14.9 million of population. Its population comprised of many ethno-linguistic groups from across Pakistan, along with migrants from other countries. This has become Karachi more difficult in terms of covering children for measles and to motivate parents to reach at outreach sites. Results of last campaign 2014 were not satisfactory that impacted the overall coverage of the province. For multiple reasons, communication and social mobilization was one of the major reasons that community did not participate at desired level in the past.

Major challenges forecasted in measles SIAs 2018 was mobilizing and participation of posh population and urban slums towards outreach sites.

To attract urban slums and mixed population, innovative approaches were required in Karachi. UNICEF undertook the

innovative and out of the box solutions to support, facilitate and lead communication related activities.. With financial assistance of Rotary International and technical support from UNICEF team under lead of PD EPI, Theatre drama on measles was planned and staged at Arts Council Karachi. The purpose of drama was to convey message of measles in unusual and attractive way so that people can understand the importance of measles vaccination. Theatrical performance was lively comic style that embedded sensitization message about measles vaccination.

Participation from community was overwhelming and around 2000 people from different communities enjoyed the drama and seated till end of drama. Message of measles was conveyed to all in a sensitive way and importance of vaccination underlined in the drama.

"choson ko batane ke achha andaz tha aur mujhe to commend wala scene bohat achha laga. Han pata tha measles kia bemari he lekin is ken a lagwane c ye injam hoga pata nh tha. Main apne family main bacho ko zaror vaccination karwaon ga".....
comments from one viewer.



Sialkot, Punjab's Jewel In The Crown

By Sajjad Hafeez

Sialkot has remained Punjab's leading district on immunization indicators over the past decade. The district tops coverage chart with 97% coverage (measles-1), boasting of 100 % BCG coverage as reported in the latest PHS survey 2017-18. It has remained polio free for over half a decade with almost no Still Refusals in the last five NIDs. The district topped DQA assessment by World Health Organization scoring 100%, and remained Punjab's leading district with 99.5% coverage in the last measles SIA. The District consistently remains amongst the top five on all third party immunization surveys as well as independent evaluations.

Whereas Punjab's 36 districts have their own exclusive set of challenges, some districts that consistently perform better than others, present contemporary best practices which may be replicated elsewhere. Sialkot remains Punjab's top district on major human development indicators as well, strongly establishing the argument that the immunization indicator has strong correlation with other HDIs especially literacy and maternal and child health indicators.

The district has largely been able to achieve its successes by doing the basics right. The provincial synergy team in the Directorate General Health Services Punjab also acknowledged the District Health Authority Sialkot for smartly utilizing its polio resources for routine immunization. The 100% DQA score reflects its trained human resource, stringent accountability system and strong emphasis on transparency. The document reviews some of the best practices in the district that make it among the best ones.

Immunization Coverage comparison

Area	BCG	OPV	Penta1	Penta2	Penta3	PCV1	PCV2	PCV3	Measles1
Punjab	96	96	95	94	92	95	94	90	87
Sialkot	100	99	99	99	96	97	97	94	97

Best Practices:

The district relies on its strong motivational and performance driven model. The district ensures it does its basics right, with supportive supervision from the top.

Here are some of the best practices adopted by the district:

A) Immunization and Registration linkage:

The District Health Authority Sialkot has introduced coordinated mechanism to link immunization with registration, though it is not binding. The option adds the extra bit in district already having over 90% immunization coverage. However, for districts struggling to achieve immunization coverage, this may end up slowing down the registration process.

The DHA Sialkot staff and the EPI teams work in close collaboration to ensure all children are registered and they do receive necessary vaccination. The EPI staff facilitates in the registration of children

Name (District)	Sialkot, Gujranwala Division, Punjab
Population	3,967,262
Number of UCs	124
No. of vaccinators	134
No. of EPI Centes total	114
A) Health facilities with EPI services	A.100
B) fixed EPI sites	B.14
No. of LHWs supporting EPI	1876
No. of Polio workers supporting Routine Immunization	2472
Routine EPI Coverage in last 5 years	Administrative coverage is above 100%. Neilson Survey of 2015/2016 is 97.3
Measles SIA 2018 coverage	99.5%
AEFI cases in measles SIA	NO
Polio NID coverage 2018-17	101%

with retention advice for immunization cards. The registration desks at the District office note the immunization cards of children and remind the parents not having it.

"On district level, we have tried to integrate immunization with registration, though it is not mandatory. But soft reminders have worked, and there is a realization in the community that EPI cards must be retained and maintained," says DO (H) Preventive Sialkot Dr. Afzal Ahmed. The two departments have reinforced each other's strengths. This closer liaison remains the contributory and compulsory factor in this district. Although not officially announced as a policy, the collaboration has produced good results

B) Integration of Lady Health Workers into EPI and PEI:

Punjab EPI has long been working on effectively on engaging the Lady Health Workers for enhancing routine immunization. The huge work force of over 48,000 LHWs in 3550 Union Councils of Punjab has quietly played a significant role in MNT elimination as well. By 2015, as many as 20,000 LHWs were trained for polio and routine immunization. The EPI Program has gradually kept on bringing into its fold more and more LHWs. The involvement of this workforce in routine immunization has paid dividend thereby translating into great boost in immunization coverage.

Sialkot has gone a step further. The LHWs have integrated the MNCH and EPI Program services very well. They start by registration of pregnant mothers, keeping track of safe deliveries and then documenting the immunization status of children as well as registration of the children with the district staff.

The district total workforce of LHWs is 1876 and they are effectively used to ensure vaccination of children. The performance of LHWs in Sialkot is apparent in their 97% ante natal care coverage and 94% skilled birth attendant coverage. This reflects how effectively, the LHW workforce is delivering the integrated health services in synergy with the EPI Program.

C) Use of Information Technology:

The District Health Authority Sialkot has uses IT interventions to enhance routine immunizations. Sialkot is one of leading five districts in the effective use of PITB dashboard and e-vaccs attendance. Other than the E-vaccs, the district uses social media especially whatsapp platforms for instant messaging.

"We have made separate whatsapp groups for vaccinators, LHWs, LHV's and Area Incharges. For distant localities and for compliance on microplans, whatsapp has been very effective. Sometimes, it is used for ensuring the presence of teams working in fields," says EPI Focal Person Dr. Afzal.

D) EPI-PEI Synergy:

Synergy has remained strong point in Punjab overall, starting from the provincial headquarters. The districts producing better synergy have produced better results in immunization coverage. Sialkot is one such example where polio work force is used for enhancement in routine immunization.

"The Microplans of Polio NIDs are used for routine immunization. The area vaccinators effectively use these microplans. In urban slums, polio microplans have been especially very helpful," says Chief Executive Office DHA Sialkot Dr. Liaqat Khan.

"We use DPEC platform to discuss weak links in routine immunization. The forum is used for analysis of weak UCs as well. The DPEC is not only a great forum for polio, it also provides great support for improving routine immunization. We keep a record of Polio campaign refusals and send in our LHWs for awareness and reassurance. The area notables and community leaders are involved for pre campaign coverage of previous campaign refusals. We maintain their log and continuously engage with them," says the CEO.

Polio microplans were greatly helpful in measles SIA 2018. Area vaccinators and DSCs remain in continuous touch for AFP surveillance, this mutual support have given Sialkot a great boost in their overall routine immunization coverage. The cross UC validation is also made possible with EPI-PEI synergy.

E) Public Private Partnerships:

The district Sialkot historically a close relationship between the civic administration and the city's entrepreneurs, dating back to the colonial era. The city was one of the few in British India to have its own electric utility company, and the infra structure was largely supported by the city's rich entrepreneurs.

The business community shares responsibility for developing infrastructure and repose trust on civic administration to deliver requested services.

The Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry is an active partner in awareness raising activities for immunization. The chamber is one of the big donors of the Shaukat Khanam Cancer Hospital Lahore, and routinely supports Social Mobilization activities for World Polio Day, World Pneumonia Day and other health initiatives.

F) Accountability and Motivation:

Although strong accountability remains a strong component of the district EPI system, yet the motivation and the rewards system is ranked higher as the real performance booster by the district CEO.

"Other than DPEC meetings, we hold regular monthly meetings with vaccinators for analysis of weak Union Councils. Sometimes, we hold bi monthly meetings with Vaccinators, LHWs and EPI supervisory staff. These meetings help in data validation through Permanent Register, Daily Register and due defaulter list.



