



Expanded Program on Immunization
Government of Pakistan



**Vaccines protect
individuals and
communities.**



#VaccinesWork
for All

FEDERAL EPI
U P D A T E S

APRIL
2020





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Plan for immunization activities during COVID-19 Pandemic

With COVID-19 Pandemic in 2020, Pakistan is facing huge challenge in controlling and responding to the Corona cases. All efforts are being focused to control the outbreak.

Initially in most of the Provinces and Federating Areas, the immunization services were halted but as the lock down is being relaxed, it has been urged to resume/continue the essential services including vaccination. According to the WHO guidelines, the implementation to resume/continue immunization services will be influenced by practicing physical distancing and adopting infection prevention and control techniques, analyzing the local burden of VPDs, the status and anticipated status of local COVID-19 transmission (classified as no cases, sporadic, clusters, or community transmission), and factors such as population demographics and migration patterns.

Following the guidance it is emphasized that the Fixed site immunization services and VPD surveillance should be executed while maintaining physical distancing measures and appropriate infection control precautions, equipped with the necessary supplies. The appropriateness of implementing other strategies (e.g. outreach or mobile services), as well as activities requiring community interaction for VPD surveillance, must be assessed in the local context and should be adapted to ensure the safety of the health workers and the community.

It is pertinent that the immunization delivery strategies are conducted under safe and hygienic conditions, without undue harm to health workers, caregivers and the community. VPD surveillance should be maintained and reinforced to enable early detection and management of VPD cases, and where feasible, contribute to surveillance of COVID-19.

The main areas that are to be focused under current circumstances include:

1. Advocacy for continuity of vaccination throughout the country
2. Risk assessment to identify high risk areas (Slums, SHRUCs)
3. Provision of routine immunization in integration with other programs (Polio, LHW program, RMNCH Nutrition, etc)
4. Support to vaccinator – personal protection and hygiene supplies and transport support.
5. Ensure availability of vaccines
6. Community mobilization – with the support of LHW, CBV and CSOs
7. Continuation of Surveillance for VPDs.
8. Post COVID-19 catch up immunization plan (once the situation allows)
9. Ensure that the infection, prevention & control protocols are in place.



Task Force on Risk Communication and Community Engagement

The Ministry of NHRSC has notified a Risk Communication and Community Engagement Task Force with professional communication, public relations and community engagement experts from the government and development sector partners. The Taskforce coordinates on all communication, health education and public outreach initiatives around the Corona Virus (COVID-19) response led by the Ministry. The Taskforce ensures consistency in all risk communication initiatives from planning, strategy development, content finalization, capacity building, implementation and monitoring of activities in line with the National Action/Response Plan developed for COVID-19. The coordination has helped in increasing community outreach with appropriate messaging across different networks.

The Task Force is also supporting in development of a preparedness plan that guides the work of the Ministry. The Task Force members also guide the provincial teams in implementation, monitoring and reporting of communication interventions. Knowledge management is another area where RCCE Task Team is assisting the Government in triangulation of available data through daily/weekly analysis to enable data driven decision making.



COVID-19 نول کورونا وائرس

اس مشکل میں ہم سب ساتھ ہیں

انسانیت کی قدر کریں
کوویڈ سے متاثرہ افراد کو خدمات اور امداد فراہم کرتے ہوئے ان کی عزت و احترام کا خیال رکھیں۔



ہمیں یکجہتی کی ضرورت ہے
کوویڈ سے متاثرہ لوگوں سے ہمدردی رکھیں۔ یکجہتی آپ کو روک کر رکھنے کی وجہ سے لوگ محبت کرنا سیکھتے ہیں۔



ہمدردانہ رویہ اختیار کریں
کوویڈ سے متاثرہ افراد کے ساتھ نرم رویہ پرکھیں اور باہمی مشاہدہ کی اور امتیاز پیدا نہ کریں۔



دوسروں کی مدد کریں
کوویڈ وائرس کی دوائے اور اینٹھ لگانے والی دواؤں اور دواؤں کا مال امداد ملے۔



صرف مستند ذرائع سے ملنے والی معلومات استعمال کریں
کوویڈ سے متعلق معلومات کے لیے سرکاری ذرائع سے حاصل کریں اور ایجنسیوں سے جاننے سے گریز کریں۔



احتیاط کریں
ایڈاپشن کرنا، سامان ہوا پانی، چھو کر ہاتھ دھو کر، کھانے پینے کے سامان سے احتیاط کریں۔





CORONA VIRUS (COVID - 19)

WE ARE IN THIS TOGETHER

WE NEED SOLIDARITY:
Be kind to the people with **Corona Virus**. Discrimination can drive people away from getting tested which is risky for everyone.



BE HUMANE:
Show dignity and respect when providing services or support to persons affected with **Corona Virus**.



GIVE YOUR SUPPORT:
Check regularly with your family and friends during the **Corona Virus** epidemic. They may need your support in meeting basic needs to recover quickly.



BE KIND:
Let us show empathy towards people who are affected by **Corona Virus** by supporting them with **care and understanding**.



LET'S PRACTICE CARE:
Wash your hands frequently with soap and water for 20 seconds. Maintain 1 feet distance. Cough and sneeze in your elbow.



USE INFORMATION FROM TRUSTED SOURCES:
Always seek information from official sources and avoid spreading rumors.







1166 HELPLINE
corona.info@nhsrc.gov.pk EMAIL
www.nhsrc.gov.pk WEBSITE
http://covid.gov.pk DASHBOARD

صحت منہ پاکستان





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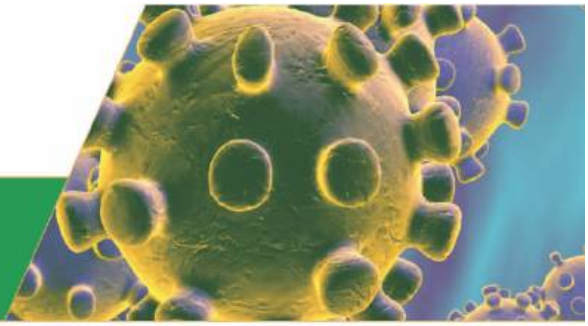
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Ministry of National Health Services,
Regulations and Coordination
Government of Pakistan

CORONA VIRUS

COVID - 19



Corona Virus Symptoms include



Fever



Cough



Difficulty in Breathing



Body Ache

Contact your medical doctor or
call the help line for more
information about COVID-19.



Protect yourself and your families from Corona Virus Infection:



Avoid contact
with people
with flu like
symptoms



Cover your nose
and mouth with
a tissue when
sneezing and
coughing or use
flexed elbow



Dispose the
used tissue
immediately in a
covered bin



Avoid touching
eyes, nose and
mouth with
unwashed hands



Wash your hands
with soap and
water or alcohol
based hand rub
regularly.



Avoid crowded
areas if you have
to go outside.
Refrain from
shaking hands.

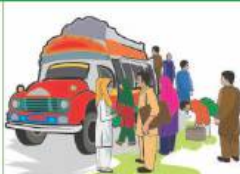
How to protect yourself from Corona Virus by Social Distancing.



Avoid large
gatherings and
maintain distance
of 3 feet/1 meter
from others.



Avoid shaking
hands and
hugging. Greet by
saying Salaam
from a distance.



Avoid
unnecessary
use of public
transport, when
possible.



Avoid large
gatherings



Avoid gatherings with
friends and family. Stay
in touch through
phones and social
media.



If possible, work from
home to protect
yourself and your
family.



If you have to go to the
grocery store/bank,
keep a distance of 3
feet/1 meter
from other people.

unicef
for every child



World Health
Organization



1166

HELPLINE

corona.info@nhsr.gov.pk

EMAIL

www.nhsr.gov.pk

WEBSITE

http://covid.gov.pk

DASHBOARD

صحت مند پاکستان

Contribution of EPI towards COVID-19 Outbreak

In light of the directives of the Special Assistant to the Prime Minister, it was agreed to contribute towards COVID -19 response in the country from the National immunization Support Project. The Mid Term Review Mission of the World Bank had also indicated to extend the support in this critical time.

Following directives of the ministry, “No objection letter” (NOL) was received from the World Bank (WB) and the procurement plan to procure Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) was developed by Ministry of NHSR&C in consultation with the Provinces/Federating Areas as per their needs. The appropriate forum was approached for approval of the plan. The UNICEF was requested to procure and supply the requisite items on behalf of the Govt. of Pakistan.

In first phase, the COVID-19 Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) were distributed to health directorates of Federating Areas as per distribution plan shared by the Ministry. Furthermore, EPI human resource within the government, UNICEF and WHO at federal, provincial and area level have been providing technical support for the COVID-19 response.

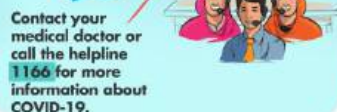
Sehat Tahaffuz Helpline 1166 – contributing towards COVID 19 Response

Sehat Tahaffuz Helpline 1166 mandated to address Polio and Routine Immunization related queries became one of the major source of dissemination of information about symptoms, precautions and general information about the COVID disease.

A set of standard “Frequently Asked Questions” were developed to assist the helpline operators in order to address concerns of the people. People from across the country call in to seek assistance in personal precautions, symptoms, acquire clarification on behavioural prevention, and share their concern on suspected transmission.

The Government of Pakistan has beefed up the strength and capacity of the Helpline and 200 additional helpline operators from Islamabad, Karachi and Lahore are engaged in assisting people.

Daily qualitative analysis of the calls received in the call centre is carried out to get the insight of the nature of calls and further communicated with the relevant quarter to devise regular mechanisms to address people's concerns..



Contact your medical doctor or call the helpline 1166 for more information about COVID-19.

Contributions of EPI in COVID 19 Response across Pakistan



Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

Dr. Asad Aly

EPI involvement in COVID-19 Response Activities in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

Provincial Level:

At provincial level, Director EPI along with three Deputy Directors were deputed to monitor the preparedness and response activities in prioritized 14 districts of KP including newly Merged Districts (Peshawar, Nowshera, Charsadda, Khyber, Mohmand, Karak, Kohat, D.I. Khan, Tank, South Waziristan, Dir Lower, Dir upper, Chitral Upper and Lower). Effective monitoring included daily feedback to concerned Deputy Commissioners and Commissioners, regular visits of all the isolation units, quarantine units and High Dependency Units were carried out, identified gaps and necessary instructions were given to all concerned for improvement.

EPI is also supporting in provision of vaccine carriers for transportation of COVID-19 sample. One truck is provided by provincial office for uninterrupted supply of logistics related to COVID-19

District level:

All EPI coordinators have been designated as COVID-19 focal persons in majority of the districts as integral part of District Rapid Response Teams. As member of Rapid Response Team member, EPI coordinators are involved in surveillance of COVID-19 and part of District COVID-19 Surveillance Committee headed by DCs. They are fully involved in tracking and tracing of all the travelers including Za-e-reen, Tableeghi jamat, Umrah travelers and all other foreign travelers.

EPI officials are involved in preparing line-lists, data collection and related surveillance activities.

UC/Field Level:

As part of Rapid Response Teams at UC level, vaccinators are engaged in assessment and screening of the suspected cases, tracing of the suspected contacts, screening sample collection, sample transportation, data collection, and data dissemination. Awareness raising and community mobilization is also being carried out through EPI field staff.

Sindh

Sunil Raja and Abid Hasan

Distribution of COVID-19 Materials

The EPI-PEI network with its community outreach is in a unique position to help raise awareness around COVID-19 as well as for surveillance and follow up of COVID-19 cases in the Sindh province. At the outset of the outbreak PEI and EPI collaborated to distribute 400 standees and more than 100,000 leaflets through the polio and EPI network across the province.

Reporter Orientation and press engagement

The EPI-PEI used its network of reporters in order to share information on COVID-19 with journalist and also to build their capacity on ethical reporting during such outbreaks. More than 60 health reporters are being reached out to by the health department on a daily basis with information on COVID-19, numbers of cases and those recovered.

Media Presence

The health department has done at least 16 prime time and morning shows around COVID-19 in which the minister for health and other health officials regularly appeared to raise awareness and to encourage social distancing. In addition to this, they have sent 20 videos of health officials to news channels and at least 15 news tickers on a daily basis.

Social Mobilization: Finding innovative ways to reach people with messages

EPI Sindh supported the social mobilization activities to mobilize communities to adopt precautionary measures in order to curtail virus circulation during the lock down. Through this network the PEI-EPI team has reached more than 188,000 people with the right messages and materials via social media, engaged 4000 religious scholars and 3000 other influencers who are now providing relevant information to their followers

Testimonials of Major Influencers

Testimonial endorsements by influencers from different walks of life were disseminated through digital platforms to raise awareness regarding Corona virus prevention. Similarly, posters with key messages on hand washing, social distancing, in take of balanced diet, role of children vaccination and how to care for children and elderly persons etc. were distributed.



Community Awareness – Local level IPCs

Individual and local level awareness program has been conducted by Lady Health Workers, Vaccinators and CBVs. It was guided that all precautionary measures must be taken while talking to community and getting them engaged for social awareness on Corona virus. Mosque announcements and one to one IPC sessions have been conducted in various areas of UCs and districts to create awareness among masses. Following are some field evidences.

Trainings

The EPI-PEI staff conducted a formal training on COVID-19 for all district level staff in which the topics covered ranged from prevention of COVID 19 to use of PPE, how to deliver messages, safe burial practices and to highlight their roles during the response. At least 200 district level staff across Sindh received this training via online applications such as Zoom.

Tameer Khalq Foundation's support for EPI and COVID-19 infection prevention

Tameer Khalaq Foundation (TKF) started field activities with 57 UC in seven districts of Karachi and Hyderabad. TKF monitors were given additional assignment related to COVID-19 infection prevention awareness. In which TKF monitors were asked to ensure the proper utilization of corona prevention IEC material at UC level. Orientation of UC front line workers was also facilitated by the field staff. TKF team are in close coordination with DPCRs and all UC front line workers of seven districts of Karachi and Hyderabad to ensure smooth dissemination of Government approved messages to down to the community level.

CSOs/ NGOs Engagement in Corona Prevention

HANDS Umerkot team is giving demonstration sessions on social distance and handwashing in women and children in Umerkot and distributed soaps to them with support of UNICEF for prevention of Corona virus in Umerkot. Highlighting the importance of hand washing, HANDs has launched a campaign in different schools of Tharparkar desert to raise awareness of how handwashing can prevent corona disease.

PUNJAB

Osama Mehmood

Continuation of EPI Services



Punjab is the only province which continued routine immunization activities and took every possible step to ensure vaccination. Director EPI Punjab Dr. Bashir Ahmad has directed to ensure provision of necessary PPE to the frontline workers i.e. fixed and outreach vaccination staff & EPI supervisors through district resources. He instructed all DSVs, ASVs and vaccinators to follow safety measures during routine immunization. In this context, EPI provincial team has prepared and issued contextualized guiding principles for Immunization activities during COVID-19 outbreak. These guidelines were shared with all CEOs (H), DHO (PS), DSVs and all the Vaccinators of Punjab. Director EPI has communicated to all the field offices to ensure implementation of these guidelines for immunization & VPD surveillance in the field.

Massive Awareness Campaign on COVID-19



Chief Minister Punjab Sardar Usman Buzdar inaugurated awareness campaign GHER RAHAIN, MEHFOOZ RAHAIN in provincial Capital Lahore. Director EPI Dr. Bashir Ahmed Siddiqui coordinated with all Divisional Directors Health Services, CEOs District Health Authorities and DSVs for effective implementation of campaign. Primary & Secondary Healthcare Department, EPI Program Punjab and UNICEF have developed a comprehensive communication plan to address the awareness need for COVID 19 pandemic.

A communication working group under the chairmanship of Special Secretary Primary and Secondary Healthcare and his team Deputy Secretary Coordination, Director CDC Punjab and representatives of WHO and UNICEF is working to develop communication material.



Corona Helpline 1033 is working round the clock in provincial command and control center. A dedicated team of young call center coordinators, Medical and Women Medical Officer and Psychologist are working to provide information, assistance and to guide people in the time of crisis.

A dedicated social media team continuously updating people through all social media platform to provide awareness, disseminating timely information and ready to counter any fake news.



Mass Media Awareness campaign on Print, Electronic Media and Radio is being aired from Health department Punjab

Department with support of UNICEF and WHO has prepared IEC Material for key opinion leaders and General Public and distributed to all the districts of Punjab. Similarly, Mosque announcements are made through out the province with the support of field teams and district administration.

Mobile Miking, one of the innovative and most effective communication tools in this pandemic where other RCCE activities are difficult to be performed, Punjab is using this tool most effectively in all 36 districts to reach people in far-flung areas by educating them on corona prevention messages. For this purpose, more than 2600 bikes of vaccinators are being used across the province. Vaccinators are visiting streets in the rural and urban areas with announcements of key messages.

EPI Staff performing duties in field and Provincial Command and Control Cell

In this pandemic and emergency situation, EPI Staff join hands with other provincial teams to fight against corona Virus. Under the guidance and directions of Director Health Services EPI Punjab, EPI staff is proactively participating in all the activities and performing duties in Provincial command and control Center. They are working to tracking of patients, contact tracing, confirming the suspected patients and analyzing data and daily updates from global and national dashboards.



Capacity building of staff for Establishment of Quarantine Centers

Provincial EPI team participated in technical facilitation and capacity building of staff for establishment of Quarantine Centers at district level. These sessions were held in 17 districts including DG Khan, Rajanpur, Bahawalnagar, Bahawalpur, RY Khan, Khanewal, Lodhran, Vehari, Pakpatan, Sahiwal, Okara, Sialkot, M.B Din, Narowal, Hafizabad etc. In these sessions CEOH, DHO Preventive, CDC Supervisor, District management including Assistant commissioners, Rescue 1122 staff, security related staff, and also janitorial staff were participated. Field officers and staff were trained on setting up quarantine centers as well as SOPs and protocols of patient/contacts management. Training also included guidance to the medical staff about use of protective equipment i.e. mask, surgical gown, infection, prevention & control (IPC), personal hygiene and hand washing etc.

Balochistan

Dr. Kamalan Gichki, Program Manager, Balochistan

COVID-19 Response by Provincial EPI Program

EPI program Balochistan had suspended all Enhanced Outreach activities (EOA) in all districts of Balochistan due to corona emergency by limiting the exposure of people with taking appropriate measures for social distancing. EPI program started awareness regarding Corona virus during quarterly review meetings held from 2-3rd March 2020 where more than 120 district participants including DHOs, M&E officers and DSVs were trained.

EPI program has conducted trainings for master trainers (TOT) of 12 high risk districts of Balochistan wherein more than 40 master trainers including lab assistants and DSV/M&E officers were trained regarding sample collection and response for coronavirus disease.

EPI Program is engaged in monitoring of the quarantine units and provincial operation cell in Quetta and establishment of the provincial and district rapid response teams (RRTs).

EPI program has arranged many training/orientation sessions in different departments of district Quetta. Orientation sessions were conducted for administration of private hospitals, technical staff of school & colleges and Balochistan high court.

EPI program used their networks to sensitize the religious scholars regarding corona emergency dissemination of messages in communities through religious leaders. Screening of prisoners and jail staff for suspected cases was also undertaken through EPI human resource. On the directives of EPI manager, 2 days training session was conducted for district health team of Quetta regarding COVID-19 surveillance, sample collection and follow up. Provincial EPI is working to develop a comprehensive plan of action which include,

1. Coordination at provincial and district level
2. Capacity building and orientation in the community regarding COVID-19
3. Strengthening the capacities of health staff for surveillance, sample collection and follow up for COVID-19.

Provincial EPI program has assigned duties to its staff with defined TORs for smooth functioning in the response of COVID-19. Provincial coordinator EPI participated in show on local TV channel and discussed the COVID-19 situation in detail and also shared the basic preventive measures with public in local language. EPI Program has a critical role in COVID-19 response in province especially in Quetta sharing maximum information with public through radio and TV channels.





Azad Jammu & Kashmir

Dr. Umar Iqbal

Dr Bushra Shams PPM EPI-AJK has been designated as Focal Person for COVID-19 preparation and response activities in AJK with EPI Provincial Program Manager's office as hub for implementation of activities. Following activities are being undertaken as COVID-19 outbreak preparation and response including

- Tracking of travelers in all each of the 10 districts of AJK
- 16 functional isolation units with 304 capacity
- Inventory and distribution of PPEs and medical equipment
- 60 Quarantine centers functional now for 1696 capacity
- Three Labs, one at each divisional level is functional for COVID-19
- Meetings with Chief Secretary ,IGP on weekly basis
- Daily Coordination Meeting held regularly in EPI office chaired by secretary Health and joined by DGHS and partners

Community mobilization/engagement is an essential component of increasing demand for immunization services. Federal EPI, in collaboration with UNICEF organized a highly interactive two-day workshop to develop a National Demand Roadmap for Routine Immunization in Pakistan. It was a lively event with participation of key partners in immunization who came together to develop an actionable plan/roadmap to enhance service experience for the caregivers, improve the interpersonal communication skills of the frontline health workforce and manage the flow of information to counteract rumors through social/digital media platforms. Human-centered design approaches were used to scrutinize issues in the field and customize interventions based on community engagement and behavioral insights. The roadmap focused on target population in prioritized geographic locations (hard to reach, security compromised, urban slums and Polio Super High-Risk Union Councils) to reach missed children that are not being covered in the regular immunization services.

The global demand agenda, contributions of partners to the sector and five thematic workstreams were discussed at length and the national roadmap/plan was developed for each workstream. The workshop report cum national roadmap is being documented and will be shared with provincial EPI and partners to organize provincial demand workshops for provincial customization of the roadmap with granular focus on key issues and their solutions in relevant target population. The roadmap will be the first step to bridge the equity gap and defines specific interventions to focus on children who keep on getting missed for routine immunization with the low coverage having an impact on disease outbreaks in the country.

National Demand Workshop on Immunization



