



## Pneumonia, the Leading cause of Children Death: *A young couple in Chitral who have lost their young one to Pneumonia, unfold their experiences to educate others*

Its summer time in Kailash Valley, Chitral and Mr. Farman Ullah is interacting with a Government EPI Official to share his strenuous experience trying to save his young daughter who ultimately lost her battle with Pneumonia.

Farman Ullah and Farzana is a young couple who got married in a very young age. They are proud parents of an 11 years old healthy daughter Laiba. Farman and Farzana loves Laiba very much and the story they are referring to, is Tayyaba's story, the deceased sister of Laiba.

"We treat the Lady Health Workers like a celebrity now and we give them special protocol" Farzana also participates in the story telling process and mentions that this is unlike as what use to occur in past, earlier we use to refuse to LHWs, LHSs and all other Government Officials not knowing the importance of their visits. Farzana added that winters of 2009 were approaching and "I, to date, cannot forget the sentence spoken by the LHW who approached our house last winter's but was not denied entry by me and my husband" I still recall her words.....

***"Winters are approaching and I have some information on precautionary measures for children to avoid Pneumonia"***

Though our refusal at that time was with full confidence but now we believe that, it was suicidal, as we had a 7 months old baby in the house (Tayyaba) with winters approaching and we have turned down the free of cost offer of the government representative who was here to help. We did not know, its consequences will be fatal.

Farman Ullah while mentioning the details of the loss of their young one narrated that "It was a deadly combination of a 7 months baby in our house and the extreme winters with temperature hitting way beyond - 5 degrees. Tayyaba started with a cold like symptoms that by the morning had turned into something very scary as she was wheezing and as the time passed her chest condition was getting worst with rapid heartbeat.



Muhammad Younis with his son Yaseen, who has been a Measles Sufferer

We straight away took her to the Hospital and then started almost a week long war between my daughter and pneumonia. Initially, the doctor's response was "She is done" take her back home. I told the doctors to please do something, I will sale out my home to save my daughter. The doctors starting treating her for a few days with various ups and down but on the 6<sup>th</sup> day, I slept for just a few minutes and woke up she was gone.

Farman shared the video recordings of her child suffering from Pneumonia. He has possessed all of her last days pictures and video.

Farman and Farzana very happily mentioned that it was Allah's will as Allah gave us and then took back our daughter. Alhamndullilah we have an older daughter and we planned to have other children as well ***but now our priorities have changed we want a healthy future for them.***

The couple concluded by saying that Chitral and Northern Areas have very high prevalence of Pneumonia amongst children hence a massive awareness creation campaign is the need of the hour to educate people on the free vaccination services that also include Pneumonia prevention offered by the Expanded Program under the guidance of Ministry of National Health Services Regulations and Coordination.